

JOY

Our advent devotion this week is based off of “The God of Amazing Gifts,” by Lizzie Laferton and “The Message of Christmas,” by Eugene Peterson.

The angels announced to the shepherds that the coming of Jesus was a great and joyful event that was significant for everyone. God had come to live among us! Life in this world is often difficult, but living with God’s constant presence and an eternal hope allows us to experience joy no matter what we may face. God’s presence in our lives is always a reason for joy.

Luke 2: 8-20

8 There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. 9 Suddenly, God’s angel stood among them and God’s glory blazed around them. They were terrified. 10 The angel said, “Don’t be afraid. I’m here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: 11 A Savior has just been born in David’s town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. 12 This is what you’re to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger.”

13 At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God’s praises:

14 Glory to God in the heavenly heights,
 Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

15 As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. “Let’s get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us.” 16 They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. 17 Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. 18 All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

19 Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. 20 The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they’d been told!

Closing Prayer

Glorious Father in the highest heaven, we thank you that because of Jesus we have reasons to celebrate every day, whether our circumstances are hard or happy. Thank you for the Savior who was born for us. Please grow our joy as we read about Jesus, talk about him, think about him, and sing his praises this Christmas. Amen.