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Christmas

devotions

2023

DEVOTION #04: LUKE 2:1-21

The Saviour is Here

Read:

Luke 2:1-21

The Birth of Jesus

² In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."




Read:

Luke 2:1-21

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.



Devotional

Extraordinary love

When a member of the royal family has a baby, who do you reckon gets to meet that baby first? It's safe to say there's probably a very small group of people who are invited around to Buckingham Palace for a meet and greet. There would be other members of the royal family for sure, and perhaps some politicians or rich, famous people might get a look-in as well. But I doubt that the local garbage collector would make the cut - in fact, I don't think you or I would, either.

When Jesus was born, God made it pretty clear that this baby was the beginning of something big. Which is why the people he chose to witness the birth of the Forever King might seem a bit weird. Read verses ¹⁵ and ¹⁶ again, and you'll see that it wasn't royalty or people with power and influence who got to meet Jesus as he came into our world. It was a group of shepherds.

Because they worked long hours in fields that were a fair distance from their town or village, you'd think shepherds would be pretty out of the loop. They were often a bit rough around the edges, a bit dirty and smelly, and - usually - a bit left out. But when God wanted to let the world know that its Saviour had been born, who did he tell first? The shepherds. And this says a lot about God's heart. The most ordinary of people, God told the shepherds first because he wanted to make it clear that his rescue plan was for everyone. That's why it's so important to hold onto what we're really celebrating at Christmas: the birth of Jesus, who brings with him unconditional love, and hope with no use-by date. Yes, Jesus came to save the wealthy, and the politicians, and the royal family. But he also came for you and me - the most ordinary of people, saved by the extraordinary love of a baby who was born in a stable.