UPC Family Daily Devotional

Advent 2021 – Week 2

Dec 5 Sunday Micah 5:1-5

In the midst of foretelling of death and destruction, God encourages His people through the prophet, Micah, by offering the hope of a Savior and the promise of peace – birth of Christ Jesus. In his humility, Jesus was born as a baby in Bethlehem while he had existed throughout all time (v.2). Just as David was a shepherd and set the pattern for the king of God’s people, so this new King will care for the flock of God. His greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

Micah tells of a ruler, the Messiah who will come from the tiny Israelite town of Bethlehem and shepherd God’s flock of sheep. How has Jesus cared for you as a shepherd would for his sheep?

Dec 6 Monday Luke 1:5-25

The birth of John the Baptist is foretold. In Jesus’ day most Jews believed that for more than 400 years the Holy Spirit had not been active in Israel, because there had been no more prophets since Malachi. Now God once again visits his people through a priest, named Zechariah and says to him, “your prayer has been heard” and foretells the birth of his son, John the Baptist, which takes away disgrace Elizabeth or any barren woman must have faced for many years. Joy and gladness (v.14) come to Zechariah and Elizabeth both because their childlessness has ended and because of what God will do through their son.

What was the greatest news you have heard from the Lord in response to your persistent prayer?

Dec 7 Tuesday Luke 1:26-38

This time Luke moves from announcing the birth of John the Baptist to announcing the birth of Jesus. The mighty work of God through John’s conception and ministry is now surpassed by the greater miracle of virginal conception and the greater work of Christ. Above all, she is told that the baby she will carry in her body will be the Savior of the world and called the Son of the Most High (v.32). This is a divine calling given to Mary. Considering her circumstance though, a virgin engaged to a man, it is quite an overwhelming news to accept all at once. Yet, look at the way Mary responds to the angels in verse 38. This is her example of true discipleship, in submission to God’s word and promise.

Which woman challenges you more? Is it Mary, willing to move forward into the unseen, or Elizabeth, living with hope despite her situation?

Dec 8 Wednesday Luke 1:39-56

Mary is blessed for her faith, but she is most blessed for the privilege of bearing the Son of God (v.42-45). Mary celebrates God’s work in the past and identifies that what is taking place in her and Elizabeth’s wombs is a continuation of those mighty saving acts. Salvation, which God brought in the past, is now present in Jesus.

What has been one of the greatest blessings you have received from the Lord? Talk about how it would relate to our Savior Jesus.

Dec 9 Thursday Luke 1:57-75

“Zachariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied: (v.67)” – the prophetic voice of the Lord had been silent for 400 years. Now, God speaks through Gabriel, through Elizabeth, through Mary, and now through Zachariah. When God speaks again, it is all connected to the theme of Jesus and His work.

Is there a matter in your life about which God has remained silent for a long time? Why do you think God makes you wait on Him?

Dec 10 Friday Luke 1:76-80

The words of Zechariah as he speaks of the future of his son, John the Baptist, portray this tiny child as a deliverer of light to a dark world. Zechariah continues his prayer of dedication (v.76). God’s love and mercy are illustrated as a light shining into a dark world. The rising sun that will come to us from heaven to shine on us when we are living in the darkness and in the shadow of death is Christ Jesus.

As seen in the Song of Zechariah, we too shall open our mouths in praise to God and in thankfulness for what He has done for us in Christ.

Dec 11 Saturday Matthew 1:18-25

The way to heal shame is to accept the event or behavior, even to embrace it, and to share it. Joseph accepted that Mary would deliver a child that was not his. He embraced the challenge of raising God’s child - his response was obedience.

What will your response be?