

Christmas Revelations

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Connecting with Jesus – Worshiping Jesus

as we begin to conclude 2020.

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DAY 1

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH

Introduction to the series

Christmas Revelations!

This is our first day together. It's a bit longer than all the other days just to set the scene and start us on our journey.

This devotional series is a personal interaction with key figures from the Bible whose lives intersect at the time of Christ's birth. It's personal because these stories are meant to affect us; they are meant to help us. These are the stories of Joseph and Mary. As you are led, read also of the shepherds and the wise men, too.

These are the lives of people who were probably very private, but because of a bigger story – the story of Jesus – their lives moved from private to public. We know these people – at least a little. But perhaps there is more to be seen, if we look again.

We will see a little more of the challenges they had to face. How did Joseph deal with the confusion and even thoughts of betrayal he faced? How did Mary come to terms with a life that was one day very simple, but the next was incredibly changed? How did the shepherds overcome their fear? How did the wise men find answers to what they sought?

Why look at these faces? We look at them, because their lives become intimately connected with a babe that lies in a manger; a babe that will Himself have the most incredible story. Through their lives, we will see something more behind the face of Jesus. Their stories – what's behind their faces – have been capturing hearts for 2,000 years. Their stories are for us. What is revealed in them is to tell their story, but it's also revealed to help us connect; to find a real connection. Christmas revelations.

We've provided a document [this one] on our webpage for you to view and if you want, use it to follow along. If you print it, you can make some notes and jot down some reflections. If you are a parent, or if you want to lead others, we encourage you to look over the document prior to meeting with your family or friends and help them see more of these people's lives, what is behind their faces and how their lives become eternally changed.

As you read through each day's devotion, we will provide a word or a theme for you to consider. Today's theme is **inheritance**. It's the idea of birthright, heritage, legacy.

Inheritance: Our passage is from Matthew 1:1-2.

Let these words of the Lord reach your ears; reach your heart, with the hope that you will get more of a view of people who are intimately connected with Jesus.

Scripture

– all passages are in the New Revised Standard Version.

¹ *An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

² *Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers...*

Matthew 1:1-2

Thought provokers

- We live in a time of “ancestry.com” and “23andme”. We can go on-line and, potentially, discover something about ourselves, and even our families from long ago.
 - Why do we want to know about our past? Discuss things you’d like to know (or even not know) about your family line.
- In verse 1, of this chapter, we see that it is an account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. It will go on for a total of 17 verses explaining the family line.
 - Do you see more of the past of Jesus in verses 1:1-2 and also in verses 1:3-17? Discuss some things you’d like to know about the family line of Jesus; try to get your answers directly from this passage.

Reflections

In the culture of that time, it was important to understand where you came from; it was important to understand the property that the family had, and it was important to know the inheritance that was theirs. Indeed, much of how these people engaged culturally was to do with the standing one had within the tribes of Israel. In verses 1-2 and 3-17, hopefully, you’ll begin to see more of this family line, ultimately noting something very special. What is that? Among all these people, one person is singularly mentioned. That person? Jesus. What set Him apart from all the others was the description that He, and He alone, was the Messiah. This child, Jesus, was the promised One who would bring redemption to man. This babe would act some 30 years after His birth to redeem these people and, not only that, but us too. He came to save: to save us from sin, error and evil. He would make a payment of incredible magnitude – He would die so that we could be part of the family line. All debts would be paid – and an inheritance of incredible proportion would be shared!

As we conclude our time today, we underscore this highlight: Jesus is the Son of the Covenant God established with Abraham, and He is the heir to the throne of King David, which God said ‘*would never end*’. To Abraham it was promised that the people would be great, that God would bless them, that their family would live, and that they would always have a place. To

David it was promised that he would be a king, that there would be a house and kingdom which will endure forever before God; that the throne will be established forever. Joseph would be a part of this incredible inheritance and with great astonishment Joseph learns that it will be absolutely fulfilled through a child that he would parent! What an inheritance, what a legacy!

As you believe in Jesus, you are promised a share in this inheritance! Do you believe today!

- Share your thoughts, feelings and reflections of what it means to be a part of this family line.

Prayer and Song

Take time in prayer looking forward to what God offers us and, sing a carol (by Henry J. van Dyke) – it is the season!

Joyful, joyful, We Adore Thee

*Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee,
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!*

*All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Singing bird and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee.*

*Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,
All who live in love are Thine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine.*

*Mortals, join the happy chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
Father love is reigning o'er us,
Brother love binds man to man.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us Sunward
In the triumph song of life.*