

Kiama Anglican Church

Christ Church Kiama with St. Paul's Minnamurra

The Songs of Christmas

Welcoming the Incarnation



Studies Around the Coming of Jesus
Luke 1-3

Welcoming the Incarnation

The Songs of Christmas

Studies around the coming of Jesus

Bible Studies : December 2010

The Songs of Christmas

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.'

Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor gives birth
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

And he will be their peace."

Micah 5:2-5a

With the prophetic words of Micah in our hearts and minds, we come to the place of the promised ruler for God's people - the stable at Bethlehem.

We come alongside Mary, Jesus' expectant mother; Zechariah, Jesus' spirit-filled Uncle; those at Jesus' stable, the shepherds and the angels; and John the Baptist - the people whose voices echoed songs of joy, fulfilment, promise, truth and peace as they sang of Jesus Christ,

Steve Stanis - December 2010

Date / Study

Passage

5th December Mary's Song	Luke 1:46-56
12th December Zechariah's Song	Luke 1: 67-80
19th December The Song of Jesus Birth	Luke 2:1-7
26th December The Song of John The Baptist	Luke 3: 1-6

This short set of studies seeks to set our minds on Jesus, the Lord and Saviour whose birth as a helpless babe we remember at Christmas.

The studies are a little shorter than usual and I have attempted to design them this time for either group or individual study.

Each study includes a verse to meditate upon. Christian meditation is not a looking inward to find truth but a serious contemplation of the truth about God we find in the Bible. I would encourage you to give serious focused thought to each word and phrase of these verses.

Greg Holmes

References:

Bock, Darrel L, The NIV Application Commentary : Luke (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1996).

Liefeld, W. "Luke" in Gaebein, F.E., Douglas J.D. (Eds) THE EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE COMMENTARY (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1990) (Cited as EBC)

Marshall, I.H. 'Luke' in Carson, D.A., France, R.T, Motyer, J.A., Wenham, G.J. (Eds) NEW BIBLE COMMENTARY : 21st Century Edition (LEICESTER, IVP, 1994) (Cited as NBC).

Morris, Leon, The Gospel According to St. Luke (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (IVP, Leicester, 1974).

Wilcock, M. The Saviour of the World : The Message of Luke's Gospel (The Bible Speaks Today) (Leicester, IVP, 1979) (Cited as BST)

A set of notes on the studies is available on the Kiama Anglican Churches website or from the office.

Study 1: Luke 1:46-56

The Song of Mary

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully.

1. Who is singing this song? Who is she visiting?
2. What does Mary sing about herself?
3. What is she saying God has done and will do through what is happening to her?

Deeper and Wider

1. Read Isaiah 7:13-15; 9:1-7. What roles does this Promised One fulfil?
2. Read Luke 4:14-21. (Note Isaiah 61:1-2) What is Jesus claiming for himself here? How does it relate to Mary's song?

Apply

1. William Temple called this 'a most revolutionary canticle.' In what ways is its message revolutionary for our world?
2. In this time of gift giving what does this song say to you about your commitment to the 'hungry' and the 'humble' of this world.

For Meditation

v53 He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

For Next Week: Read Luke 1:67-80

Study 2: Luke 1:67-80

The Song of Zechariah

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully.

1. Who is Zechariah? What is the context for his song?
2. What do vs 68-70 tell us about the main theme of the song?
3. Which two children is the song about? What will each child do?

Deeper and Wider

1. Read 2 Samuel 7:8-16. How does Zechariah understand this passage for his own situation?
2. Look at John 8:12. Compare this to v78, 79. In what way is Jesus your 'light'??

Apply

1. What example is set for us by Zechariah?
(Need to look around in the rest of this chapter for this.)
2. In this time of year when we think of 'salvation', 'forgiveness' and 'peace' what personal relationships do you need to think about repairing?

For Meditation

Vs 68 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.

69 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David

For Next Week: Read Luke 2:1-7

Study 3: Luke 2:1-7 **The Song of Jesus' Birth**

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully.

1. What was Luke's purpose in including v1-3
2. What is emphasised about going to Bethlehem?
3. How is this baby's birth described? What is paradoxical about all of this?

Deeper and Wider

1. Read Micah 5:2. Who decided that Joseph and Mary needed to go to Bethlehem at this crucial time?
2. Read Matthew 1:18-2:1. What does Matthew's account add to what we should know about Jesus' birth?

Apply.

1. On that uncomfortable night in Bethlehem what do you think it was that sustained Joseph and Mary? What example is this for us as we celebrate Christmas as families?
2. Consider Philippians 2:5-11. What is this telling us about Jesus' birth and what it means for us?

For Meditation

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

For Next Week: Read Luke 3:1-6

Study 4: Luke 3:1-6

The Song of John the Baptist

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully.

1. When did all this happen? Why the detail?

Who is 'timing' all this?

2. What was John the Baptist's message?
3. Where does Luke see John fitting into God's plan?

Deeper and Wider

1. Read Isaiah 40:1-31. This gives the context for this message about John. What is Isaiah saying about the LORD and his purposes?
2. Read Luke 3:7-20. What does John preach and what is the response?

Apply

1. How is John the Baptist a model for us as we speak about salvation through Jesus?
2. How will 'all mankind see God's salvation'?

For Meditation

Vs 6 "And all mankind will see God's salvation.

To follow up: Read Luke's Gospel right through.