

“There was in the days of *Herod*, the king of Judea, a certain priest named *Zacharias*, of the course (class) of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was *Elizabeth*.

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

“And they had no child, because that *Elizabeth* was barren, and they both were now well stricken (advanced) in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed (performed) the priest's office before God in the order of his class, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.



“And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared to him an *angel* of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when *Zacharias* saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell on him. But the *angel* said to him, **Fear not,** *Zacharias*: for your prayer is heard; and your wife *Elizabeth* shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name *John*. And you shall have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of

the Lord and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the *Holy Ghost*, even from his mother's womb.

“And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of *Elijah*, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready

A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD.

“And *Zacharias* said to the *angel*,

By what shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well advanced in years.

“And the *angel* answering said to him,

I am *Gabriel*, that stands in the presence of God; and am sent to speak to you, and to show you these glad tidings. And behold, you shall be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because you believed not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

“And the people waited for *Zacharias*, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak to them:

and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. And it came to pass that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife *Elizabeth* conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

Thus, has the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

“And in the sixth month the *angel Gabriel* was sent from God to a city of *Galilee*, named *Nazareth*, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was *Joseph*, of the house of *David*; and the virgin's name was *Mary*. And the *angel* came to her, and said, ‘Hail, you that are highly favored, the Lord is with you: blessed are you among women.’

“And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying and cast (sowed) in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the *angel* said to her,

Fear not, *Mary*: for you have found favor with God. And behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS.

“He shall be great and shall be called THE SON OF THE HIGHEST:

and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father *David*:

And HE SHALL REIGN over the house of *Jacob* forever;

and of His Kingdom THERE SHALL BE NO END.

“Then said *Mary* to the *angel*,

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

“And the *angel* answered and said to her,

The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore, also that Holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the SON OF GOD.

And behold, your cousin *Elizabeth*, she has also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

“And *Mary* said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it to me according to your word. And the *angel* departed from her.

“And *Mary* arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered the house of *Zacharias*, and saluted *Elizabeth*. And it came to pass that, when *Elizabeth* heard the salutation of *Mary*, the baby leaped in her womb; and *Elizabeth* was filled with the *Holy Ghost*: And she spoke out with a loud voice, and said,

‘Blessed Are You Among Women and Blessed is the Fruit of Your Womb. And for what reason is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of your salutation sounded in my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for JOY. And Blessed is She that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. MY SOUL DOES MAGNIFY THE LORD, And My spirit has rejoiced in GOD MY SAVIOR. For he has regarded the low estate of his

handmaiden: for, behold, from time forward all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty has done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He has showed strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant *Israel*, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spoke to our fathers, to *Abraham*, and to his seed forever.’

“And *Mary* abode with her about three months and returned to her own house. Now *Elizabeth's* full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had shown great mercy on her; and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him *Zacharias*, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, **Not so, but he shall be called *John*.**“ And they said to her, There is none of your kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would desire to name him. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, **His name is *John*.** And they all marveled. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, and praised *God*. And fear came on all that dwelled around them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, **What manner of child shall this be!** And the hand

of the Lord was with him. And his father *Zacharias* was filled with the *Holy Ghost*, and prophesied, saying, ‘*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*; for he has visited and redeemed his people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his *Servant David*.’ As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father *Abraham*, that he would grant to us, That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And you, child, shall be called THE PROPHET OF THE HIGHEST: for you shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of SALVATION to his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God. Whereby the dayspring from on high has visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 2:1, 3–6 “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from *Caesar Augustus*, that all the world should be taxed— “And all went to be taxed, everyone into his

own city. And *Joseph* also went up from *Galilee*, out of the city of *Nazareth*, into Judea, to the city of *David*, which is called *Bethlehem*.

“(Because he was of the house and lineage of *David*;) To be taxed with *Mary* his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.”

John 3:16–21 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be SAVED.

“He that believes on him is not condemned:

But he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

“And this is the condemnation,

That light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

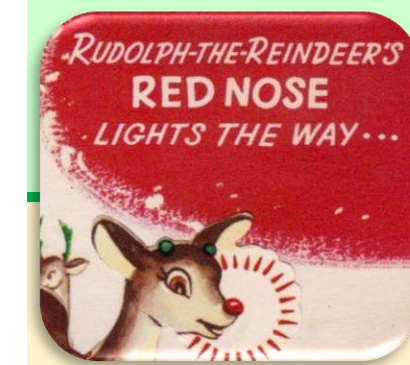
“For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Jesus: “Light has come into the world – I am the light of the world – the light of life.” (John 3:19, 8:12)

PART 2 Follow the Light Num 24:17




“There shall come a Star out of *Jacob*, and a Scepter shall rise out of *Israel*.”

Matthew 1:18–25 “Now the birth of *Jesus Christ* was on this wise: When,

as his mother *Mary* was espoused to *Joseph*, before they came together,

she was found with child of the *Holy Ghost*. Then *Joseph* her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was intending to put her away privately. But while he thought about these things, behold, the *angel* of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying,

 **Joseph**, you son of *David*, **fear not** to take to you *Mary* your wife: for that which is **conceived** in her is of the **Holy Ghost**. And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call his name **JESUS**: for he shall **SAVE** his people **FROM** their **SINS**.”

“**Now all this was done**, that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken of the Lord **by the prophet**, saying,

‘**Behold, A Virgin** shall be with *child*, and shall bring forth a *son*, and they shall call his name **Emmanuel**, which being interpreted is, **God with Us**.’

“**Then Joseph** being raised from sleep did as the *angel* of the Lord had explained to him, and took unto him his wife:

And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name **JESUS**.

Luke 2:7–39 “**And she brought forth her firstborn son**, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was **no room for them in the inn**. And there were in the same country **shepherds** abiding in the field, **keeping watch** over their flock by night. And, lo, **the angel** of the Lord came on them, and **the glory of the Lord shone round about them**: and they were sore afraid. And **the angel** said to them,



‘**Fear not**: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of **great joy**, which shall be **to all people**. For **to you, is born** this day in the city of David **A Savior, which is Christ** the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you; Ye **shall find the baby** wrapped in swaddling clothes, **lying in a manger**.’



“**And suddenly** there was with **the angel** a multitude of the heavenly host praising *God*, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

“**And it came to pass**, as **the angels** were gone away from them into heaven, **The Shepherds** said one to another,

Let us now go even to *Bethlehem*, and see this thing, which is come to pass, which the *Lord* has made known to us.

“**And they came with haste**, and found *Mary*, and *Joseph*, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, **they made known abroad** the saying which was told them **concerning this child**. And all they that heard it wondered about those things which were told them by the shepherds. But *Mary* kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And **The Shepherds Returned, Glorifying, and Praising God** for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told to them. And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of **The Child, His Name Was Called Jesus**, which was so named of the *angel* before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of her purification according to


the law of *Moses* were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.

(**As it is written** in the law of the Lord, ‘Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.’)

And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord,

A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

“**And behold**, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was *Simeon*; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the *Holy Ghost* was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the *Holy Ghost*, that **he should not see death, before** he had seen **THE LORD’S CHRIST**. And he **came by the Spirit** into the temple: and when **the parents brought in** the child *Jesus*, to do for him **after the custom of the law**, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed *God*, and said,

 ‘**Lord, now let us thou your servant** depart in peace, *according to your word*: **For my eyes** have seen **Your Salvation**, which **you have prepared** before the face of all people; **A light to lighten the Gentiles**, and the glory of **your people Israel**.

“**And Joseph and his mother marveled** at those things which were spoken of him. And *Simeon* **blessed** them, and said to *Mary* his mother,

‘**Behold, this child** is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yes, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also,) **That the thoughts of many Hearts May be Revealed**.’

“**And there was one Anna**, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which **departed not from the temple**, but **served God** with fastings and **prayers** night and day.


And she, coming in that instant **gave thanks likewise to the Lord**, and **spoke of him to all of them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem**.

“**And when they had performed all things according to the law** of the Lord, they returned into *Galilee*, to their own city *Nazareth*.”

Matthew 2:1–23 “**Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem** of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came **wise men** from the east **to Jerusalem**, saying,

Where is He that is Born King of the *Jews*? For we have seen **his star** in the east and have come to **Worship Him**.

“**When Herod the king** had heard these things, **he was troubled, and all Jerusalem** with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, **he demanded** of them where *Christ* should be born. And they said to him,

 ‘**In Bethlehem** of Judea: for thus it is written **by the prophet**, and thou *Bethlehem*, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the princes of Judah: for **Out of you shall come a Governor**, that shall rule my people Israel.’

“**Then Herod**, when he had **secretly** called the **wise men**, enquired of them diligently what **time the star appeared**. And he sent them to *Bethlehem*, and said,

Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, **that I may come and worship him** also.

“**When they had heard the king**, they departed; and, lo, the **star**, which they saw in the east, **went before them**, till it came and **stood over** where **the young child** was. When they saw the **star**, **They Rejoiced with Exceeding Great Joy**. And when they had come into the **house**, they **saw the young child** with *Mary* his mother, and fell down, **And Worshipped Him**: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented to him gifts; **gold**, and **frankincense**, and **myrrh**. And being **warned of God** in a



dream that they should not return to *Herod*, **they departed** into their own country **another way**. And when they departed, behold, the **angel** of the Lord appeared to *Joseph* in a **dream**, saying,

Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and **flee into Egypt**, and you be there until

I bring you word: for **Herod will seek** the young child **to destroy him**.

“**When he arose, he took** the young child and his mother by night, and **departed into Egypt**: And was there until the death of *Herod*: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord **by the prophet**, saying,

Out of Egypt have I called my son.

“**Then Herod**, when he saw that he was mocked of the *wise men*, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and **slew all the children** that were in *Bethlehem*, and in all the coasts thereof, from **two years old and under**, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the *wise men*. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken **by Jeremiah the prophet**, saying,

In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

“**But when Herod** was dead, behold, an *angel* of the Lord appears in a **dream** to *Joseph* in *Egypt*, saying,

‘**Arise**, and take the young child and his mother, and **go into** the land of *Israel*: for They are dead which sought the young child’s life.’

And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and **came into the land of Israel**. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father *Herod*, he was afraid to go there:

“**Notwithstanding**, being warned of God in a **dream**, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

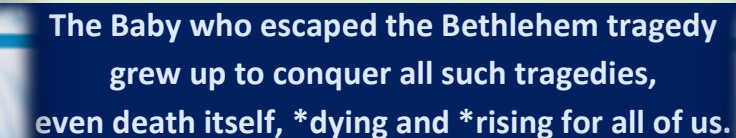
And he came and dwelt in a city called **Nazareth**: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken **by the prophets**, He shall be called a *Nazarene*.”

Luke 1:80 “**And the child grew**, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing to Israel.”

John 1:2-17, 29–37 “**The same** was in the beginning with *God*. All things were made by him; and without him there was not anything made that was made. **In him was life; and the life was the light of men**. And the **light** shines in darkness; and **the darkness comprehended it not**.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was *John*. The same **came** for a witness, **to bear witness** of the **Light**, **that all men through him might believe**. He was not that *Light* but was sent to bear witness of that *Light*. That was **the true Light, which lights every man** that comes into the world. He was in the *world*, and **the world was made by him**, and **the world knew him not**. He came to his own, and **his own (Israel) received him not**. **But as many** (Jew and Gentile) as **received him**, to them **he gave power to become the Sons of God**, even to them that **believe** on his Name: Which were **born**, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God**. **And the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) **full of grace and truth**. *John* bare witness of him, and cried, saying, “**This was he** who I spoke of, He that comes after me is **preferred before me**: for he was before me. And of **his fulness** have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but **Grace and Truth Came by Jesus Christ**.”

The following are thoughts shared by a family member gleaned from the devotional “**Our Daily Bread**” titled “**Celebrating Jesus**.” “A line from a familiar Christmas carol keeps ringing in my mind: ‘**The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight**.’ **Dreams and grief** are crucial themes of the Christmas story found in the Gospel of Matthew. In a literal **dream**, **an angel** explained the **miraculous conception** of Jesus to Joseph (1:20). Another **dream** warned the Magi to avoid the murderous Herod (2:12). And **an angel** told Joseph in a **dream** to flee to Egypt with the baby Jesus (2:13). We welcome the **dreams** of Christmas. The sadness, however, intrudes like a rude guest. **Rachel weeps** is representing Israel—**Jeremiah 31:16**, for soon after the first Christmas a paranoid king, (Herod) would slaughter many helpless children. It’s a scene we yearn to see deleted from the story. Why must there be so much sadness in this, the greatest of all stories? **JESUS**, himself is **the only satisfying answer** to that question.

 **The Baby who escaped the Bethlehem tragedy grew up to conquer all such tragedies, even death itself, *dying and *rising for all of us.**

Again,

“The Hopes and Fears of All the Years Are Met in You Tonight.”

“And these things we write to you, that your **joy** may be full. This then is the message which we have **heard** of him, and **declare** to you, that God is **light**, and in him is no darkness at all. **If we say that we have fellowship with him**, and walk in darkness, **we lie**, and do not the truth: But **If we walk in the light**, as he is in the **light, we have fellowship** one with another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin**. **If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves**, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**. **If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”** (1 John 1:4–10) **“When he (Jesus) saw their faith, he said to him, ‘Man, your sins are forgiven you.’** (Luke 5:20) **“Brethren, I (Paul) declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which ye also are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached to you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas (Peter) —the twelve —above five hundred brethren —James —all the apostles —last of all —me (Paul) also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles ... not worthy ... because I persecuted the church of God.”** (1 Cor 15:1–9)

HOW TO BE SAVED – FORGIVEN OF ALL YOUR SIN

Seek God with all your heart through the reading & hearing of his word.

God is speaking here, in this verse, to the Israelites scattered in other nations:

“**And there** ye shall serve gods, **the work of men’s hands**, wood and stone, which neither **see**, nor **hear**, nor **eat**, nor **smell**. But, if from there you shall **seek** the LORD your God, you shall **find** him, if you **seek** him with **all your heart** and with **all your soul**” (Deut 4:29). “**And ye shall seek me, and find me**, when ye shall search for me with **all your heart**” (Jer 29:13). “**But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**” (Heb 11:6) **Jesus says to the Jews:** “I know that ye are Abraham’s seed; but ye **seek** to kill me, because my **word** has no place in you” (John 8:37). **Paul: “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”** (Rom 10:17). **James:** “**Of his own will he gave birth to us with the word of truth**, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures —**Put away** all moral filthiness and the abundance of naughtiness, and **receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls**” (Jam 1:18, 21). “**This is his (God the Father’s) commandment**, that we should **believe** on the name of his Son **Jesus Christ**, and **love** one another, as he gave us **commandment**. And he that keeps his **commandments** dwells in him, and he in him. And hereby **we know** that he abides in us, by the **Spirit** which he has given us” (1 John 3:23–24). **Jesus:** “**Truly, truly, I say to you, except a man be born of water (physical birth, mothers water sac) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said to you, ‘Ye must be born again’**” (John 3:5–7). **Scriptures - KJV Modified**

Gary Westgerdes, Celina OH, www.3keysofheaven.com

MERRY CHRISTMAS

**“For unto you is born this day
in the city of David, a Savior,
which is Christ the Lord.”**

(Luke 2:11)

PART 1 Believe in the miracle Isaiah 9:6



**“For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given and
the government shall
be on his shoulder: and
his name shall be called
Wonderful, Counsellor,
The Mighty God,
The Everlasting Father,
The Prince of Peace.”**

Matt 1:1, 15–17 **“The book of the generation of JESUS CHRIST,** the son of **David**, the son of **Abraham**. **Abraham**, fathered **Issac**; **Issac**, fathered **Jacob**; **Jacob**, fathered **Judas**, and his brethren . . . and **Matthan**, fathered **Jacob**; and **Jacob**, fathered **Joseph** the husband of **Mary**, of who was born **Jesus**, who is called **Christ**. So, all the generations from Abraham to David are **fourteen** generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are **fourteen** generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are **fourteen** generations.” **Luke 1:1–79** **“Forasmuch** as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things **which are most surely believed among us**, even as they delivered them to us, which from the beginning were **eyewitnesses** and **ministers of the word**. **It seemed good** to me also, **Having Had Perfect Understanding** of all things from the very first, to **write** to you in order, most excellent Theophilus, **that you** might know the **certainty** of those things, in which you have been instructed.

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Jesus’s death, burial and resurrection