

24 December 2024

Christmas Eve

The Light of Salvation Has Dawned

Ps. 89.1-4, 19-37

Isaiah 52.1-10

Matt.1.18-end

Key Verse - *Matthew. 1.21 "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."*

Christmas Eve is a sacred time of reflection, filled with wonder and hope. On this holy night, we gather to celebrate the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. This event, foretold by prophets and sung by angels, marks the beginning of God's ultimate plan of redemption for humanity. It is a night that reminds us of God's faithfulness, His power to redeem, and His invitation for all to partake in His salvation. From the announcement of His coming in Psalm 89 to the prophetic vision in Isaiah 52, and the fulfilment recorded in Matthew 1, we will explore three dimensions of the Christmas story: God's Faithfulness, God's Redemption, and God's Presence.

1. God's Faithfulness: The Covenant of a Saviour (Psalm 89:1-4, 19-37)

Psalm 89 opens with a declaration of God's steadfast love and faithfulness: *"I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth, I will make your faithfulness known through all generations."* (v. 1) This psalm recalls God's covenant with David, promising a ruler from his lineage who would establish an eternal kingdom. Jesus is the fulfilment of this covenant, the long-awaited Messiah who came to reign not just over Israel but overall creation. Imagine a promise made to you generations ago, passed down through centuries, and finally fulfilled in your lifetime. This is the magnitude of what the birth of Jesus signifies - a promise made to David a thousand years before, kept by God in Bethlehem. God's faithfulness in keeping His promises gives us hope. In a world where human commitments often falter, the birth of Jesus reminds us that God's word never fails. The Christmas story is a testimony that God's love is unwavering, His timing is perfect, and His purposes are sure.

2. God's Redemption: The Beautiful Feet of Good News (Isaiah 52:1-10)

Isaiah paints a vivid picture of redemption: *"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'"* (v. 7) On Christmas Eve, we celebrate the arrival of the ultimate bearer of good news - Jesus Christ. He came to proclaim liberty to the captives, peace to the broken-hearted, and salvation to all who believe. Consider the joy of receiving a long-awaited letter from a loved one bringing good news. Now magnify that feeling infinitely. The birth of Jesus is not just good

news; it is *the best news*. It declares that God Himself has come to redeem His people from sin and restore what was broken. The world waited in darkness for this moment. Isaiah's prophecy reminds us that redemption is not merely a future hope but a present reality in Christ. Jesus came to set us free from sin and death, and His birth is a declaration of peace, joy, and victory over evil.

3. God's Presence: Emmanuel, God with Us (Matthew 1:18-25)

The Gospel of Matthew records the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy: "*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us).*" (v. 23) In Jesus, God became flesh and dwelt among us. The infinite Creator entered our finite world to share in our joys, sufferings, and struggles. His presence brings comfort, strength, and hope, assuring us that we are never alone. Think of a parent sitting beside their child in the dark, offering reassurance simply by being there. In the same way, the presence of Jesus dispels our fears and brings us peace. Emmanuel is not just a name; it is a promise that God is with us in every moment. On this Christmas Eve, let us remember that Jesus did not come to observe humanity from a distance. He came to walk among us, to experience our pain, and to bring us into a loving relationship with God. His presence is the greatest gift of Christmas.

Conclusion:

As we reflect on God's faithfulness, redemption, and presence, Christmas Eve becomes more than a historical celebration. It is a reminder of the eternal hope we have in Jesus. The birth of Christ is the light that pierces through the darkness, offering salvation and peace to all who believe. This evening, as we sing carols and light candles, let us open our hearts to the joy and wonder of Christ's birth. Let us carry the message of Emmanuel - God with us - to a world in need of His light. This Christmas Eve, let the light of Christ's birth illuminate your heart, reminding you of God's unchanging faithfulness, His redeeming love, and His abiding presence.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, On this holy night, we thank You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. We praise You for Your faithfulness, Your redemption, and Your abiding presence with us. As we celebrate His birth, fill our hearts with joy and our lives with purpose. Help us to share the good news of salvation with others, bringing light and hope to those in darkness. May the peace of Christ rule in our hearts tonight and always. Let us walk in the light of His love, glorifying You in all we do. In the precious name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.