

**Announcing the Advent
Advent 2021**

**Announcing the Advent to the World
Week 3**

The Opening Hymn: LSB 332, "Savior of the Nations, Come"

The Invocation

The Psalmody: Psalm 24

P: The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,

C: For he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

P: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

C: He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

P: He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

C: Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

C: Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

C: Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!

An Advent Reading

A Hymn: LSB 349, "Hark the Glad Sound"

The Study: *"Announcing the Advent to the World"* (Adapted from Announcing the Advent by Curtis Moermond, CPH:1991)

In this study we will hear of God making an announcement of His Son's birth to two godly temple dwellers, Simeon and Anna, who like Mary and the shepherds, told others the Good news of our Savior's birth.

The task of sharing the announcement of our Lord's advent is done by people, one to another. As strange as that may seem, God is counting on you and me and other disciples of Jesus Christ to do just that. We are to *"Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere!"*

But, first, let's back up and listen to the happenings in the temple in Jerusalem.

The Announcement

Read Luke 2:22-35, ²² *When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord* ²³ *(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"),* ²⁴ *and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."* ²⁵ *Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.* ²⁶ *It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.* ²⁷ *Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,* ²⁸ *Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:* ²⁹ *"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.* ³⁰ *For my eyes have seen your salvation,* ³¹ *which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:* ³² *a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."* ³³ *The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.* ³⁴ *Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,* ³⁵ *so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."*

What were Mary and Joseph doing in Jerusalem?

What do we learn about Simeon? (vs 25)

What does it mean when it says that Simeon is waiting for the "consolation" of Israel? (cf. Isaiah 40:1-2)

What has the Holy Spirit revealed (announced) to Simeon? How does the Holy Spirit make sure that Simeon doesn't miss the Child? (27)

What does Simeon do when we sees the infant Jesus? (28-32)

What is Simeon's hymn commonly called? Why is it appropriate for us to sing Simeon's words following the Lord's Supper?

What is the significance of the word, "NOW?"

What does Simeon mean when he says, “**Let thy servant depart (or be dismissed) in peace?**”

The Christ Child – the consolation of Israel – is not just for Simeon but for all people, Luke emphasizes that “*salvation is for all people.*” More specifically, Jesus Christ is the Savior of all people! (Cf. Isaiah 52:10; Psalm 98:3)

Jesus is the light (*phos*). An image that makes us think of John’s opening words in his gospel (see John 1:6-13).

What is Simeon’s message to Mary? (See Verses 34-35)

Tragically, many in Israel will not believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior. What is the consequence of their unbelief? (see Luke 20:17-18; 1 Cor. 1:23; 1 Peter 2:6-8)

But for others, the Messiah will be “*An rising*” ... a “*resurrection!*” 😊

Simeon gets even more personal. To Mary he delivers somber news: “*a sword will pierce your own soul too.*” To what is Simeon referring?

Read 2:36-40, “*There was also a prophetess name, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. 38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.*”

What do we learn about Anna?

How is Simeon like the angels and Anna like the shepherds? But how is Anna’s message different from the shepherds’ message?

The Reaction

1. What is Mary and Joseph’s reaction to Simeon’s words? (33)

2. Simeon prophesied that many would speak against Jesus and His message. What are some of the objections raised in Jesus' day? What are some of the objections to Jesus and His message today?

Accusations against Jesus in His day?

Objections to Jesus and His message today:

The Response

Thirty years pass before Jesus begins His public ministry and mission. Were there still people who would recall that many years earlier there had been shepherds in Bethlehem who had spoken of the Messiah being born? Would some, maybe remembering what their parents told them, recall an old man and woman in the temple announcing the birth of the Savior of the world, the One who is a *"light to the Gentiles and for the glory to your people Israel?"*

There were those who, like Simeon and Anna, had closed their eyes in peace, knowing that God had kept His promise. For faith relies not upon what is seen. For them, and for us, God's Word is sufficient.

My Response

As we near the close of the Advent season, we come face-to-face with the fact that our response to God's incarnation is to be a response of faith. We cannot see the birth of Jesus simply as a historical event or a sentimental fable. The Incarnation took place for **"MY salvation."** So great is God's love, not for an abstract, faceless world, but for **me**, a lost and condemned sinner, that he was willing to go to such ends so that *"I may be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness."* (Luther's Small Catechism)

But the CHILD – our salvation – is NOT JUST FOR ME and He's not just for YOU. He is the LIGHT ... He is the SALVATION of all nations – Jew and Gentile!

So, how might we share this Good News? The Consolation of Israel? The Redemption of Jerusalem?

For your reflection: How might you share the Gospel with individuals who are faced with the following situations?

Situation 1: An individual/family is faced with financial hardship due to a loss of a job or family illness. As Christmas approaches, the thoughts of gifts seem only a dream. What might you say? What might you do?

Situation 2: An individual/family in which there has been a diagnosis of an incurable disease or debilitating accident or health problem. Perhaps the word “*terminal*” might enter the situation. Family members now face a changing life situation. What might you say? What might you do?

Situation 3: An individual/family in which there has been a recent death and now they are faced with putting back the pieces. What might you say? What might you do?

Situation 4: An individual/family often separated, perhaps for long periods of time, because of work or military obligations. It means children without a parent and/or a spouse without a mate. What might you say? What might you do?

Situation 5: A single parent who must leave her/his children with someone else because of work obligations. What might you say? What might you do?

We go to those closest to us and we share ... we declare ... we gossip ... the good news of Jesus.

Go tell it on the mountain ... that Jesus Christ is born!!!!

The Offering

The Prayers and the Lord’s Prayer

The Benediction

P: Now to Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy ...

C: To the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

The Closing Hymn: LSB 355, “O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide”

Join us for the Christmas Services

December 24 at 7:00 p.m. “The Color of Christmas is White!”

December 25 at 10:00 a.m. “God’s Christmas Gift to You: A White Stone!”

December 26 at 9:30 a.m. “A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols”

December 31 at 7:00 p.m. “The Color of Christmas is Gold!”

