

“Expecting Christmas”- 11/29/20

I. Christmas is found in your greatest _____.

In the days when Herod was king of Judea there was a certain priest whose name was Zachariah, of the daily service (the division) of Abia; and his wife was also a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they both were righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. But they had no child, for Elizabeth was barren; and both were far advanced in years.

- Luke 1:5-7 (Amplified Version)

II. Our _____ is not always God’s _____.

Children are a heritage from the Lord,
offspring a reward from him.

Like arrows in the hands of a warrior
are children born in one’s youth.

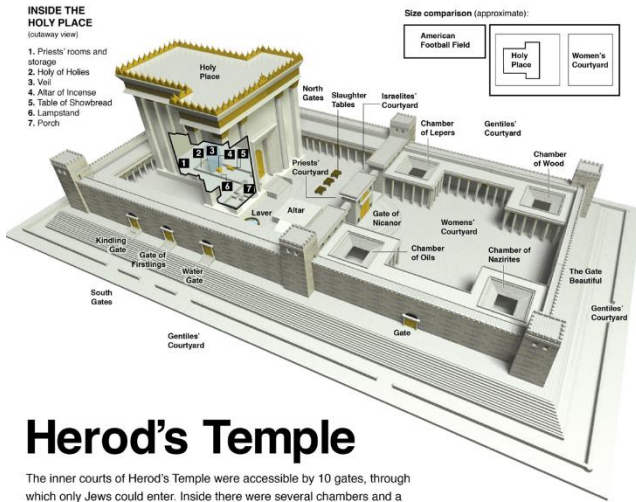
Blessed is the man
whose quiver is full of them.

They will not be put to shame...

-Psalms 127:3-5

Now while on duty, serving as priest before God in the order of his division, As was the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter [the sanctuary of] the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And all the throng of people were praying outside [in the court] at the hour of incense [burning]. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zachariah saw him, he was troubled, and fear took possession of him. But the angel said to him, Do not be afraid, Zachariah, because your petition was heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you must call his name John [God is favorable] and you shall have joy and exultant delight, and many will rejoice over his birth. For he will be great and distinguished in the sight of the Lord. And he must drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit even and from his mother’s womb. And he will turn back and cause to return many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will [himself] go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn back the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient and incredulous and unpersuadable to the wisdom of the upright [which is the knowledge and holy love of the will of God] –in order to make ready for the Lord a

people [perfectly] prepared [in spirit, adjusted and disposed and placed in the right moral state]. Luke 1:8-17



Herod's Temple

The inner courts of Herod's Temple were accessible by 10 gates, through which only Jews could enter. Inside there were several chambers and a courtyard where sacrifices were made. At one end was the holy place—a two-room sanctuary used by Jewish priests. The expansive building project of Herod's Second Temple and Temple Mount was completed in approximately AD 62–64, only to be destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

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Altar of Incense

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Altar of Burnt Offering

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III. What are you going to do with the _____?

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the father's to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Zechariah asked the angel, 'How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.' The angel answered, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time.' Luke 1:17-20

"He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers or else I will come and strike the land with a curse." Malachi 4:6

ANSWERS: Disappointments, Timing, Timing, Answer.

(All Scriptures are NIV unless otherwise noted.)