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Joyful Expectation of Christ's Coming

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READINGS
Old Testament : Jer. 33:10-16

Psalm : 68:11-20

Epistle : 1 Thess. 3: 6-13

Gospel : Lk. 1:39-45

Verse for meditation: "As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby

in my womb leaped for joy" (Lk. 1:44).

The advent of Jesus Christ has given hope and peace to the world. The coming of Jesus Christ had been foretold by the prophets (Acts 3:18, 10:13; Lk: 24: 44, 46, 47; Jn. 5:33). The birth of Christ, His ministry, His resurrection, his Second Coming – all these have been already prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. Therefore, the people of Israel were awaiting for the coming of the Messiah (Christ). As we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Christ, it is good to know that the coming of Christ is a joyful expectation of his people. Primarily, we meditate about the decision we ought to take at the coming of Christ. Secondly, we think of the joy of the fullness of the Holy Spirit that we receive the coming of people through the right relationships with other fellow beings. Finally, we meditate on the second coming of Christ also.

1. The coming of Christ: A Joyful experience (Jer. 33:10-16; 1 Thess. 3:6-11)

The coming of Christ has given joy to the whole world. 'A righteous branch sprout from David's line' is a matter of great joy to the people of Israel. Jeremiah says that very soon an optimistic day will break out to fulfill the prophecy (Jer. 33:10-16). This verse is seen on a prophetic utterance regarding the coming of Jesus Christ. The coming of Jesus Christ gives peace. To those who are without hope, it gives hope. Timothy who arrived from the church at Thessalonica shared good words about them to Paul and those words were comforting Paul. The testimony that they are strong in their faith in Jesus has made Paul rejoice. It gave a new life to Paul (1Thess. 3:6-13). As the coming of Timothy was a consolation both for Paul and the Church, all our relations and visits should become a cause for the sharing of the love and

comfort that Jesus gives.

2. The coming of Christ: Joy in the Holy Spirit

Lk.1:39-45 reports the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth. Mary journeyed from Nazareth and reached the house of Zechariah in Judah and met Elizabeth. She was filled with the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:41). The baby in the womb of Elizabeth leaped with joy (Lk. 1:44). As we are preparing to celebrate the advent of Jesus Christ, we should also meditate upon the joy of such blessed friendly relationships and visits could bring to our lives. The joy we experience when two families meet together, the joy of the fullness of Spirit when two friends meet together. May God give us such experience!

3. The Second coming of Christ: The eternal Joy (1Thess. 3:13-18)

Another matter to be considered as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Christ is the return of the Lord. The greatest hope of the Christian believers is that Christ will come again to collect unto him the Church. St. Paul expounds the second coming of Christ in 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:16-18 and 5:1-3. The Church believes that the Lord Jesus will come to the middle sky and reward his people on that day (Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; 2 Cor. 5:10). The Church affirms this faith through the words of both Apostles and Nicene Creeds. The meditation about the coming of Christ should not be forgotten after the Christmas celebrations. Rather we should be encouraged to wait upon daily for the coming of the Lord.

Prayer

God of all places and all times, In whose Son we find joy, hope, peace and salvation, Help us to pray and long for the fullness of salvation and grant us the grace to live the gladness of Your salvation all through our lives In order that You would find us blameless and holy in Your presence when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones, Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever more. Amen