

## ***Advent Meditation Moments***

**This Advent Time of Meditation is meant to offer you an opportunity to escape from the mad rush of the world for a few moments, and to focus on God, God's attentiveness to you, and your response to God's activity in your life. Each week Beautiful Savior will offer a different meditation, based on the Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, hallmarks of the abundant life that Jesus offers us.**

### **ADVENT III: JOY**

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest. . . . For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 9:3, 6-7

**Context:** Modern nations don't hold the mortgage on screwed-up politics. In Isaiah's time, Assyria was threatening the northern kingdom of Israel; that king teamed up with another king and put the squeeze on King Ahaz of the southern kingdom to join against Assyria. Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help. It was a lose-lose proposition, and the prophet Isaiah spoke out against this insanity. Yet his forthtelling and foretelling were tempered by the announcement of great joy—the birth of a new king who would be God's instrument of justice and mercy. Christians have read these verses in

the light of Jesus---God's ultimate Good Shepherd, who even unto death loved us.

***To think about:*** There is a difference between happiness and joy. Happiness is what we all can experience gathered around the Christmas tree. Especially as kids it's a magical time of receiving gifts, and a time to build memories for a lifetime. But life isn't always so kind, and happiness can dissolve as the years plod on, and cynicism can rob us of that feeling of wellbeing. Joy, however, is based upon our relationship with God in Jesus---joy arises from trusting in God's presence and promises, not from life going well. It's a permanent state of being, not because we are always "happy" with God, but rather because God's promises and presence are sure.

***Psalm of Joy: 100***

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

Know that the LORD is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.

For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

***Closing Prayer***

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us---our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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## Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee



1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!  
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,  
 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.  
 stars and an - gels sing a-round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - 'ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,  
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 chant - ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in thee.  
 teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852–1922

Music: HYMN TO JOY, Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827, adapt.

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## *Joy*

From *Opportunity IV*, no. 26 by Clarissa Scott Delany

*Joy shakes me like the wind that lifts a sail,  
Like the roistering wind  
That laughs through stalwart pines.  
It floods me like the sun  
On rain-drenched trees  
That flash with silver and green.  
I abandon myself to joy —  
I laugh — I sing.  
Too long have I walked a desolate way,  
Too long stumbled down a maze  
Bewildered.*

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Clarissa Scott Delany,

born in 1901,

was a poet, essayist, and social worker

associated with the Harlem Renaissance movement.

She died in 1927.