

Bible Reading Plan Week 44

Day	Bible Passage	Pray for
November 26, 2017	Mark 6-7	Serbia
November 27, 2017	Mark 8-9	Seychelles
November 28, 2017	Mark 10-11	Sierra Leone
November 29, 2017	Mark 12-13	Singapore
November 30, 2017	Mark 14	Slovakia
December 01, 2017	Mark 15-16	Slovenia
December 02, 2017	Luke 1-2	Solomon Islands

BIRTHDAY LIST DECEMBER 2017

ARON ABRAHAM	12/03	ALINA BENLY	12/06
DAVID PRINCE	12/17	JEFFREY THOMAS	12/21
JENCIL JOSEPH	12/24	JOSHUA MATHEW	12/260
CYRIL DANIELKUTTY	12/27	SARA WILSON	12/29

Upcoming Events

December 18-29 Fasting Prayer
 December 30 - Golden Jubilee Thanksgiving Service
 December 31 - Watch Night Service
 January 14 - Annual Business Meeting

INDIA CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

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WELCOME TO
 ICA SUNDAY SERVICE
 November 26, 2017



WEEKLY ICA VOICE

THIS WEEK'S MEETING

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER @ 07:30 PM AT ICA
 FRIDAY - FASTING AND PRAYER @ 10:30 AM AT ICA
 SATURDAY—PRAYER MEETING @ 07:00 PM AT ICA

Ushers: Thomas Kurian & Lesley Abraham

CHURCH HOME TEAM IN CHARGE THIS WEEK :
 George Johannan & Family

WEEK OF 12/03/2017
 Sam Thomas & Family

THE CITY OF NAZARETH

Rev. Dr. Wilson Varkey

E. Nazareth, the Home of Jesus

At the time of Jesus' birth, Herod the great was the king of Judea. Gospel of Matthew chapter 2 confirms the historical records of Herod's paranoia by describing the slaughter in Bethlehem to eliminate any future king, as well as the angel's warning to Joseph to take Jesus to Egypt for protection. As noted earlier, during the reign of Hasmonian dynasty, Herod's grandfather and father held prominent political offices in Judea and established close relations with the Romans, the unquestioned world power during that time. Meanwhile, a Parthian invasion in 40 BC brought another change to the country. Antigonus, a rival Hasmonean, became the king of Judea with the support of the Parthians, and Herod had to flee. He left his family in the fortress of Masada and went to Rome. There, Roman leaders Antony (c. 81-30 BC) and Octavian (64 BC - 14 AD), the future Augustus, accepted him, and the Senate named him the king of Judea. King Herod was not a Jew and therefore the Jews did not accept Herod as their king. However, he used his military power and defeated all uprisings. He was so paranoid about his questionable parentage and therefore he burned all the public genealogies of the Jews. His aim in doing such an act was that he would appear more legitimate if no one else could trace his roots. He was especially afraid of those who were descendants of the royal Davidic line.

At the death of Herod, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead" Matt. 2:20. So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, "He will be called a Nazarene" Lk. 2:23. After their flight from Herod to Egypt, they returned and resettled in Nazareth. Therefore, we can assume that Jesus grew up from some point in his childhood in this small village.

As any other Jewish villages, Nazareth was a town that eagerly waited to have the Son of God as one of its children. God in grace visited Nazareth and fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah. Based on the Gospel accounts, we have every reason to assume that Jesus grew in wisdom in Nazareth. It is in Nazareth Jesus started to live the "human experience" sheltered by the loving mother Mary and the caring father Joseph. As living with his parents in the small house in Nazareth, Jesus went to the Synagogue to study the Torah and the Prophets and to Praise the Father. One can also believe that Jesus engaged in the family business along with his father in Nazareth. Moreover, Jesus made pilgrim journeys to Jerusalem every year from Nazareth along with his friends and fami-

lies. As the appointed time of Jesus came to begin his public ministry, he left from Nazareth to go to the Judean desert and started to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God.

One of the disciples of Jesus is Nathanael who was very was contemptuous of Nazareth. According to Nathanael, there was nothing in the Old Testament, which foretold that God's chosen one would come from Nazareth Jn. 1:45-51. Nazareth had a very hostile response to Jesus as he began his ministry. It is evident from the incident that took place when Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth and taught there Lk. 4:29-30.

Although Nazareth did not accept Jesus and his teachings while he was alive, the people of Nazareth kept alive the tradition of the house where the Annunciation took place after his death and resurrection in Jerusalem. Early Christians was very familiar with Nazareth and the place of annunciation. Moreover, the next kin of Jesus Christ, Joseph and Mary were also familiar with the events took place in the life of Joseph and Mary in Nazareth. Therefore, the early Christians and the next kin of Joseph and Mary preserved it from destruction. Those who visit Nazareth today can bow in silence to hear the "voice" announcing to Mary and kneel down and meditate about the great "mystery of love" that evolved on and around the unknown town.

F. Nazareth Today

Today Nazareth is a busy town with a population made up of Christians and Moslems. Once unimportant and contemptuous city has become the political and administrative capital of Galilee today. On the outskirts of the historic town a "new Nazaret" (Nazareth Illit) has grown. Dominating the skyline of this low lying town is the dome over the site of the Annunciation, a gem of architecture which the Franciscans, through the generous help of the Christians from all over the world has put up to mark this holy place. Moreover, Nazareth is a home to at least 23 monasteries and churches today. Many of the older churches are located in the old city. There are a number of mosques also in Nazareth in the center of Nazareth's old market. One of the main attractions of Nazareth is the church of Annunciation.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**
- **HEALING**
- **FINANCIAL SECURITY**
- **MARRIAGE OF CHILDREN**