



And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel (Luke 1:80).

Another challenging year.....hmmmmm.

To my surprise, friends, this last verse of Chapter I in Luke refers to John the Baptist, and is echoed in descriptions of Samuel's development, as well as Jesus' in Luke 2:52. Are you surprised as you read it saying, "I'd knew I had heard that phrase before?" Truth is Luke's chronicle is page-turning. The excitement builds and it is history in a nutshell. But I am getting ahead of myself in my excitement!

Advent greetings, my treasured friends in Christ and faith family, this first week of our much-anticipated Advent Season~2021. If the trumpets were to sound today, for the end of yet *another challenging year*, world-wide pandemic, I would sacrifice my hearing! Blast away! Sound the Good News. The Savior is Born!

BUT that is our job, in a very special way; we know He is coming, just not when. And we want to be prepared with hearts and minds on the right path. So, moving on with much "anticipation", I have chosen to take on a "personal challenge" that I heard of just days ago. They said: "If you read the Book of Luke, one chapter a day, it will take you up to Christmas Eve, all twenty-four chapters. And that Eve is perhaps my most favorite day of the year...to sit in my church, in the near-dark, with the full orchestra of trumpets sounding, and huge choirs heralding the coming of Christ.

Here I sit, with my weathered 50-year-old King James Bible cradled in my lap, and my trusty back-up Lutheran Study Bible, with its dependable footnotes for my study time. As you read Luke's carefully charted account, it becomes the most vivid story of Jesus' life as a "*journey*" of His birth to crucifixion; twenty-four chapters, birth to age 30, up to and including the Ascension. It is the journey I wish to take these next 23 days.

Wherever our Devotions take us, we read, mark, and inwardly digest them with **Comfort**.
Wherever we are and in whatever circumstances, we snuggle in the **Peace Everlasting**.
Whomever we gather with this season, may we carry the **Light of the Lord in us**.

I know, as a frustrated author myself, Luke would be delighted if we all would come to the New year 2022 with a great Review: "Hey! Did you get through Luke, all twenty-four chapters? It was a page-turner! Once I started it, I just couldn't put it down!"

I chose to close with this personal pleading: *Give me understanding, that I may keep your law, and observe it with my whole heart. Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it (Psalm 119.34~35).*

Holding you all close in my heart, Most Sincerely, Pat Reck, Leader Development