



The Barrenness of Christmas

Lesson 1

For Many People Christmas Is Far from Merry and Bright.

A “Blue Christmas” can be *musical, seasonal, historical, and even biblical!*

The holidays can be a time when *barrenness, sadness, and loneliness* are *acutely felt*.

A “Blue Christmas” brings a sense of *helplessness and hopelessness*. But with the Advent of Jesus Christ *there's hope of reversals that are humanly impossible!*

The Barrenness of Christmas

Barrenness at Christmas can be *physical, relational, financial, and spiritual*.

1. Five Barren **WOMEN** in the Old Testament.

- From the Beginning God has promised the blessing of fruitfulness to men and women in His image. *Genesis 1:26-28*
- After the Fall the LORD continued to promise fruitfulness and even promised the nation of Israel there would be no infertility in the Promise Land. *Genesis 1:26-28; 9:1, 7; 35:11; 49:22; Exodus 1:7; 23:26; Deuteronomy 7:12-14*
- Barrenness was seen as a curse and cause for great shame and even ridicule. It brought a deep sense helplessness and hopelessness. Yet godly couples still struggled with barrenness.

1. Abraham's wife, **SARAH**. *Genesis 11:30*
2. Isaac's wife, **REBEKAH**. *Genesis 25:21*
3. Jacob's wife, **RACHEL**. *Genesis 29:31ff.; 30:1-2*
4. Manoah's wife, **UNNAMED**. *Judges 13:2*
5. Elkanah's wife, **HANNAH**. *1 Samuel 1:2, 5*

2. Barrenness is **REVERSED** by the LORD.

- The barren womb is not **GREATER** than the Creator God.
- The barrenness is reversed into **FRUITFULNESS** by the LORD.
 1. Sarah bears a son, **ISAAC**, in her old age *according to God's promise*. *Genesis 18:14; 21:1-2*
 2. Rebekah bears a son, **JACOB**, *in answer to prayer*. *Genesis 25:21*
 3. Rachel bears a son, **JOSEPH**, *according to God's providence*. *Genesis 30:22-23*
 4. Manoah's wife bears a son, **SAMSON**, *according to God's promise*. *Judges 13:3, 24*
 5. Hannah bears a son, **SAMUEL**, *according to God's promise*. *1 Samuel 1:19-20*

3. The **SIGNIFICANCE** of Barren Women Conceiving Children.

➤ Conceptions by the barren showcase...

1. The LORD's **POWERFUL** acts to reverse the Fall.

Fruitfulness was God's **IDEAL** before the Fall.

Barrenness is a **RESULT** of the Fall and only God's grace reverses it – *not our worthiness*.

Fruitfulness of the womb can be reversed by God *but according to the His will and for His own purposes which we do not always understand*.

God's **power alone** overcomes sin's curse and **only God** can reverse the results of the Fall.
Genesis 18:14; 30:1-2

2. The LORD's **PROMISE** keeping attributes revealed by grace through faith.

The promise-keeping power of the Lord can reverse our barrenness into fruitfulness, so persevere by faith in His grace until He does!

*Persevering **FAITH** and **PRAYER** is the way forward through our barrenness.*

➤ Children of the barren showcase...

1. The LORD's promise of **REDEMPTION**.

Each son is reminder to *look back* to the promise of redemption in *Genesis 3:15*.

These five barren women lead us through God's Big Story!

2. The LORD's promise of a **RULER**.

Each son is reminder to *look forward* to the advent of the Ruler in *Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-7; 11:1-16*.

4. A Barren Woman and a Betrothed **VIRGIN** in the New Testament.

- Zacharias' barren wife, Elisabeth, bears a son, **JOHN** the Baptist. *Luke 1:5-7, 13-17*

- Joseph's betrothed wife, Mary, bears a son as a virgin, **JESUS** Christ our Lord. *Luke 1:30-38*

How Is This Possible? **NOTHING** is impossible with God!

What Is the Pattern? *The promise **KEEPING** power of Jesus Christ our Lord!*

In **JESUS** the *promise of redemption* is finally fulfilled. *Matthew 1:21*

In Jesus **CHRIST** is the *promise of a Ruler* is finally fulfilled. *Luke 1:30-33*

In Jesus Christ our **LORD** the *promise of the great reversal* is finally fulfilled. *Isaiah 49:22-26; 54:1-8*

The Advent of Christ Is Good News for the Barren!

Barrenness reversed into fruitfulness is humanly impossible unless the LORD Himself does it!

And the LORD is doing it, so shout for joy, O barren one! *Galatians 4:27*

Barrenness Becomes Fruitfulness by the Faithfulness of the LORD!

This pattern of reversal is *not a promise of physical fruitfulness* to all who are barren in this life. But this pattern of reversal is a promise of *spiritual fruitfulness* in the present and *total fruitfulness* in future as the Bride of Christ!
So shout for joy, O barren one and share the joy of reversals that are only possible in Jesus!