

Great Expectations

by Karen Maio

Expectations run high around the holidays--feasting on delicious meals and treats, going to fantastic parties, creating cherished family memories, receiving fabulous presents, attending or participating in awe-inspiring Christmas concerts, and the list goes on.



But, sometimes the turkey is dry and the cookies are a little burned. The wives at the office party spend the evening gossiping and looking disdainfully down at other wives' dresses. The son you haven't seen in a year is snowed in and won't be home for Christmas. Uncle John has way too much to drink...again. The sweater you circled in the ad is not in the box you open, just a set of pot holders and a new pizza pan. At the Christmas service, the soloist comes in at the wrong time, and flu has wiped out half the choir...

Expectations set high are generally hard to meet.

In Christ's day, the people of Israel had high expectations, too. They waited years for their Messiah, and when he finally came, they expected him to become their king, an earthly king who would reign over Israel and become again the powerful nation it was in King David's time. But, only a baby came...a baby who grew up in poverty and refused to be their earthly king.

While the Israelites' expectations went unmet, we can set some great expectations for this baby, and be assured they will be met. Because of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, we can expect our sins to be forgiven. *In him (Jesus) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.* (Ephesians 1:7) We can expect Jesus to return again someday and take us to our eternal home in heaven.

Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. (John 14:1-4)

What comfort and joy these expectations bring!

Try to relax your secular Christmas expectations this year (the lower they are, the higher the chance of them being met, and focus on our sacred ones instead. Cherish the baby Jesus and the gifts he brings. Celebrate the newborn King and have a merry Christmas!



Season: Thanksgiving/Advent

Video: 13. Christmas or Chaos-mas?

Devotions: 30. Given to You by Christine Wentzel

40. Easter Means You Are FREE! By the staff of A WORD for Women

Prayers: 2. Perseverance by Christine Wentzel

17. Advent by Carolyn Webb

20. Peace by Carolyn Webb

23. Transfiguration by Carolyn Webb

34. Focus by Janet Gehlhar

39. I Need You by Diana Kerr

Super Girl: 61. "There's no such thing as a free lunch." ...

Scripture References: Psalm 130:7; Matthew 6:12; Acts 2:38; Acts 20:28; Romans 2:4;

Romans 3:24-25; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:8, 14; Genesis 41:55; Matthew 12:46

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