



*The 2021 SAGE International
Meditations for the
First Week of Advent*



"The Son of God became a man to enable men to become the sons of God."

C. S. Lewis



The 2021 SAGE International Meditations for Advent

Volume 1

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Cover portrait of “*Moses Breaking the Tablets of the Law,*” from Exodus 32:19.
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Meditations for Advent

Many Christians throughout the world in an effort to center their lives in Christ divide the Church Calendar into special seasons and notable days. For generations, special devotional meditations have been developed to aid Christians in their personal and family worship. The start of the Christian calendar is a season called, *Advent*.

But, what is Advent? The Advent is a season that begins four Sundays prior to Christmas Day. It is a time to prepare our hearts for the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Most countries in the world mark their time by the birth of the Jesus. We call this year 2021 A.D. The *AD* is the Latin abbreviation for *Anno Domini*, which means “in the year of our Lord,” or, more fully, *anno domini nostri Jesu Christi*: “the year of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Jesus’ birth was the second most spectacular event in human history—the first being, Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. Because Jesus’ birth is so significant for all of us who know and trust Him as our Savior, it is appropriate to reflect seriously and reverently regarding this great event. Today in the West, cultural forces in many ways have corrupted this holiday by promoting it as a season of commercialism and emotional sentiment. Sometimes, there are civil restrictions, which ban nativity scenes and other religious symbols to be displayed in public places. Yet despite these subtle forms of persecution, true believers want to worship the Lord Jesus in “*spirit and in truth*”. The Advent season allows us to focus on the central theme of Scripture—Jesus, the Christ.

This booklet seeks to help families and individual believers in their private worship of our Lord and Savior during this special season. Each day during the Advent season, this booklet will help guides us with readings and meditations on a Biblical passage which inform us regarding Christ Jesus. When Jesus walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, “*He explained to them beginning with Moses and all the prophets, the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures*” (Luke 24:27). With this approach in mind, we will begin to look at the *Torah*, the Biblical books of Moses, where Jesus is taught, foreshadowed, and prophesied. In addition to the reading and meditation for, each day, we will include a prayer, a hymn, and a closing benediction.

May God richly bless you as together we draw close to our Lord Jesus Christ this holiday season. We at *SAGE International* gladly wish you a merry and very blessed Christmas!



The Biblical Accounts of Jesus' Birth

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all the people were on their way to register for the census, each to his own city. Now Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was betrothed to him, and was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock at night. And an angel of the Lord *suddenly* stood near them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. And *so* the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army *of angels* praising God and saying,

*“Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased.”*

When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem, then, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. When they had seen *Him*, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. And all who heard it were amazed about the things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

— Luke 2:1-20



Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, since he was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had thought this over, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a Son; and you shall name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” Now all this took place so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled: *“Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and they shall name Him Immanuel,”* which translated means, “God with us.” And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he named Him Jesus.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.” When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet,

*‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah;
For from you will come forth a Ruler
Who will shepherd My people Israel.’*

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.” After hearing the king, they went on their way; and behold, the star, which they had seen in the east, went on ahead of them until it came to a stop over the place where the Child was to be found. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And after they came into the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary; and they fell down and worshiped Him.



Then they opened their treasures and presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And after being warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the Magi left for their own country by another way.

Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to kill Him.”

So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod; this happened so that what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled: “*Out of Egypt I called My Son.*”

— *Mathew 1:19 - 2:15*



The First Sunday of Advent

November 28, 2021

The Pre-incarnate Christ

The Season of Advent

Advent means ‘*Coming.*’ The Apostle Paul taught that, “*when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son...*” (Galatians 4:4). For ages and ages, God’s people waited for the promised Messiah. Then at just the right time, God intervened in human history by sending Jesus, God incarnate, who was “*born of a woman, born under the Law.*”

The Apostle John began his account of the Gospel by reflecting on the *pre-existence of the Logos*, “the Word.” John helps point us back to the beginning of time and even before— to eternity past.

Scripture Reading

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” —Genesis 1:1

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” —John 1:1-5

Devotional

Children often ask, “Where did God come from?” or “Who created God?” The thought that God existed before time— from all eternity before creation, is hard for child to grasp. This glorious truth brings wonder and amazement into the minds and hearts of us all, who believe. Our awe-inspiring God is One being, yet He is revealed in the holy scriptures as three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. Furthermore, the Son is the Word, the divine *Logos*. He is the One who gives meaning to life. This Word, is the powerful Creator of time and space. He brought this world, and all the universe into existence by His spoken word. This powerful Creator, the Lord Jesus, also has purposed to bring light, understanding, and hope into our dark, confusing world. Not even the forces of evil can



stop Him. God remains faithful to His good, loving, and gracious purposes to those who believe Him, love Him, trust Him and serve Him. What a wonderful, mysterious, great Savior we love and adore! *“O come, O come Emmanuel!”*

Prayer

Almighty God,
Give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness,
And put upon us the armor of light,
Now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ
Came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day,
When He shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge
Both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal;
Through Him who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever. *Amen.*

A prayer by Thomas Cranmer, 1489—1556

An Advent Hymn— *“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (Stanza 1)*

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Latin Hymn, 1710. Translated by John Mason Neale, 1851

Benediction

O Heavenly Father, who by Thy Son created the world,
May You create life in us and remove the darkness of sin from our lives
And cause the light of Thy dear Son to shine within us,
So that we might know Thy peace and joy.
Now and forevermore at Thy coming.



Monday, November 29, 2021
The Promised Seed

Scripture Reading

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.” —Genesis 3:15

Devotional

After the terrible and corrupting fall of Adam and Eve into sin, God gave a promise of hope and deliverance. It was *Good News* declared in the midst of a cursed world. God promised ultimate victory over the devil, evil, sin, and death. The Messiah would do spiritual battle against the devil and “crush his head.” This victory would come at a painful price. The serpent would strike the heel, and cause the Savior’s painful, cursed death—the death of the cross. Yet, victory and Satan’s defeat was assured three days later!

Prayer

O Lord, Logos, Creator, Sustainer, Incarnate Savior,
We bow in humble reverence before Thy glorious majesty.
We plead for Thy mercy and grace this day,
And ask that we might bear the fruit of contrite humility
Before Your presence and in the presence of others.

An Advent Hymn— **“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (Stanza 2)**

*O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
Who in Thy tribes on Sinai’s height,
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud and majesty and awe.*
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Latin Hymn, 1710. Translated by John Mason Neale, 1851

Benediction

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.” —Matthew 5:3



Tuesday, November 30, 2021
The Passover Lamb

Scripture Reading —Exodus12:21-27

“Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts...” —Exodus 12:21-22

Devotional

One final and terrifying plague God would send upon Egypt that would fill up His cup of judgment upon Egypt and its gods. In judgement of Pharaoh’s hard heart, God would go out into the midst of the empire and every firstborn would die, excepting those households protected by the blood of the Passover Lamb. Blood from an unblemished lamb sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts delivered them as God passed through the land. The Apostle Paul refers to Christ as our saving Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7).

Prayer

O Lord, you are the Creator of all there is.
Yet in Your majestic glory, You take delight to care for us,
In Your gracious mercy, You save us.
For Jesus’ sake, keep us until You come again.

An Advent Hymn— “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (Stanza 3)

*O come, O come, Thou rod of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o’er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Latin Hymn, 1710. Translated by John Mason Neale, 1851

Benediction

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” — Matthew 5:4



Wednesday, December 1, 2021

The Tabernacle

Scripture Reading— Exodus 40:33-38

“Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up. For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.” —Exodus 40:36-38

Devotional

After Moses descended from Mt. Sinai with the two tablets of divine Law, he gave detailed instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle. This *Tent of Meeting* was where God’s presence, symbolized by the cloud and the pillar of fire, would sojourn in the midst of His people. This wilderness-wandering tabernacle was later replaced with the more settled presence of the Jerusalem Temple, first built by King Solomon. But, the tabernacle was a symbol of Christ, who spoke of His body as a temple (John 2:19-21). The Apostle John also taught that Jesus “tabernacled” among us (John 1:14).

Prayer

Lord and Savior of the world, have mercy on us, miserable offenders of Thy holy will.

For the sake of Jesus Christ, grant us your merciful forgiveness.

Shine upon us and our children the warmth of Thy grace.

An Advent Hymn— “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (Stanza 4)

O come, O come, Thou Dayspring on high,

And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;

Disperse the gloomy clouds of night

And death’s dark shadow’s put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Latin Hymn, 1710. Translated by John Mason Neale, 1851

Benediction

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5 (KJV)



Thursday, December 2, 2021

The Sacrificial Atonement

Scripture Reading— Leviticus 16:15-22

“Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat... Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness...” —Leviticus 16:15,21

Devotional

The most solemn and holy of days on the Hebrew calendar of ancient Israel was the annual Day of Atonement. With great ceremony the high priest would make appropriate sacrifices for himself, his household, and for the sins of the assembly of Israel. One goat was a burnt sacrificial offering, and another, the scapegoat, was sent into the wilderness carrying the iniquities into the wilderness to a solitary place (Lev. 16:20-22). This sacrificial offerings pointed to Christ, the ultimate and final sacrifice, *“having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time”* (Hebrews 10:12).

Prayer

Praise God, who has inaugurated for us an entrance before Him by the blood of Jesus.

An Advent Hymn— *“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”* (Stanza 5)

O come, O come, Thou Key of David, come

And open wide our heavenly home;

Make safe the way that leads on high

And close the path to misery

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Latin Hymn, 1710. Translated by John Mason Neale, 1851

Benediction

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied”

—Matthew 5:6



Friday, December 3, 2021

The Bronze Serpent

Scripture Reading— Numbers 21:4-9

“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live.’ ”

—Numbers 21:8

Devotional

Trials and tests were scattered along the pathway of the forty-year sojourn of Israel in the Sinai wilderness. God’s people were often impatient with the testing. They complained against Moses and against God. On one such occasion God disciplined and tested His people. Fiery serpents crawled from the wilderness to bite the Israelites, so many died. In repentance, the people asked for Moses to intercede. God told Moses to craft a bronze serpent, and mount it on a pole, so when the people looked in faith to the image they would be healed. Many years later, Jesus told Nicodemus, *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life”* (John 3:14-15).

Prayer

Surely, O Lord Jesus, you have borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;

You were pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities.

Praise be to our Triune God, who has forgiven our sins and given us life in Christ.

The Advent Hymn— *“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”* (Stanza 1)

*Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee,
Israel’s strength and consultation, hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear Desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

By Charles Wesley, 1744

Benediction

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” —Matthew 5:7



Saturday, December 4, 2021
The Prophet to Come

Scripture— Deuteronomy 18:14-22

“I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.” —Deuteronomy 18:18-19

Devotional:

After a long and difficult forty years, the nation of Israel was perched on the eastern banks of Jordan awaiting God’s command to enter and possess the Promised Land. Yet, that new generation needed to be reminded to be very careful to heed God’s Law. But Moses also taught them, that another prophet would be raised from among them who would give God’s Word to them. Many generations later, that prophecy would be ultimately fulfilled When God sent His Own Son. The Jews of the first century knew this Great prophet was to be the Messiah and it was often questioned who this prophet might be (John 1:21,25; 6:14; 7:40). With confidence Philip identified Jesus as this Prophet (John 1:45), as did Peter (Acts 3:22-23) and Stephen (7:37). Indeed, Jesus’ own testimony confirms that He is the Prophet, *“I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”* (John 12:50).

Prayer

“Speak, O Lord, Thy precepts me, so that in keeping them, I might rejoice in Thee.”

An Advent Hymn— “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (Stanza 2)

*Born Thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king.
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.*

By Charles Wesley, 1744

Benediction

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” —Matthew 5:8





*Children Stories
for the
First Week of Advent*



"The Son of God became a man to enable men to become the sons of God."

C. S. Lewis





Children's Stories for the First Week of Advent

Volume 1

Copyright by Randy L. Wilding

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Cover portrait is a still picture of Charlton Heston playing the role of Moses when the Red Sea was parted shown in "*The Ten Commandments*," a 1956 American movie produced, directed, and narrated by Cecil B. DeMille and released by Paramount Pictures.

Scriptures quotations taken from The Holy Bible, International Children's Bible®

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The Story of Jesus' Birth

At that time, Augustus Caesar sent an order to all people in the countries that were under Roman rule. The order said that they must list their names in a register. This was the first registration taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to their own towns to be registered.

So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee. He went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. This town was known as the town of David. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David. Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him. (Mary was now pregnant.) While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have the baby. She gave birth to her first son. There were no rooms left in the inn. So she wrapped the baby with cloths and laid him in a box where animals are fed.

That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened. The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Savior was born in David's town. He is Christ, the Lord. This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box."

Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying:

"Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace
to the people God with whom God is pleased."

Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. We will see this thing the Lord told us about."

So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box. Then they told what the angels had said about this child. Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them. Mary hid these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. Then the shepherds went back to





their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, since he was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had thought this over, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a Son; and you shall name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” Now all this took place so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled: “Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and they shall name Him Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.” And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he named Him Jesus.

Luke 2:1-20 (International Children’s Bible Translation)





The First Sunday of Advent

November 28, 2021

Scripture Reading

“In the beginning, God created the sky and the earth.” —Genesis 1:1 (ICB)

“Before the world began, there was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were made through him. Nothing was made without him. In him there was life. That life was light for the people of the world. The Light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overpowered the Light.” —John 1:1-5. (ICB)

Devotional

Children often ask, “Where did God come from?” or “Who created God?” The thought that God was alive before there was anything at all is hard to understand. But somebody had to make the world we live in, right? That was GOD!

Another thing that is hard to understand that there is only one God in the whole world. Sometimes we talk about God the Father, and at other times we talk about God the Son. Then again, we also talk about God, the Spirit. That does not mean there are three Gods — just One! God sort-of has three personalities. Yes, that’s hard for adults to understand too. But if we could figure everything out about God—well that would make us as smart as God and that’s impossible! But God tells us what He wants us to know in the Bible, and the first thing He wants us to know is that He is so great and powerful that at the beginning of time He made everything! He wants us to know that He made us and we are very special to God.

Prayer

Dear God, help me come to know You better, and just how great You are! Amen.

A Hymn—

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten” (Stanza 1)

*Of the Father’s love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.*

By Aurelius Clements Prudentius, 348—413. Translated by John Mason Neale, 1854





Monday, November 29, 2021
The Child of Promise

Scripture Reading

“A I will make you and the woman enemies with each other. Your children and her children will be enemies. Her [special] child will crush your head. And you will bite His heel.” —Genesis 3:15 (ICB)

Devotional

A terrible thing happened to Adam and Eve, the first two people to live on earth. At first, things were great. They lived with God in a beautiful garden. But then they both disobeyed God, and everything changed after that. People began fighting and hating each other. But God did not give up on the special people He made. He promised that many, many years later a special Child would be born. This Child was Jesus who birth we celebrate at Christmas. He finally did come. But when His life on earth was over, Satan bit him on the heel. That means Jesus died because Satan, the devil, hated Jesus and wanted to destroy all the good things that Jesus came into the world to do. But even though Jesus died, He came back to life again, and Jesus crushed Satan on the head that day. Jesus destroyed Satan’s evil plans!

Prayer

Dear Jesus, help me to love you and others, because you first loved me enough to come into the world to die for me, so that I too can life forever with you. Amen.

A Hymn—

“Creation Sings the Father’s Song” (Stanza 2)

*Creation gazed upon His face; the ageless One in time's embrace,
Unveiled the Father's plan of reconciling God and man.
A second Adam walked the earth, whose blameless life would break the curse,
Whose death would set us free o live with Him eternally.
Hallelujah! Let all creation stand and sing,
"Hallelujah!" Fill the earth with songs of worship;
Tell the wonders of creation's King.*

By Keith and Kristyn Getty & Stuart Townsend, 2008





Tuesday, November 30, 2021
The Passover Lamb

Scripture Reading

“Then Moses called all the elders of Israel together. He told them, “Get the animals for your families. Kill the animals for the Passover. Take a branch of the hyssop plant and dip it into the bowl filled with blood. Wipe the blood on the sides and tops of the doorframes. No one may leave his house until morning...” —Exodus 12:21-22 (ICB)

Devotional

Long ago God sent terrible things to happen to the people Egypt because they would not let the Hebrew slaves go free. Finally, He sent one super terrible thing. If the people did not put blood from a lamb around their door that one special night, then everyone who was born first would die in that family. The Egyptians did not believe God, so there was a lot of sadness that night. But God protected the families of God’s people. Jesus, the special Child that was promised, came into our world to die for us. He is like that lamb so when God sees the blood, He passes over that family and protects them.

Prayer

O Lord God, thank you for sending Jesus into the world, so that when He died like a lamb, His blood can forgive me of my sins and protect me. Amen.

An Advent Hymn—

“Joy to the World” (Stanza 1)

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King;

Let every heart prepare Him room,

And Heaven and nature sing,

And Heaven and nature sing,

And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

Hymn based on Psalm 98 by Isaac Watts, 1719.





Wednesday, December 1, 2021

The Tabernacle

Scripture Reading

“When the cloud rose from the Holy Tent, the Israelites would begin to travel. But as long as the cloud stayed on the Holy Tent, the people did not travel. They stayed in that place until the cloud rose. So the cloud of the Lord was over the Holy Tent during the day. And there was a fire in the cloud at night. So all the Israelites could see the cloud while they traveled.” —Exodus 40:36-38 (ICB)

Devotional

After that last terrible plague in Egypt, the king of Egypt gave up and let God’s people go free. They traveled into the desert and God told everyone how He wanted them to live. He also told them to make a very special tent, where a cloud would hover over it during the day and a fire would hover over it at night. When the cloud began to move, all the people follow it. They did this for forty years until they came to the land God had promised them. God wanted His people to know that He was always with them—right in the middle of all the people who camped around the tent. Jesus is still with us today, even though we can’t see Him in a tent, He never leaves us and is always by our side to take care of us.

Prayer

Lord God, help me to remember You are always with me to help me day and night.
Help me to love you more and obey what you want me to do. Amen.

An Advent Hymn—

“Joy to the World” (Stanza 2)

*Joy to the World, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.*

Hymn based on Psalm 98 by Isaac Watts, 1719.





Thursday, December 2, 2021

The Goat that Died and the One that Went Free

Scripture Reading

“Then Aaron must kill the goat of the sin offering for the people. He must bring this goat’s blood into the room behind the curtain. He must do with the goat’s blood as he did with the bull’s blood. He must sprinkle the goat’s blood on the lid and in front of it... He will put both his hands on the head of the living goat. Then he will confess all the sins and crimes of Israel over the goat. In this way Aaron will put the people’s sins on the goat’s head. Then he will send the goat away into the desert. A man who has been appointed will lead the goat away...” —Leviticus 16:15,21 (ICB)

Devotional

When God’s people were in the desert, with the tent, God also told the people to celebrate special days. We also celebrate special days like New Years, Christmas and Easter. But the special day God told the nation of Israel to celebrate was a day with two goats. The High Priest, the most important religious person in Israel, was to pray and ask God to forgive all the sins of all the people for the whole past year. Then one of the goats would be sacrificed to God for all those sins. Then the other goat was led out into the desert, and be left there. This was to remind the people that only blood sacrifices can forgive sin so they can be taken away from us. That is why Jesus finally came to earth so His blood would be shed, and our sins be removed from us.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to forgive me of my sins. Please forgive all my sins and give me a new attitude so that I will love and obey you. Amen.

An Advent Hymn—

“Joy to the World” (Stanza 3)

No more let sins and sorrows grow

Nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,

Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

Hymn based on Psalm 98 by Isaac Watts, 1719.





Friday, December 3, 2021

The Bronze Serpent

Scripture Reading

“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Make a bronze snake. And put it on a pole. If anyone is bitten, he should look at it. Then he will live.’” —Numbers 21:8 (ICB)

Devotional

It was not easy to live in the desert and God’s people often complained to Moses and to God about how hard their life was. So God would have to teach His people important lessons. One time He taught them about faith. He made snakes with a burning bite and when they bit the people many of them died. So God told Moses to make a snake out of bronze and put it on a pole, so when the people looked to that bronze statue of a snake and prayed, then God would heal them. Today you can see a picture of this snakes on a pole on ambulances.

Many years later, Jesus told Nicodemus, an important religious person in Jerusalem, *“Moses lifted up the snake in the desert. It is the same with the Son of Man. The Son of Man must be lifted up too. Then everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life. (John 3:14-5 ICB).* God promises that we can be healed of the deadly bite of sin in our lives if we look to Jesus and trust him to forgive us. God made this great promise, *“For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son. God gave His Son so that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but have eternal life”* (John 3:16 ICB).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, give me faith so I can trust you to forgive me, because you hung on a cross for me. Amen.

An Advent Hymn— *“Joy to the World”* (Stanza 4)

*Joy to the World, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.*

Hymn based on Psalm 98 by Isaac Watts, 1719.





Saturday, December 4, 2021
The Prophet to Come

Scripture

“So I will give them a Prophet like you. He will be one of their own people. I will tell Him what to say. And He will tell them everything I command. This Prophet will speak for me. Anyone who does not listen when He speaks will answer to me.

—Deuteronomy 18:18-19 (ICB)

Devotional:

Finally, after a long 40 years, God’s people had finished traveling through the desert. They were just east of the Jordan River, where they could see the Promised Land on the other side. Moses told all the people who had been born in the desert about God’s Law and how God wanted them to live and worship Him. He also told them about a special prophet, like Moses, but even greater, who would come and tell the people of His day the message of God’s goodness and forgiveness to all who would believe. Philip, one of Jesus’ followers, knew that this Prophet was Jesus (John 1:45). Jesus also told us, *“And I know that eternal life comes from what the Father commands. So whatever I say is what the Father told me to say”* (John 12:50 ICB).

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, you continue to tell us about yourself and how You want us to love, obey and trust You. Forgive me when I don’t do that. Thank you that You died on the cross to forgive sinners like me. I love you and I want to live to honor You each day. Amen.

A Hymn—

“I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say” (Stanza 1)

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Come unto Me and rest.
Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast.”
I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn, and sad.
I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad.*

By Horatius Bonar, 1846

