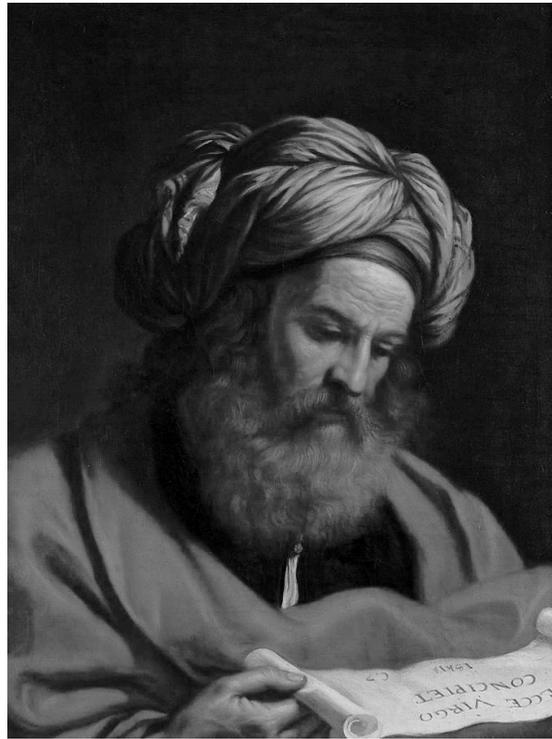




Meditations for the The Second Week of Advent



"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 2

Copyright by Randy L. Wilding
Executive Director
Strategic Advancement for Gospel Empowerment International

Published by SAGE International Press
5745 SW 75th Street — Box 184
Gainesville, Florida 32608 USA

Cover portrait “*The Prophet Isaiah*” by Benedetto Gennari il Giovane, 17th century

Scriptures quotations taken from *NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE*,
Copyright 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995
by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scriptures NOT quoted from the NASB are otherwise noted.



The Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021

Immanuel, Will Be Born

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 7:10-16

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name, Immanuel.” —Isaiah 7:14

Devotional

Many centuries ago a good king that God had placed as the leader of His people was fearful of two strong armies coming to conquer his kingdom. God wanted King Ahaz to trust Him and test His promise that He would protect and help the king. With false humility, Ahaz said that he would never put God to the test, so God said, “Well I’ll give you a sign anyway, even though you do not ask for one.” A boy will be born to a young lady and before this child grows up to know what is right and wrong, those two enemies will not bother you any more!” That promise gave the king hope, not just for himself, but for God’s people who lived in the Promised Land. This special boy was given the name, *Immanuel*, which meant, “God with Us.” God certainly was with His people at that time when they needed Him!

Then centuries later after Ahab, God’s people were again in trouble. Their land had been taken over by an evil empire. Wicked soldiers marched daily through the streets of Israel’s cities. Temple leaders, who were supposed to inspire and help the people, instead were corrupt and evil. God’s people again needed the Lord to be with them and help them. So God made another promise. God told Joseph, a descendant from the royal family of David, that the young lady he loved and to whom he was pledged to be married, would have a baby. This baby would be unlike any other. This baby was God born as a human baby boy. He too would be known as *Immanuel*. This Immanuel would grow up to destroy the enemies of God’s people. The identity of this baby boy is Jesus. God, our heavenly Father, sent Him into this world to defeat the devil and conquer evil that is all around us.



Christ can conquer sin and evil in our lives, as well. That is one of the main reasons why Jesus came into the world. Those who are given life from above by God are enabled to turn from their sinful ways and trust Jesus to be their Savior. *Immanuel*, God with us, is a living reality to everyone who has come to faith in the Lord Jesus, the Messiah!

—meditation originally written by Rev. Dr. Michael Saunders

Prayer

Blessed Lord,
You have caused the holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
Grant that we may be wise to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them,
And that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word,
Grant that we may embrace and ever hold fast to the blessed hope of everlasting life,
Which You have given to us in our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer by Thomas Cranmer

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

*“The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance toward you— and give you [His] peace. Amen.”*

—The benediction by the High Priest, Aaron; *Numbers 6:24-26*



Monday, December 6, 2021
The People Will See a Great Light

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 9:2-7

“The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them. . . .For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom...” —Isaiah 9:2,6,7a

Devotional

The nation Israel was walking in spiritual darkness due to her sinful rebellion. The regions of Zebulun and Naphtali would soon be conquered by Assyria (v.1). Nevertheless, in God’s mercy, He would send the Light of His blessing again (v.2). This anticipation would prompt joy to increase (v.3). Israel’s deliverance (vv. 3b-5) would come, not one might expect under the leadership of a fierce warrior, but from a child (v.6a). This Child will have the kingdom’s rule upon His shoulders (v.6b). This was not ‘child king’, but a Child that is Divine, and entitled to royal and divine titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace (v.6c). This King, from the royal line of David, would rule justly, righteously, and eternally (v.7). Our hearts are thrilled because this great King, the Lord Jesus, has brought us joy and spiritual deliverance. King Jesus has come, and He will continue to reign in our hearts by faith. He will continue to rule from His heavenly throne. From his exalted throne of glory he continues to direct the affairs of kings and nations. Jesus testified before Pilate that He was indeed a king, but not like a mere mortal king. (John 17:37).



Prayer

O Sovereign Lord, Thine is the dominion—an everlasting kingdom,
And Thy Kingdom endures from generation to generation.
All inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,
For Thou accomplish all Thy will in the armies of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.
And no one can thwart Thy hand, or say to Thee,
“What have You done?”

—The adoration of God by King Nebuchadnezzar; *Daniel 4:34,35*

An Advent Hymn— “*The Race that Long in Darkness Pined*” (Stanza 1,2)

*The race that long in darkness pined
Have seen a glorious Light;
The people dwell in day,
Who dwelt in death's surrounding night.
To hail Thy rise, Thou better Sun,
The gathering nations come,
Joyous as when the reapers bear
The harvest treasures home.*

by John Morison, 1750

Benediction

*“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
And the love of God,
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with you all.”*

—An apostolic benediction by the Apostle Paul; *2 Corinthians 13:14*



Tuesday, December 7, 2021
The Shoot from the Stump of Jesse

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 11:1-5

“Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.”
—Isaiah 11:1,2

Devotional

Have you ever seen a shoot grow out of a stump from a fallen tree. This is the picture of the kingdom that was removed (cut down) with the promise that a renewed branch will grow from its roots. Isaiah lived during troublesome times. A great king had died (Isaiah 6:1), the northern tribes were in rebellion against the Davidic kingship and were eventually carried off into captivity. Judah, the southern kingdom was also being threatened by the dreaded Assyrian empire. The line of David’s kingship looked like a stump compared to its glories under King David and his son, King Solomon.

Yet, God’s purposes for this line of David was not over. God had promised David that his kingdom would endure forever (2 Samuel 7). A new and greater King will one day be anointed by the Spirit of God and will be endowed with *“wisdom and understanding”* for the rule of government; *“counsel and strength”* for the engagement in battle, and *“knowledge and the fear of the Lord”* for exercising spiritual leadership.

These qualities perfectly suit our Savior, King Jesus! He rules in the Church and over our lives, and through the providential dealing among nations. He conquers all His enemies and teaches us His will. He also gives us His Spirit that we might fear the Lord and walk in His ways.

Prayer

Who am I and what is my house, that You have brought me this far? (v. 18)
You are great, O Lord God; for there is none like You, and here is no God besides You. (v. 22)
You have redeemed Your people Israel, to make a name for Yourself. (v. 23)
May Your name be magnified forever, the Lord of hosts is over Israel. (v. 26)
Now, O Lord God, You are God, and Your Words are truth. (v. 22)

—A prayer by King David; 2 Samuel 7:18-29



An Advent Hymn— “Lo! How a Rose E’er Blooming” (Stanza 1)

*Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse’s lineage coming, as men of old have sung.
It came, a flowered bright,
Amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.*

Traditional German Carol, 15th Century; Translated by Theodore Baker, 1894

Benediction

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!
For “who has known the mind of the Lord?”
“Or who has become His counselor?”
Or “who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again?”
For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things.
To Him be the glory forever.
Amen.*

—An ascription of praise by the Apostle Paul; *Romans 11:33-36*



Wednesday, December 8, 2021
A Voice Calling in the Wilderness

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 40:1-11

“A voice is calling, Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken” —Isaiah 40:3-5

Devotional

The compassionate, comforting, eagerly-forgiving voice of God is gently calling to a wayward people. The Savior calls them from their misery to return to the fold of their Good Shepherd (v.11). This *Gentle Voice* (vv. 1,2) proceeds the *Herald’s Call* (vv. 3-5); followed by the *Preacher’s Message* (vv. 6-8); and the *Crier’s News* (vv. 9-11).

The herald’s call and offer of salvation is expressed in every generation, but was most powerfully proclaimed when the Baptist stood beside Jordan’s waters calling God’s people to prepare their hearts for the Messiah’s coming (Isaiah 40: 3-5 cf. Luke 2:3-6).

The preacher’s message is a humbling one. Our human existence is fleeting and fragile. It is as vulnerable as the grass of the field to changing seasons or drought. Its beauty is like that of a flower that displays its beauty, then in a few days is gone. Humanity in the presence of God and His justice is frightfully perilous!

The prophetic exhortation is not yet complete until we hear the crier’s news. It is a *Good News!* Zion is the one who bears good tidings. The gospel was of God’s victory over His enemies brought judgment to the oppressor and reward to faithful. Our great, almighty God will come and gather His precious flock into His fold.

This prophecy is most eloquently fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist (Luke 3:3-6,15-18) and our Lord Jesus, who went throughout all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel (Good News) of the kingdom...” (Matthew 4:23). The apostles continued this commission by “*proclaiming in Jesus’ Name that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem*” (Luke 24:42).



An Advent Poem

There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
A call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway,
A highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
The lofty hills brought low;
Make straight all the crooked places,
Where the Lord our God may go!

By James Milligan, 1876-1961

An Advent Hymn—

“Let All Mortal Flesh keep Silence”

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.*

*King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood;
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heav'nly food.*

*At His feet the six-winged seraph, cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry:*

“Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord Most High!”

From the Liturgy of St. James. c. 4th Century; Translated by Gerard Moultrie, 1864

Benediction

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ;
And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension,
Guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

Amen.

—An apostolic benediction by the Apostle Paul; *Philippians 1:2; 4:7,23*



Thursday, December 9, 2021

The Chosen Servant

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 42:1-9

“Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry out or raise His voice, nor make His voice heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice”
—Isaiah 42:1-3

Devotional

Isaiah records (42:1-9) his first ‘*Servant Song*’ in which the Lord’s Chosen One is anointed by the Spirit to be the Servant King to establish justice and righteousness within His Kingdom and eventually to all nations (v.1).

The Servant is tender in his dealings as he comes into this world. His voice speaks in hushed tones (v. 2) and deals gently with those disheartened and down-trodden (v. 3a); He will not harshly ‘snuff-out’ the life of those clinging to the light. This tenderness to his dearly beloved will continue throughout his earthly ministry with justice for all, especially to the poor, the down-trodden, the oppressed, and the weak (vv. 3c-4a). Not only His people Israel await The Servant’s coming, but the distant coastlands will rejoice at His advent (v.4b).

Such ideal hopes seem so distant at times. Most political figures, who so often speak promising words on behalf of the people benefit, turn out sadly to be self-seeking, over-lording tyrants. What hope do we have of a servant who cares for the sake of others? The Lord promises this to be true on the basis of His exalted Creative glory (vv. 5-9)! He has created both cosmos and the living breath of mankind (v. 5). The great God who has done such glorious things will by that same glory, call His Anointed One to be the Covenant Head of His people. He will be the Light to the all the nations (v. 6). His ministry will be marked by redemption of those held in sin’s bondage and darkness (v.7).

There is no one comparable to our great God, our Covenant Savior! Others may boast of their glory, even seeking to claim God’s glory as their own, yet the Lord alone shines superior! He will usher in a new era of grace, mercy, and justice. Lord, Jesus, the Lord’s Chosen One has come. O Lord, come quickly again!



Prayer

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love, which you have for all the saints...

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding...

So that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...

Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience...

Joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light

—A prayer by the Apostle Paul; *Colossians 1:4,9-12*

An Advent Hymn—

“Hark the Glad Sound” (Stanzas 1,2,6)

*Hark the glad sound, the Savior promised long;
Let every heart prepare a throne, and ev'ry voice a song.*

*On Him the Spirit, largely poured, exerts His sacred fire;
Wisdom and might, and zeal and love; His holy beast inspire.*

*Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heaven's eternal arches ring with Thy beloved name.*

by Philip Doddridge, 1735

Benediction

*Now the God of peace,
Who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep
Through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord,
Equip you in every good thing to do His will,
Working in us that which is pleasing in His sight,
Through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.
Amen.*

—From the apostolic benediction to the Hebrews; *Hebrews 13:20-21*



Friday, December 10, 2021

The Suffering Servant

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 52:13 — 53:12

“He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” —Isaiah 53:3-4

Devotional

How strange, one might think, to include a passage regarding the *Suffering Servant* into an Advent series. I would tend to agree, except that Isaiah does speak regarding the lowly estate of our Savior in this notable text:

*“For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,
And like a root out of parched ground;
He has no stately form or majesty
That we should look upon Him, nor appearance
That we should be attracted to Him (52:3).*

There does not appear anything stately or majestic about the earthly visitation of our Savior, when He came into this world. Indeed, He was born in a manger, reared in poor household, and known to the multitudes as one from the despised village of Nazareth.

Nevertheless, in this *Fourth Servant Song* from Isaiah the exalted character and life of the Lord Jesus is sort forth. The song has five stanzas of three biblical verses each. The first (52:13-15) and concluding stanzas (53:10-12) exalt the lofty character and the benefits He came as a servant to achieve. He came from the glories of heaven to earth. Then following His agonizing death, He was raised up with exalted glory to receive His earned reward—the justified (52:11). He came to save those, who were given by the good pleasure of the Lord as an eternal inheritance of our glorified King.

Yet, this reward came at great cost and sacrifice. The other three stanzas (53:1-3, 4-6, 7-9) vividly portray the sacrifice of the Suffering Servant, who bore our griefs and died, because our iniquity was laid on Him. For our sake, He came into this world as a little baby, and died on the cross as *‘The Man’* who loved us and gave His life for us!



Prayer

What shall I render to Thee for the Gift of gifts,
Thine own dear Son, begotten, not created,
My Redeemer, proxy, surety, substitute.
Herein is wonders of wonders:
He came below to raise me above,
Was born like me that I might become like Him.
He came God-incarnate to save me to the outermost,
As man to die my death, to shed satisfying blood on my behalf.

—From “*Gift of Gifts*,” The Valley of Vision: prayers compiled by Arthur Bennett, 1975

An Advent Hymn

“*Lo! How a Rose E’er Blooming*” (Stanza 2,4,5)

*Isaiah twas foretold it the rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind,
To show God’s love aright
She bore to men a Savior when half-spent was the night.*

*This flow’r whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us and lightens ev’ry load.*

*O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray,
To the bright courts of heaven and to the endless day.*

Traditional German Carol, 15th Century.;Translated byTheodore Baker, 1894

Benediction

*“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ....
Peace be to you all who are in Christ.
To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”*

—From a benediction and ascription of praise by the Apostle Peter—*1 Peter 5:14; 2 Peter 3:18*



Saturday, December 11, 2021
The Song of the Lord's Anointed

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 61:1-11

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn,” —Isaiah 61:1-2

Devotional

The *Song of the Lord's Anointed* lists the benefits or fruits of His passion. The titles of *Servant* and *Messianic King* are blended in this joyful conclusion to the five *Servant Songs* of Isaiah. Our Savior was anointed at His Baptism to be the Lord's Servant and the Messianic King. He accepted the sorrowful task of temptation, suffering, and death which would result in His reward and a blessing upon those He came to save.

Jesus made use of the prophecy in His opening sermon at Nazareth (Luke 4:17-21).. At first, His hearers *“were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips...”* (Luke 4:22). Yet soon, their wonder turned to rage, when Jesus spoke of the Prophet Elijah turning away from Israel to heal a Syrian. Yet, a greater Prophet, than Elijah was now among them. He would perform miracles, healings, and deliverance from spiritual bondage. These wonders would confirm that He was the Messiah, the Anointed Servant of the Lord (Hebrews 2:3-4)!

Isaiah's message is a joyful proclamation of *“Good News”* [the gospel] to those who looked from Babylonian's captivity back in their memory to the desolation of their ruined, yet beloved city, Jerusalem. Following Babylon's conquest, Jerusalem lay in ruin and the people were in the depths of affliction, broken-heartedness, and bondage (v.1).

Yet, with joyful proclamation, the Lord's Anointed, came to Israel of old in Babylon, to the first century Jewish people, and us today in His Word to those who have ears to hear. He comes to proclaim a Jubilee—release to captives, debts forgiven, and lands restored. Such joy fills the heart of every one redeemed by the Lord. In harmony, we sing our song of praise, *“I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation!”* (v. 10).



Prayer

O most loving Father, who wills for us to give thanks in all things,
To dread nothing but the loss of Thee, and to cast all our care on Thee,
Who cares for us: preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties,
And grant that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light
Of that immortal love which Thou has manifested to us
In Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From a 'Brief Petition' The Book of Common Worship, 1946

An Advent Hymn—

“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” (Stanzas 1,4,6)

*Hail to the Lord’s Anointed, great David’s greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
To take away transgression, and rule in equity.*

*He comes with rescue speedy to those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong.
He turns their sighs to singing, their darkness into light,
For they, condemned and dying, are precious in His sight.*

*In name forever glorious, He on His throne shall rest,
From age to age victorious, all-blessing and all-blest.
Praise God, who rules each nation; tell of His deeds again;
His glory fills creation; sing praise to God. Amen!*

By James Montgomery, 1822; Revised Bert Polman, 1985.

Benediction

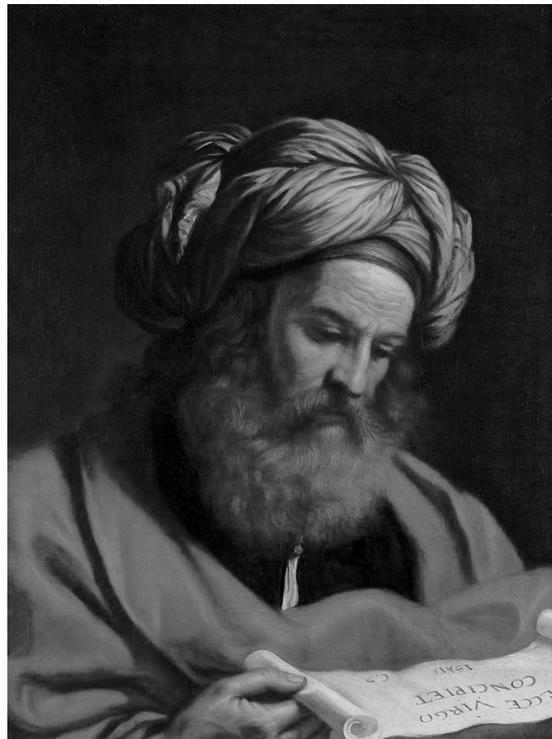
*“To Him who is the blessed and only Sovereign One,
The King of kings and Lord of lords,
Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light,
Whom no man has seen or can see.
To Him be honor and eternal dominion!
Amen.”*

—A pastoral affirmation of praise by the Apostle Paul—*1 Timothy 6:15,16*





*Children's Bible Stories
for the
The Second Week of Advent*



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

C. S. Lewis



Children's Bible Stories for Advent

Volume 2

Copyright by Randy L. Wilding

Executive Director

Strategic Advancement for Gospel Empowerment International

Published by SAGE International Press

5745 SW 75th Street — Box 184

Gainesville, Florida 32608 USA

Cover portrait "*The Prophet Isaiah*" by Benedetto Gennari il Giovane, 17th century

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

Copyright© 1986, 1988, 1999, 2015 by Tommy Nelson TM,

a division of Thomas Nelson. Used by permission.



The Second Sunday of Advent

Immanuel, Will Be Born

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 7:10-16

“But the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be pregnant. She will have a son, and she will name him, Immanuel. He will be eating milk curds and honey when he learns to reject what is evil and to choose what is good.” —Isaiah 7:14 (ICB)

“Mary was engaged to marry Joseph. But before they married, she learned that she was going to have a baby. She was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. ...The baby in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. You will name the son Jesus. Give him that name because he will save his people from their sins. “

—Matthew 1:18,20-21 (ICB)

Devotional

A long, long time ago a king was in trouble. Two other kings wanted to take over his kingdom. But the prophet, Isaiah, told him he would be fine, if he trusted God. He told the king to ask God for a sign so he could know for sure that God’s promise was true. The king said, “Oh, no! I would never test God!” But the prophet said, “Well, God is going to give you a sign anyway! A young lady will have a baby, and before the baby learns right from wrong, those two kings won’t be able to bother you anymore!” And the child’s name will be *Immanuel*, which means ‘God with Us.’”

God is still with us. He sent Jesus to be our *Immanuel*, and He sent His Spirit to be with us always!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to remember that you are always with me, even when I’m having a hard day. In Jesus’ name. *Amen.*

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



Monday, December 6, 2021
The People Will See a Great Light

Scripture Reading

“Now those people live in darkness. But they will see a great light. They live in a place that is very dark. But a light will shine on them. . . . A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace. . . . He will rule as king on David’s throne and over David’s kingdom...”

—Isaiah 9:2,6,7 (ICB)

Devotional

God’s people, Israel, were not obeying God. It was as if they were walking around in the darkness of night all the time. But God still loved His people, so he promised that in the future he would send his Son as a Light. The Child was born without a human father! He would be a human baby (born of Mary), but also He was God! He rules over all his people in our hearts, not like earthly kings who rule over kingdoms on earth.

Prayer

O Lord God, you are so great and powerful. You do exactly what you want to do all the time. Help me each day to trust you that you are leading me to do what you want me to do. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

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



Tuesday, December 7, 2021
The Tree Branch from the Stump of Jesse

Scripture Reading

“A branch will grow from a stump of a tree that was cut down. So a new king will come from the family of Jesse. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon that king. The Spirit gives him wisdom, understanding, guidance and power. And the Spirit teaches him to know and respect the Lord.” —Isaiah 11:1-2 (ICB)

Devotional

Have you ever seen a branch grow out of a stump from a tree that has been cut down?. The kingdom of Israel was cut down like a tree because they disobeyed God. It was small like a stump. Isaiah lived during these very difficult times. They were suffering lots of problems as a country. It looked like their country would soon come to an end. But God promised them that a new branch would grow from the roots.

God promised that this new and great king would one day come and be given gifts and power by God’s Spirit to have *“wisdom and understanding”* to the rule the government; *“counsel and strength”* for fighting God’s battles, and *“knowledge and the respect for the Lord”* to be a good leader. This new king is Jesus! Is He leading your life?

Prayer

O Lord, the King of heaven and earth. Please come into my life and rule in my heart. Give me your Spirit, that I might know you better and love you more. I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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



Wednesday, December 8, 2021

A Voice Calling in the Wilderness

Scripture Reading

“This is the voice of a man who calls out: ‘Prepare in the desert the way for the Lord. Make the road in the dry lands straight for our God. Every valley should be raised up. Every mountain and hill should be made flat. The rough ground should be made level. The rugged ground should be made smooth. Then the glory of the Lord will be shown. All people together will see it.’ The Lord himself said these things.” —Isaiah 40:3-5

Devotional

God calls all people to turn from their sins and come to Him. God promises forgiveness of their sins to anyone who turns away from living a selfish life and turns toward God to live the way He wants us to live. He wants us to get everything out of our way that would stop us from coming to God. It is like getting the ground flat and straight to get it ready to build a new road.

That is what John the Baptist told people when He preached by the Jordan River. Jesus preached the same message to the people who came to hear him. That is what preachers today say when they preach from the Bible. Have you heard Jesus speak to you, telling you to come to Him?

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, open my ears so that I can hear you speak to me from the Bible. Open my heart, so that I will want to hear and obey what you tell me. Help me to love you, believe in you, and live for you each day. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

An Advent Hymn

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (Stanza 4)

*O come, O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Dispense the gloomy clues of night
And death’s dark shadows put to flight.*

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

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



Thursday, December 9, 2021

The Chosen Servant

Scripture Reading

“Here is my servant, the one I support. He is the One I chose, and I am pleased with him. I will put my Spirit in him. And he will bring justice to all nations. He will not cry out or yell. He will not speak loudly in the streets. He will not break a crushed blade of grass. He will not put out even a weak flame. He will bring justice and find what is true.” —Isaiah 42:1-3 (ICB)

Devotional

Isaiah wrote songs about Jesus Christ who would come many years later. These songs help us understand Jesus better. You just read part of Isaiah’s first song. This song tells us that Jesus is God’s chosen servant. That means, God selected his Son, Jesus, to come into this world and help sinners like you and me. We all need the tender help and care of someone who loves us and can help us with our biggest problems. Sometimes we feel like no one cares for us or loves us. Sometimes no matter how hard we try, we do not do well enough to please others. Then, there are times we do things we know we shouldn’t, but we do them anyway. We need help!

Jesus can help us with our biggest problems—our sins and our desire to keep on sinning, no matter what others say! Jesus really does care for his children and He is able to help us? Have you asked Him, yet? Please, pray and ask for him to help you today!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I need your help today. Change my heart so I will love you and love others. In your name, I pray. Amen.

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



Friday, December 10, 2021

The Suffering Servant

Scripture Reading

“He was hated and rejected by people. He had much pain and suffering. People would not even look at him. He was hated, and we didn’t even notice him. But he took our suffering on himself and felt our pain for us. We saw his suffering. ... We all have wandered away like sheep. Each of us has gone his own way. But the Lord has put on him the punishment for all the evil we have done.” —Isaiah 53:3-4,6

Devotional

The most well-known song that Isaiah wrote is about how much the servant Jesus suffered. He did not suffer because he made mistakes or did evil things. No, not at all! Do you remember the story about the two goats, how one was sacrificed after Aaron put his hands on its head and prayed? Then the lamb was killed and its blood taken into the Holy Tent and sprinkled on the Holy Box. And do you remember the story about the Passover Lamb that was killed and its blood put on the doorposts so death would pass over that family. That’s why Jesus died. He was like that goat and that lamb whose blood was shed so others could be forgiven of their sins.

It is only by Jesus’ blood that we can be forgiven. That’s because Jesus is God. He is the only one who lived a perfect life and did everything his Father in heaven wanted him to say and do. But many people still hated him. So they had him arrested, put him on a cross, and they killed him like a perfect lamb whose blood was poured out for others.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to die for sinners like me. Forgive me, Lord! Amen.

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 consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear Desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

By Charles Wesley, 1744



Saturday, December 11, 2021
The Song of the Lord's Anointed

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 61:1-11

“The Lord God has put his Spirit in Me. This is because he has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken. He has sent me to tell the captives they are free. He has sent me to tell the prisoners that they are released. He has sent me to announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness and the time when our God will punish evil people. He has sent me to comfort all those who are [terribly] sad.” —Isaiah 61:1-2 (ICB)

Devotional

When Jesus began to preach in his home town, where he grew up as a boy, he used this song from Isaiah to describe the kind of help he would give to others. He said, he was able to perform miracles and forgive sinners because God’s Spirit gave him power. The Bible teaches that our sins are like a prison that traps us behind bars. We cannot be free to be all God wants us to be until God sets us free. Until God releases us from the chains of our sin, we will continue to be sad, angry, and not live a joyful life. I hope these lessons help you understand why we all need Jesus.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the only Savior of the world. You are the only one who can help me and set me free from all my sin. Because of your love and by your power, set me free today from my sins. In Your name I pray. Amen.

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

