

From the

Old

to the

New



Jesse Tree Devotional
Emmanuel Reformed Church - 2023

Welcome to our Jesse Tree Devotional booklet—a journey from Genesis to Jesus, tracing God's redemptive plan throughout the Bible. The Jesse Tree tradition finds its roots in Isaiah 11:1-2, where the prophet speaks of the coming Messiah as a shoot springing from the stump of Jesse, King David's father. Each day of Advent, we will explore a scripture passage that has a significant part in the lineage leading to Christ's birth.

This devotional invites you to reflect on the rich tapestry of God's faithfulness; revealing His promise and fulfillment in Scripture. From creation to Jesus, each story intricately weaves into the grand narrative of salvation, highlighting God's faithfulness, grace, and sovereignty. Again and again, we will see a message of hope in what feels like great uncertainty.

As we journey through this season of anticipation, the desire is to delve deeper into the lives and stories of those who played a role in preparing the way for the birth of our Savior. Through these daily reflections, we will witness how God's faithfulness transcends time, shaping the lives of ordinary individuals to accomplish His extraordinary purposes.

May this Jesse Tree Devotional be a source of inspiration, enlightenment, and encouragement as we meditate on the profound love and redemptive plan of our Heavenly Father. Join in exploring the Jesse Tree, from its roots in creation to the new covenant of Jesus Christ. Discover the beauty of God's promises and consider ways we can more fully experience the abundant life Christ came to give.

May each day of this Advent season draw us closer to the heart of God and deepen our understanding of His plan for salvation through the One whose coming we celebrate at Christmas.

Blessings on your journey through the Jesse Tree.

Pastor Dirk

December 1

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10

The season of Advent, a time of anticipation and preparation, invites us to reflect on the promises of God fulfilled through the birth of Jesus Christ. In verses 1 and 2, we encounter a prophetic vision that captures the hope that God gives our lives.

The imagery of a shoot emerging from the stump of Jesse signifies a seemingly dormant lineage, yet within it lies the potential for new life and transformation. Just as a seemingly lifeless stump can unexpectedly produce new growth, so can our seemingly impossible situations be infused with renewed hope through the promises of God.

We are reminded that from the humble and seemingly unremarkable - greatness can emerge. Jesus, the promised Branch, came from the lineage of David (Jesse being David's father) and through His birth, the world witnessed the unfurling of divine promises.

As we journey through the days of Advent, let us reflect on the promises fulfilled in Christ and the transformation His presence brings into our lives. This season calls us to rekindle hope, to believe in the renewal of our hearts, families, communities, and ultimately the whole world through Christ.

Through our anticipation and preparation during this Advent season, may we rekindle our faith and trust in the promises of God, for in Christ, the seemingly impossible finds its fulfillment, and from the most unexpected places, new life and hope will blossom.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, during this season of waiting and preparation, open our hearts to the promises fulfilled in Christ. Help us to embrace the hope of new beginnings and to be receptive to the transformative power of Your Spirit in our lives. Amen.



December 2

Scripture: Genesis 1: 26-31



This passage reveals the pinnacle of creation: humanity, made in the image and likeness of God. God intentionally crafted us to reflect His nature; granting all humans value, purpose, and dignity. As we journey through Advent, we are reminded of this divine design as the starting point.

The season of Advent is not just preparation for the celebration of Christ's arrival but a reflection on our call to bear God's image in the world. Jesus, the ultimate image-bearer of God as the one who is fully human and fully divine, demonstrates qualities of love, justice, and humility, inspiring us to mirror these attributes in our lives.

Yet, the world's brokenness often obscures this divine reflection. Advent stands as a beacon of hope, promising restoration and redemption through Christ.

During this season, let's reflect on our responsibility as stewards of God's image. We're called to care for creation and nurture relationships with each other. As we await Christ's birth, let's prepare our hearts to embody God's image in our interactions, spreading love, compassion, and reconciliation.

Advent whispers a promise of renewal, urging us to embrace our role as reflections of God's image. As we anticipate Christ's coming, may our lives echo the love, compassion, and grace inherent in God's design for humanity.

Prayer: Gracious Creator, thank you for forming us in Your image. Help us to embody Your nature in our daily lives, being agents of love and reconciliation. As we await the celebration of Christ's birth, renew our hearts with the promise of redemption and restoration. Amen.

December 3

Scripture: Genesis 3: 1-19

This is the pivotal moment in human history - humanity's fall due to disobedience. Yet, in the midst of this narrative of brokenness, there exists a whisper of hope, a promise of restoration.

The serpent's deceit led to Adam and Eve's disobedience, resulting in the introduction of sin and its consequences into the world. However, even in this moment of despair, God reveals His plan for redemption.



The consequence of sin means pain and toil in this life, but within these verses lies a glimmer of hope - a promise of a Savior who would one day crush the serpent's head, triumphing over sin and its effects.

This passage not only illustrates the reality of human frailty but also unveils God's grace and mercy. Advent, in its essence, encapsulates this divine promise. It is a season of anticipation for the birth of the Promised One, Jesus Christ, who would ultimately redeem humanity from sin's grip.

As we journey through Advent, this passage reminds us of our need for a Savior and points to the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan through Jesus. It encourages us to acknowledge our brokenness; yet look forward in hope to the One who brings restoration and healing.

Let this season be a time of longing for the Savior. May we recognize our need for redemption and eagerly await the fulfillment of God's promise - the birth of Christ, our ultimate hope and the solution to our brokenness.

Prayer: Gracious Lord, in the midst of our brokenness, thank you for the promise of redemption through Christ. As we anticipate His coming, help us embrace the hope of restoration and eagerly await the fulfillment of Your redemptive plan. Amen.

December 4

Scripture: Genesis 6: 11-14; 7: 17-8: 3; 9: 8-13



God's covenant with Noah - a word of hope after the devastating flood – is another view of God's grace. The rainbow becomes a visual reminder of God's promise never to destroy the earth by floodwaters again.

During Advent, this covenant offers a profound reflection of God's faithfulness. It signifies a promise of redemption and renewal. Just as the rainbow emerged after the storm, so too does Advent signal the arrival of hope after periods of darkness.

Noah's story is one of God's faithfulness in preserving life and providing a new beginning. This parallels the anticipation of the birth of Christ, who would become the ultimate beacon of hope and new life for all humanity.

The rainbow serves as a reminder that God keeps His promises. As we journey through Advent, it points us towards the fulfillment of God's covenant through the birth of Jesus - a promise of salvation and restoration for a world longing for light.

Let this season of waiting remind us of God's unwavering faithfulness and His covenant of hope. Just as the rainbow arcs across the sky, symbolizing God's enduring promise, let us anticipate the fulfillment of God's ultimate promise - Christ, the hope for a renewed and redeemed world.

Prayer: Merciful God, thank you for your enduring promises. As we await the birth of Christ, may the rainbow serve as a reminder of your faithfulness and the hope found in your covenant. Help us embrace the anticipation of new beginnings and the ultimate promise fulfilled in Christ. Amen.

December 5

Scripture: Genesis 12: 1-7

God's call to Abram is a call to leave the familiar and step into the unknown. Abram is not only promised blessings but is also told that through him, all the families of the earth will be blessed. This divine directive echoes the essence of the Advent season – the blessings we receive so that we can be a blessing.



God's promise to Abram extends beyond personal blessings; it encompasses a universal blessing, an anticipation of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Advent reminds us that through the birth of Jesus, the ultimate blessing for humanity, God fulfills His promise to Abram.

Abram's call to bless all families emphasizes a vital truth: as recipients of God's blessings, we are also called to be conduits of blessings to others. The promise given to Abram mirrors the call for us to share the blessings and love we have received with the world around us.

As we prepare for the birth of Jesus, we're called to embody this same spirit of being a blessing. Our anticipation during Advent should ignite a desire to share God's love and blessings with others, just as God's promise to Abram was meant for the wider world.

May this season be a reminder that we are blessed to be a blessing. As we await the arrival of the promised Messiah, may we seek opportunities to extend love, kindness, and hope to those around us, fulfilling God's call to be a blessing to all.

Prayer: Generous God, thank you for the promise of blessings through Christ. Help us embody the spirit of being a blessing to others, sharing the love and grace we have received. As we anticipate the birth of Jesus, inspire us to be vessels of your blessings in the world. Amen.

December 6

Scripture: Genesis 21: 1-7



The birth of Isaac to Sarah and Abraham in their old age was truly miraculous. This event stands as a testament to God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises, even in seemingly impossible circumstances.

As we journey through the season of Advent, this passage echoes the theme of waiting for the fulfillment of God's promises. Just as Sarah conceived and bore a son in her old age, Advent signifies the anticipation of the miraculous birth of Jesus, the fulfillment of God's promise of a Savior.

Isaac's birth illustrates the divine timing and faithfulness of God. His arrival brought joy and fulfilled the promise made to Abraham. Similarly, Jesus' birth brought immeasurable joy and fulfilled the promise of a Messiah who would bring salvation to humanity.

This passage invites us to reflect on the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promises. It inspires hope, affirming that God is faithful to His word, even in circumstances that seem impossible.

Advent encourages us to wait in expectation for the fulfillment of God's promises. Just as Sarah and Abraham experienced joy in the birth of Isaac, we too await the joyous celebration of the birth of Jesus, the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise and the source of eternal joy for all.

May this season remind us of God's faithfulness. As we anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth, let us hold onto hope, knowing that God fulfills His promises in His perfect timing.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for your faithfulness in fulfilling your promises. As we await the birth of Jesus, instill in us a sense of hope and anticipation, knowing that you are faithful to fulfill your word. Amen.

Scripture: Genesis 22: 1-18

The story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, Isaac, in obedience to God's command is severe. As Abraham raised the knife, God provided a ram, sparing Isaac's life. This poignant narrative embodies obedience, faith, and points to Jesus.



First, the sacrifice demanded of Abraham resonates in the Advent season as God gives his one and only son. Abraham's love for his son prefigures God the Father, who would later offer His own Son, Jesus, as a sacrifice for humanity.

Second, the faith of Abraham is a shining example of trusting God even when everything does not make sense to us. The Bible says that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness.


Third, God's provision of a ram in place of Isaac symbolizes His ultimate provision—Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb who would take away the sins of the world. The story reveals God's plan for redemption through the offering of His Son who would die in our place. It points to the ultimate sacrifice on the cross, which brings salvation and fulfills God's promise of redemption.

Abraham's trust in God's provision echoes the trust and faith we're called to have as we anticipate the fulfillment of God's promises. As we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth, may we reflect on Abraham's faithfulness and the profound sacrifice God made for our redemption.

Prayer: Loving Father, thank you for the ultimate sacrifice made through Christ. As we anticipate the celebration of Jesus' birth, may we hold onto faith and reflect on the depth of your love, knowing that you fulfill your promises. Amen.

December 8

Scripture: Genesis 28: 10-22



We find Jacob, on a journey to Haran fleeing his brother's wrath, resting for the night with a stone for a pillow. It is in this desolate place that he has a remarkable encounter with God in a dream. Jacob sees a ladder extending from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending, and the Lord standing beside him.

This story resonates with Advent. Just as Jacob had a profound encounter with God in a place of vulnerability and uncertainty, Advent invites us to prepare our hearts for a divine encounter - and we never know when or where it might happen.

The ladder in Jacob's dream symbolizes the connection between heaven and earth. Advent is a reminder of Jesus, who became the bridge between God and humanity. Through His birth, He brought heaven's promise to earth.

Jacob awakens from his dream, recognizing the presence of God, and declares the place "the house of God" and "the gate of heaven," and sets up a visible reminder of the spiritual encounter. Advent prompts us to recognize the significance of the moment, acknowledging that through Christ, heaven's gate has been opened for us. May our decorations be reminders of the true miracle of Christmas.

As we journey through this season, may we be like Jacob, open to divine encounters in the most unexpected places. May we remember that through Jesus, we have access to heaven's promises, love, and grace. Advent encourages us to seek and embrace God's presence, knowing that Christ is the ultimate gateway to heaven.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the connection between heaven and earth through Christ. As we anticipate His birth, may our hearts be open to divine encounters, and may we recognize the significance of the moment, knowing that through Jesus, heaven's gate is open to us. Amen.

December 9

Scripture: Genesis 37: 1-36; 50: 15-21

Joseph was betrayed and sold into slavery by his brothers. This narrative of betrayal and suffering amid the pursuit of God's plan reflects the themes of hardship and hope found in the Advent season.

Joseph's story, marked by adversity and injustice, echoes the challenges faced by many. Advent, similarly, is a time when we acknowledge the darkness and difficulties in our lives while anticipating the hope found in the birth of Jesus.

Joseph's brothers' betrayal resulted in his bondage, yet God had a greater plan. Similarly, amidst the world's brokenness, Jesus humbly came, taking on the form of a servant, for God had a greater plan.

Let us not lose hope in the brokenness around us but strive to be faithful. Joseph's life serves as a reminder that God works amid the darkest of circumstances. And just as Joseph's story had a redemptive ending, Jesus brings hope and restoration to a broken world. Advent invites us to cling to hope, knowing that God's plan of redemption and restoration persists even in the midst of adversity.

As we navigate this season, let us reflect on the story of Joseph that runs from Genesis 37 to 50. We see how God used Joseph to be a blessing to the foreign nation and save his estranged brothers. It points us to trust in God's ultimate plan for redemption and reminds us to hold onto hope, knowing that from the most challenging circumstances, God can bring forth beauty and restoration.

Prayer: Sovereign Lord, in the midst of adversity, thank you for the hope found in Jesus. As we anticipate His arrival, grant us strength to endure and faith to trust in Your redemptive plan, even amidst life's challenges. Amen.



December 10

Scripture: Deuteronomy 5: 1-22



God is a God of covenants and Deuteronomy 5:1-22 recounts the renewal of the covenant at Mount Sinai, and reminds the Israelites of God's commandments. It underscores the importance of obedience and the covenantal relationship between God and His people.

Advent, likewise, is a season of remembrance and reflection. Just as the Israelites were called to remember and follow God's commands, we are called to reflect on the significance of Christ's birth and the covenant of grace through His life, death and resurrection.

The commandments given in Deuteronomy symbolize the framework of living in alignment with God's will. In a similar manner, the arrival of Jesus marks the fulfillment of God's plan, offering us a new covenant—a covenant of grace, love, and salvation.

Advent encourages us to remember the essence of God's commands – they are based on God's love of us. Jesus says we show our love back to him by following his commands.

As we journey through this season, let us take time to remember God's commandments and His love for us in showing us how to live. Reflecting on the covenant of grace, may it inspire us to live in obedience and gratitude, embracing the love and salvation offered through Jesus.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the covenant of grace through Christ. As we anticipate His birth, help us remember the significance of Your commandments and the love expressed through the covenant established in Jesus. May we live in obedience to your command out of gratitude for Your love. Amen.

December 11

Scripture: Joshua 2: 1-21

Rahab's courageous act amidst perilous circumstances reveals unexpected hope in the most unlikely of places, resonating with the themes of anticipation and redemption in the Advent season.

Rahab, a woman from an enemy city, demonstrated bravery and faith by helping the spies. Her actions stand out in the history of Israel and align with the spirit of Advent—a time of faith that is open to everyone, regardless of past or circumstances.

Rahab's role as an unexpected ally mirrors the surprising nature of God's work during Advent. The birth of Jesus symbolizes hope emerging in the unlikeliest of settings, offering redemption and salvation to all, regardless of background or status.

Rahab's faith reminds us that God's redemptive plan often unfolds in unexpected ways, showcasing His grace and love. Advent also calls us to acknowledge unexpected messengers of God in our lives.

As we anticipate the birth of Christ, let us reflect on Rahab's courage and faith. Her story challenges us to recognize God's inclination to use those who the world discounts. Maybe it is you who God wants to use in a powerful way to further His work in this world.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for the unexpected messengers of hope in our lives. As we await the birth of Jesus, help us see Your redemptive work in unexpected places and grant us the courage to embrace your call in our life in all circumstances. Amen.



December 12

Scripture: Ruth 1: 15-2: 3



Ruth, a widow, chose to accompany her mother-in-law, Naomi, back to Bethlehem. Ruth's pledge of loyalty, encapsulated in the profound words, "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God," reveals a spirit of unwavering commitment and loyalty amidst uncertainty.

This act of loyalty and selflessness resonates deeply with the Advent season—a time that calls for devotion and commitment to God's plan and promises. Ruth's decision reflects the trust and hope that Advent embodies, trusting in God's providence despite challenging circumstances.

The story of Ruth and Naomi illustrates the theme of redemption and God's providence. As Ruth gathers grain in Boaz's field, she unknowingly steps into the path of God's provision, foreshadowing the greater provision and redemption that will come through her life.

Advent is a time to remember God's providential care and redemptive plan. Just as Ruth found favor and provision in Boaz's field, the birth of Jesus embodies the ultimate provision and redemption offered to all through God's grace.

As we journey through this season, let us mirror Ruth's commitment and loyalty to God's plan. And like Ruth, trust in God's providence and embrace His redemptive work, ultimately fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the life of Ruth, showcasing loyalty and commitment. As we await the birth of Jesus, help us trust in Your providence and embrace Your redemptive work in our lives. May we mirror Ruth's commitment to Your plan. Amen.

December 13

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Samuel anoints David, the son of Jesse, as the future king of Israel. David, a shepherd boy, was an unlikely choice, yet God saw beyond appearances, looking at the heart. This narrative echoes what is found in Advent - God working in unexpected ways to fulfill His divine plans. Jesus' birth, seemingly ordinary, held extraordinary significance, showing that God often works through the mundane to bring about His purposes.



David's anointing symbolizes God's deliberate choice and divinely orchestrated ways of working. Advent is a season that mirrors this theme, where God's ultimate plan of salvation unfolds through divinely orchestrated events leading to the birth of Jesus. Just as Samuel anointed David, God speaks a word over Jesus as the promised Messiah.

Advent encourages us to acknowledge God's unexpected methods and his ability to work through unlikely circumstances. David's anointing reminds us that God's choices often diverge from human expectations, yet they fulfill His divine plan.

As we prepare for the birth of Christ, let us remember that God's chosen path may not always align with human perception. God's ultimate plan unfolds within His divine orchestration, praise be to God.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for choosing unexpected ways to fulfill Your plan. As we await the birth of Jesus, help us embrace Your unexpected work in our lives. May we trust in Your divine plan, even if it diverges from our expectations. Amen.

December 14

Scripture: 2 Samuel 5: 1-5

David's journey from shepherd to king reflects a powerful intertwining of roles – a shepherd leading his people as king.

These qualities of a king and a shepherd in the one who leads God's people are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

As a shepherd, David's humble beginnings nurtured a heart of care, protection, and guidance. He understood the responsibility of tending to his flock, just

as Jesus tends to us, His people. He is the Good Shepherd who leads us out, protects us, and cares for even the sheep that wanders away.

Jesus embodies this dual role as both King and Shepherd perfectly. He leads with authority, righteousness, and sovereignty as a king, yet His compassion, love, and intimate care resemble that of a shepherd. His sacrificial love on the cross exemplifies the ultimate act of shepherding His people.

As we anticipate the birth of our Savior, may we remember that in Jesus, we have a King who reigns with wisdom and a Shepherd who tenderly cares for our souls. Let us emulate these qualities in our lives; serving with humility, compassion, justice, and a heart dedicated to following God's will. As we celebrate the birth of the King-Shepherd, let's recommit ourselves to follow His example.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the model of leadership displayed by David and fulfilled in Jesus. Help us to lead with the heart of a shepherd and the wisdom of a king, always seeking Your will in our actions. In Jesus' name, Amen.



December 15

Scripture: Isaiah 9: 2-7

Isaiah prophesies the arrival of a great light in the land of deep darkness, foretelling the birth of a child who would bring hope, peace, and a reign of endless justice and righteousness. This passage is the anticipation of Advent, celebrating the birth of Jesus, the ultimate light of hope in a world veiled by darkness.



Amidst the darkness of uncertainty and despair, Isaiah's prophecy illuminates the promise of a radiant light. This light symbolizes the arrival of Jesus, whose birth would dispel the shadows of hopelessness and bring everlasting light and joy to humanity.

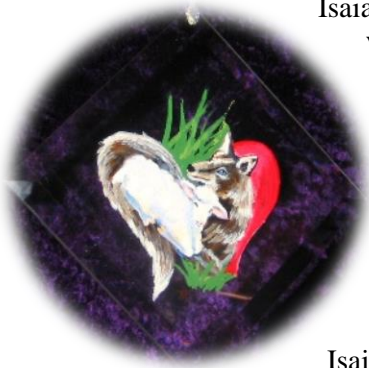
The passage celebrates the reign of a Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace—titles that find their fulfillment in Jesus. Advent invites us to reflect on the hope and peace brought by Christ, the embodiment of God's love and grace.

As we journey through this season, let us embrace the promise of light in the midst of darkness. Isaiah's prophecy reminds us that in Jesus, we find the ultimate source of hope, peace, and justice - lighting our way through the uncertainties of life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the promise of a great light in Jesus. As we await His birth, may His light shine in our lives, bringing hope, peace, and joy to a world in need of Your love. Amen.

December 16

Scripture: Isaiah 11: 6-9



Isaiah's vision of the messianic future paints a vivid picture of a peaceful and harmonious kingdom. The prophecy envisions a world where the wolf dwells with the lamb, the leopard lies down with the goat, and the lion eats straw like the ox. This imagery is impossible by natural means, but gives hope for a world restored and reconciled through the coming Christ.

Isaiah's prophecy speaks of an era of profound peace and unity, where natural enemies coexist in harmony. Advent mirrors this vision of peace and reconciliation brought by Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who would break down walls of hostility and restore peace between God and humanity.

It is the restoration of a broken world, where hostility and enmity are replaced by peace and harmony. It represents the fulfillment of God's promise of redemption and reconciliation through the work of Christ.

As we journey through the Advent season, let us hold onto the promise of a peaceful kingdom foretold by Isaiah. It serves as a reminder of the transformative power of Christ, bringing reconciliation, peace, and unity, not only among people but also within the entirety of creation.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the promise of peace and reconciliation through Jesus. As we anticipate His birth, may His truth bring harmony and unity into our lives and the world, fulfilling Your promise of a peaceful kingdom. Come Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

December 17

Scripture: Micah 5:1-5a

Micah prophesies the birth of a ruler from Bethlehem, whose origins are from of old. This passage anticipates the birth of a great King, Jesus, whose coming we celebrate at Christmas.

The prophecy points to the humble birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, yet His origins are eternal. Micah's words foretell the significance of the birthplace of Jesus, emphasizing the humble yet significant beginnings of the long-awaited ruler.

At Christmas we find the fulfillment of this prophecy, where the Savior's arrival which brings salvation and eternal significance to humanity.

The passage speaks of a ruler who would shepherd his people in the strength of the Lord (tying back to shepherd king David). Yet they must wait for this to happen. Waiting is part of Advent.

As we journey through this season, let us reflect on the prophecy of Micah. It was given 700 years before a pregnant Mary was forced to travel to Bethlehem, and yet it came to pass. And this baby born in the little town of Bethlehem has a greatness that has reached to the ends of the earth. Jesus is God's divine plan that has been unfolding throughout all of history, and continues even today. We are privileged to be part of this great unfolding.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the promise of a ruler fulfilled in Jesus. As we anticipate His birth, may His reign of peace and security resonate in our lives, guiding us in the strength of Your love. Amen.



December 18

Scripture: Daniel 6



In Daniel 6, we witness Daniel's unwavering faithfulness to God despite adversity.

When his enemies sought to discredit him, Daniel remained steadfast in his devotion, trusting God amidst a den of lions. His faithfulness echoes the spirit of Advent, emphasizing unwavering trust and hope, especially in challenging times.

Just as Daniel stood firm in his faith, Advent reminds us to stand unwaveringly in our faith in God's promises. The season represents hope and faith in the coming of the Savior, who brings light into the darkest corners of our lives.

The story of Daniel also reflects God's faithfulness in delivering him from harm. Advent calls us to trust in God's faithfulness, knowing that He delivers, sustains, and protects us in the face of challenges.

As Christmas approaches, let us embody Daniel's unwavering faith and trust in God. His story teaches us to remain steadfast in our hope and faith, knowing that God is faithful and will deliver us in His perfect time.

Prayer: Almighty God, thank you for the example of Daniel's unwavering faith. As we anticipate the birth of Christ, may His light shine in our lives, and may we remain steadfast in our faith, trusting in Your deliverance and grace. Amen.

December 19

Scripture: Habakkuk 2: 1-4

Habakkuk 2:1-4 portrays the prophet's resolve to wait for God's response to his concerns. He positions himself to listen and wait for God's guidance, symbolizing the theme of patient anticipation during the Advent season.

Habakkuk's posture reflects the spirit of Advent—a time to wait with hope and faith for God's promises to unfold. Just as Habakkuk waited for God's response, we anticipate the fulfillment of God's plan through the birth of Jesus.

The passage encourages us to be patient in our anticipation of God's response. Advent is a season that teaches us to wait in faith, trusting that God's timing is perfect and His promises will come to fruition.

Habakkuk's reminder that the righteous shall live by faith resonates through the New Testament and our lives today. It encourages us to live by faith, trusting in God's promises fulfilled in Christ, who brings salvation and eternal hope.

As we journey through this season, let us mirror Habakkuk's patience and faith. His story reminds us to patiently wait in faith for the fulfillment of God's promises, especially as we anticipate the joyous celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the example of patience and faith seen in Habakkuk. As we await the birth of Christ, may we embody patient anticipation, trusting in Your promises and living by faith in Your perfect plan. Amen.



December 20

Scripture: Luke 1: 5-25

Zechariah and Elizabeth are faithful yet childless. Despite their longing for a child, doubt lingered due to their advanced age. Yet, God's promise arrived in the form of an angel who foretold the birth of John the Baptist.

This passage resonates with the message of the Advent season - reminding us of God's faithfulness to fulfill His promises. Just as Zechariah and Elizabeth waited with doubt and uncertainty,

we await the fulfillment of God's promise through Jesus. God's work is not stopped by our doubt, but happens because of God's faithfulness.

Zechariah's initial disbelief reflects the human tendency to doubt, yet God's promise was unwavering. Advent symbolizes God's faithfulness, even in the midst of doubt. Let us hold on in faith and hope.

The angel's message brought not just the promise of a son but the advent of a forerunner to the Messiah. Advent promises not only the birth of Jesus but also the fulfillment of God's plan for redemption.

As we journey through this season, let us reflect on Zechariah and Elizabeth's story. It encourages us to trust in God's promises, even when doubt clouds our expectations, and to await Christmas with hope and certainty in God's faithfulness.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the reminder of Your faithfulness in Zechariah and Elizabeth's story. As we await Christmas, help us trust in Your promises, overcoming doubt and embracing hope in the fulfillment of Your plan. Amen.



December 21

Scripture: Matthew 3: 1-6

John the Baptist emerges as the herald preparing the way for the arrival of Jesus. His call for repentance and baptism should be heard again every Advent season - urging us to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Messiah.

John's message is to repent and turn toward God in anticipation of the Savior. His call for spiritual preparation aligns with the season, prompting us to ready our hearts for the birth of Jesus.



The wilderness in which John preached represents a place of introspection and preparation. Similarly, Advent urges us to create spiritual "wilderness" moments, where we reflect on our lives and align ourselves with God's will. Where will you find the quiet place away from all the holiday activity of Christmas? In the "wilderness" work on spiritual readiness.

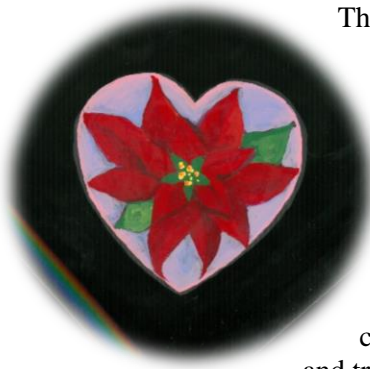
Advent calls us to cleanse our hearts, making way for Christ's arrival and embracing the transformative power of His birth, life, death, and resurrection in our lives.

As we journey through this season, let us reflect on John the Baptist's message. "Prepare the way for the Lord!" His call for spiritual preparedness serves as a reminder for us to reflect, repent, and prepare our hearts for the arrival of Jesus, the long-awaited Savior.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the message of preparation by John the Baptist. As we anticipate the birth of Christ, help us prepare our hearts for His arrival, turning towards You in repentance and readiness. Amen.

December 22

Scripture: Luke 1: 26-38



The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive and give birth to the Son of God. Mary's obedient response of faith embodies the heart God wants within each of us this Advent. Are we ready for the arrival of Jesus and to accept God's divine plan.

Mary's humility and submission to God's will despite the uncertainty of the circumstances stand as a testament to faith and trust. Her response symbolizes the openness and readiness required in the season of Advent.

The passage portrays Mary as the blessed receiver, accepting God's plan for the world's salvation. Similarly, Advent calls us to be open and receptive to God's plan, embracing the gift of His Son, Jesus, with faith and humility.

Mary's courageous response emphasizes the role of a faithful servant, saying, "May it be to me as you have said." Advent calls us to adopt a similar mindset, willingly accepting God's will and purpose in our lives.

As we journey near the end of Advent, let us reflect on Mary's obedience and openness to God's plan. Her humble acceptance teaches us to surrender to God's will and embrace the gift of Jesus with faith and obedience.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the example of Mary's faith and humility. As we anticipate the birth of Christ, may we be open and receptive to Your will, embracing the gift of Jesus with faith and obedience. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 1: 18-25

Joseph learns of Mary's unexpected pregnancy. Despite the social stigma and confusion, Joseph, a righteous man, listens to the angel's message, displaying obedient trust. His response epitomizes the essence of Advent, exemplifying trust in God's divine plan.



Joseph's initial bewilderment and subsequent decision to obey the angel's message mirrors the uncertainty and trust inherent in the Advent season (and most seasons in our lives). It showcases the acceptance of God's plan unfolding in unexpected ways.

Joseph's obedient trust signifies his readiness to embrace God's divine intervention. Similarly, Advent invites us to trust in God's plans, embracing the miraculous birth of Jesus and acknowledging God's work in our lives.


The passage emphasizes the significance of Emmanuel, "God with us" - the incarnation of God in human form. Advent celebrates the reality of God dwelling among us, fostering a deeper sense of trust and connection with Him.

With Christmas in view, let us reflect on Joseph's obedient trust. His faith and willingness to accept God's plan, even amid confusion, serve as a model for us to trust in God's divine workings during Advent and throughout our lives. And the joyful result is that God is with us – Emmanuel.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for the example of Joseph's obedient trust. As we await the birth of Christ, may we exhibit trust in Your plans, embracing the miraculous arrival of Jesus and acknowledging Your presence in our lives. Amen.

December 24

Scripture: Luke 2: 1-5



Mary and Joseph had an arduous journey to Bethlehem, compelled by the Roman decree for a census. This forced journey was not part of their plan, yet it was integral to fulfilling the prophecy of the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem. Their obedience and trust in God's timing amidst inconvenience reveal lessons for us this Christmas Eve.

Mary and Joseph's trek to Bethlehem was a test of their faith and endurance. It speaks to the unpredictability of life and the unexpected turns that can redirect our paths. Our own lives take unexpected turns, pushing us into unforeseen journeys. However, in the midst of such challenges, God's divine purpose unfolds.

Their obedience in following the decree, even when it seemed inconvenient, reflects trust in God's sovereign plan. Likewise, in our own lives, there are instances where we might be called to walk paths we hadn't foreseen or desired. Yet, it's in these unexpected journeys that God often reveals His purpose and fulfills His promises in us and through us.

As we prepare our hearts for the birth of Christ, let's reflect on Mary and Joseph's faith-filled journey. Their willingness to embrace the unexpected serves as a reminder that God's timing and plans supersede our own. It's an encouragement to trust in His divine orchestration, even when circumstances seem inconvenient or uncertain.

This Christmas, let's remember that God can work miracles even in the midst of the most challenging and unexpected situations. Let us trust His perfect timing and have faith that, just as Mary and Joseph's journey led to the birth of our Savior, our own unexpected paths can lead to blessings beyond our imagination.

Prayer: Gracious God, help us to trust Your timing and plans, even when our journey seems unexpected or challenging. Grant us the faith to embrace the paths You lay before us, knowing that Your divine purpose will ultimately bring forth blessings. In Jesus' name, Amen.

December 25

Scripture: Luke 2: 6-21

Jesus is born in Bethlehem, announced by an angel to humble shepherds. The shepherds, after witnessing the miraculous event, spread the news, marveling at the wonder of it all. This passage is the heart of Christmas, the joyous proclamation of the Savior's birth.



The humble setting of Jesus' birth signifies the inclusivity of God's message. Indeed, this is good news of great joy for all people!

The shepherds' joy and excitement upon hearing the angelic proclamation foretell of the jubilant spirit of Christmas as the world hears the good news of Christ. The shepherds' testimony after encountering the infant Jesus exemplifies the need to share the good news with others. Christmas calls us to share the joy of Christ's birth, spreading the message of hope and salvation with the same enthusiasm. It is Good News!

May your Christmas be filled with the hope, joy, peace and love of Christ. May the joyous proclamation of the shepherds be found in your heart and on your lips as we rejoice that the Messiah has come. Merry Christmas!

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the joyous proclamation of Jesus' birth. As we celebrate Christmas, help us share the good news of hope and salvation brought by Christ's arrival, rejoicing in the gift of Your Son. Amen.

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