



Daily Family Readings For Advent

Advent is a great time to reflect on who Jesus is and what he came to do.

As we remember the story of Jesus' birth, the Old Testament passages point us to the importance of Christmas in God's plan of salvation.

As you open the next door on your advent calendars, take the time to read through one of these Bible passages and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.



Day 1
2 Samuel 7:11-15

God Makes a Promise to King David

¹¹ 'The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you:

¹² When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom.

¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.

¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

Discuss

God is talking to King David about what he will do for David.

1. What are your first thoughts?
2. What does God promise David?
3. What will this king do?

God promised David that one of his descendants would rule God's people forever. Throughout these readings we will see who this king is and what he will do for God's people.

Day 2
Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

Discuss

1. What stands out to you as you read this?
2. What does this tell us about God's coming king?
3. What will this king's rule look like?

Here in Isaiah, God reminds us that he has not forgotten his promise to David and starts to show his people what his chosen king will do when he comes.

Day 3
Isaiah 11:1-5

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the
earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
5 Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Discuss

Jesse is the father of David, and here again God reminds his people he has not forgotten his promise a king is coming to save his people.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. How will God be with his chosen king?
3. How will this King behave and act?

Day 4
Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice of one calling:

“In the wilderness prepare
the way for the LORD;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.

5 And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Discuss

Jesse is the father of David, and here again God reminds his people he has not forgotten his promise a king is coming to save his people.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Who is the way being prepared for?
3. What will happen when he comes?

Day 5
Isaiah 40:8-11

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever.”

9 You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

10 See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.

11 He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

Discuss

Isaiah continues to remind God’s people that God has not forgotten them.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Who has come to save God’s people?
3. How will he treat his people?

Day 6

Ezekiel 34:11-14

" 'For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. ¹² As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. ¹³ I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. ¹⁴ I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel

Discuss

God's people are currently in exile. They have no king to rule them, but through the prophet Ezekiel, God reminds them that they have not been forgotten.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Who will come to look after God's people?
3. How will He look after his people?

Day 7
Jeremiah 33:14-17

14 “ ‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

15 “ ‘In those days and at that time
I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line;
he will do what is just and right in the land.

16 In those days Judah will be saved
and Jerusalem will live in safety.
This is the name by which it will be called:
The LORD Our Righteous Savior.’

17 For this is what the LORD says: ‘David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of Israel,

Discuss

Jeremiah reminds the people of Israel that God has not forgotten about them.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. How will God’s people be saved?
3. What do we learn about God’s chosen king?

Day 8
Micah 5:1-2

Marshal your troops now, city of troops,
for a siege is laid against us.

They will strike Israel's ruler
on the cheek with a rod.

² "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times."

Discuss

Through the prophet Mica God continues to remind his people he has not forgotten them. His king is coming but not they way you would expect a king to come.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Has God forgotten about his people and his promise to David?
3. Where will God's king come from?
4. What does God tell us about his chosen king?

Day 9
Micah 5:3-4

Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

4 He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

Discuss

Continuing from yesterday, God tells Israel more about His chosen king.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What will God's king bring to his people?
3. Whose authority will this king have?

Day 10

Isaiah 7:10-13

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹ "Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights."

12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test."

13 Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Discuss

Ahaz is King and is scared because it looks like the enemies of Israel will capture the city of Jerusalem. God sends Isaiah to Ahaz to tell him that God will keep his people safe.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What sign does God give to Ahaz?
3. How does this point us to Jesus?

Day 11

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way” —

³ “a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.’ ”

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Discuss

We now reach the New Testament and begin to see God preparing his people for the coming king.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What was John the Baptist’s job?
3. What was John’s message to God’s people?

Day 12

Matt 1:18-23

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Discuss

We now begin to look at how Matthew describes the Christmas story.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What was unusual about Mary's pregnancy?
3. What two names are given to Mary's child and why are they important?

Day 13

Luke 1:26-33

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Discuss

Here we see the start of Luke's account of Jesus' birth. Gabriel is an important figure in the Old Testament who announces the coming of God's chosen King.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. How do we see the start of God fulfilling his promise to David?
3. What do we learn about Jesus?

Day 14
Luke 1: 34-38

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month.

³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Discuss

Here we continue the story and get more information about the child that will be born.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Why is this birth so special?
3. What do we learn about Jesus?

Day 15
Luke 1: 50-55

His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

- 51 He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
- 52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
- 53 He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
- 54 He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
- 55 to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors."

Discuss

After going to stay with Elizabeth, Mary sings a song of praise to God for what he has done for her.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What has God done for his people?
3. What do we learn about Jesus?

Day 16

Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Discuss

Luke continues his account and we get more details about the coming of Jesus.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Why is it important that Jesus is born in Bethlehem.?
3. Would a king usually be born in a stable? What does this tell us about Jesus?

Day 17
Luke 2:8-14

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth, peace to those on whom his favor rests."

Discuss

God wanted to make sure that people knew that his chosen King had arrived. Here we get to see the birth announcement.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What did the angels tell the shepherd?
3. Why do you think the angels were singing God's praises?

Day 18

Luke 2:15-20

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Discuss

Now we see how the shepherds responded to the angels' message

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What did the shepherds do after the angels left?
3. How did they respond to meeting Jesus?

Day 19

Matthew 2:1-8

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

6 " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

Discuss

We now move to Matthew's account to see what happens after that first night.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Who were the wise men looking for?
3. How did the wise men know Jesus was special?

Day 20

Matt 2:9-12

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Discuss

We now get to see how the Wise Men respond to meeting Jesus. Gold is a gift for a king, myrrh is a spice used in embalming and frankincense is used in temple offerings.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What do the Wise Men do when they meet Jesus?
3. What do the gifts tell us about Jesus' life?

Day 21
Matt 2:13-15

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

14 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Discuss

After Jesus was born life does not get easier for Mary and Joseph.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. How does God protect his chosen King?
3. Why do you think Matthew includes this story?

Day 22

Matt 2:19-23

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."

21 So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Discuss

After Jesus was born life does not get easier for Mary and Joseph

1. what are your first impressions?
2. How does God protect his chosen King?
3. Why do you think Matthew includes this story?

Day 23
Luke 2:25-33

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

- 29** "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.
30 For my eyes have seen your salvation,
31 which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel."
33 The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

Discuss

After Jesus is born his parents take him to the temple and Luke tells us some important things about what Jesus has come to do.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. What was Simeon waiting for?
3. What do we learn about what Jesus came to do?

Day 24

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Discuss

For the last 2 days we have had a chance to see what John has to say about why the Christmas story is so significant. John, at the start of his gospel, starts to describe Jesus as “the Word”

1. What are your first impressions
2. How important is this Word?
3. What does this tell us about Jesus?

Day 25

John 1:14-18

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ") **16** Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

Discuss

John continues to describe Jesus.

1. What are your first impressions?
2. Why is Christmas so important?
3. What did Jesus come to do?

