



Advent Reflection

2023

Tell me the old, old story – a reflection

Jesus did not suddenly appear unannounced. His coming was promised in the Old Testament and a family was prepared for him to be born into – the nation of Israel. These readings, which could be used during the last week of Advent, remind us of the long story of why and how 'God sent His Son'.



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'Nativity' Ben White (Unsplash)

Day 1

Genesis 12:3b

The Lord promised Abraham, 'and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you'.

Almost two thousand years before Jesus came, his ancestor Abraham received this astonishing promise. Through his family would come blessing to all nations. Today we see how the promise has come to pass, first through the coming of Jesus into the world, sent by his Father, and then through what he did for us, the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus going forth all over the world.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you that you kept your promise to Abraham and today we can see that the message of Jesus has gone to the nations. I pray for the work of sharing the gospel, especially (...name a country or some missionaries). May your good news continue to be shared everywhere. Amen.

Day 6

Matthew 2:11

'On coming into the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him'.



'the-three magi 32' [Inbal Malca](#) (Unsplash) inbal-malca-NhIKx6Uvm3E-unsplash

The wise men who came searching for the King who would be born found him at last. And what did they do? They worshiped. It is true that Jesus is our Saviour. But he is also our Lord, and we do not know him if we fail to worship him, speaking his praises and seeking to please him in all things all our life long.

Prayer

Almighty God, I worship you, Three Persons in One God, trusting in you each day. Help me to live my life seeking to please you in all things. Help me to seek and find the good works you want me to walk in each day. Amen.

Day 5

Matthew 1:21

The angel said to Joseph, 'You shall give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins'.

Most names have a meaning. The name Jesus means 'Saviour' and it also has the form 'Joshua', who was one of the great saving heroes of the Old Testament. But while Joshua saved God's people from human enemies, Jesus, the real Saviour, saves us from our sins. We are guilty and deserve judgement. Because Jesus came amongst us, because he lived a perfect life, because he defeated Satan, and especially because he died and rose again, he defeated the worst enemy which we could have – our own sins. In him we have the priceless gift of forgiveness.

Prayer

Dear Lord, I thank you with all my heart for our Saviour Jesus and for the forgiveness which he brings. I repent of my sins (especially...) and ask once again for your forgiveness. Help me also to forgive others and live at peace with them. Amen

Day 2

Isaiah 11:1

'A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse'.



Dan Kiefer (Unsplash) dan-kiefer-uPI8fJ5Ce2M-unsplash

Ruth, the Moabite, whose story is found in the book named after her, became the grandmother of Jesse, who is famous for being the father of King David. God kept working through this family to keep his promises. King David himself was promised a son who would occupy the throne forever, a true 'shoot from the stump of Jesse'. His name is Jesus and he is the King of Kings.

Prayer

Gracious Lord, thank you for the faithful witness of Ruth and of her great-grandson, David. Thank you that in due course Jesus was born and that he is the King of all Kings. Help us (...pray for your church) to worship him as we should. Amen

Day 3

Isaiah 7:14

‘Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and will give birth to a son, and will call him Emmanuel’

The Lord never gave up his plan to bless the world though the family of Abraham. We learn that he intended to fulfil his promises through a special man. His birth is here foretold with a name that signals who he really is – Emmanuel – which means, ‘God with’us . When Jesus was born the Son of God become one of us, both human and divine. No wonder his birth is marked by the great miracle that his mother was a virgin.

Prayer

Father Almighty, thank you for the faith and obedience of Mary. Thank you for the coming of Jesus, our Emmanuel. Thank you that this means that you are with us. Today I pray for my family (...name family members), that all may know about your wonderful love that brought Jesus into our world. Amen.

Day 4

Matthew 1:1

Matthew begins his Gospel with these words: ‘This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham’.



Aaron Burden (Unsplash) aaron-burden-J2XuOsy4mJE-unsplash

Jesus is the child of promise. Unlike us, when God makes a promise, he keeps it to the end. In Jesus all the promises of God come true. He is the one through whom all the nations are blessed, and he is the King of Kings. He is our only hope in life or in death and he is the mediator between God and humanity. How wonderful God is! We can trust him always.

Prayer

Thank you, heavenly Father, that you are a promise-keeping God and that your word is so powerful. I pray for my own community (...name) and ask that many people around us will put their trust in Jesus as the hope of the world. Amen.