



Advent

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL
OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
DECEMBER 2020

ADVENT FAMILY DEVOTIONAL
OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
DECEMBER 2020



Contents

Dec 18 Anticipating the Coming Messiah.....	2
Dec 19 Preparation for the Messiah.....	4
Dec 20 Joyful Expectation of the Messiah.....	7
Dec 21 The Kingdom of the Messiah.....	9
Dec 22 The Salvation of the Messiah.....	12
Dec 23 The Presence of the Messiah.....	14
Dec 24 Adoring the Messiah	16
Dec 25 Peace in the Messiah	18



December 18

Anticipating the Coming Messiah

Written by Chris Reeser

READ *Isaiah 9:2, 6-7*

Christmas is the most anticipated holiday on the calendar! Ask each other, “what do you anticipate about Christmas?” Or, if there’s another holiday/time of the year, “why do you look forward to it?” You’ll hear many different reasons to anticipate the coming holiday (gifts, family, food, etc.). They are all good reasons and they are all part of the larger reason for the season . . . Jesus’ birth! Looking back, for those in the days of Isaiah, the nation of Judah was being judged for their disobedience to God. He was sending another nation to invade, as a consequence. God was reminding His people that He is the only God worthy of worship and He would eventually send a savior to reign . . . but they would have to wait . . . with anticipation. Isaiah was foretelling them of Jesus! Read again Isaiah 9:6-7 . . . imagine the good news of peace in the time of war, rest in the time of unrest, and a counselor in the time of uncertainty. Amen! Of course, Jesus was not quite the king they were expecting . . . they were expecting a mighty warrior who would establish an earthly kingdom. Looking back, we know that Jesus, a mighty servant, came to establish a spiritual kingdom. Jesus came to live and die for the sins of everyone, everywhere.

He would conquer our sins on the cross and conquer death by rising from the dead . . . Hallelujah! We look back with celebration of Jesus' birth, and we look forward with anticipation that He will return and reign with justice and righteousness!

PRAY

Father, we thank you for Jesus coming as our Savior. We celebrate his birth, we put our faith in His death and resurrection, and we anticipate His coming again. Be with us now as we live our lives with great expectation for the coming King!

SING

Unto Us a Child is Born



Unto Us



RESPOND

How do you think the people of Judah felt with Isaiah's proclamation? How do you celebrate Jesus' birth? Now, how do you live your life knowing that Jesus could return at any moment?



December 19

Preparation for the Messiah

Written by Sharon Barnes

READ *Isaiah 40:3-5, Matthew 3:1-3*

What are some things you do to prepare for your birthday? Isaiah foretold of the birth of Jesus, some 700 years before it happened. In Isaiah 40:3-5, it says, *“A messenger is calling out, ‘In the desert prepare the way for the Lord. Make a straight road through it for our God. Every valley will be filled in. Every mountain and hill will be made level. The rough ground will be smoothed out. The rocky places will be made flat. Then the glory of the Lord will appear. And everyone will see it.”*

What does it mean to prepare for something? The word “prepare” means to get ready, to put together, and to plan in advance. In Matthew 3:1-3, we learn that John the Baptist was sent by God as a messenger to prepare the world for the birth of Jesus, the Messiah! Why do we celebrate Christmas? What did John the Baptist do to prepare for the Messiah? Let’s celebrate the Good News of Jesus by making a birthday cake! Things you will need: 1-white cake mix / 1-chocolate cake mix / White frosting / Red and green liquid food coloring / Candles Instructions: In advance, bake a chocolate cake layer as directed on the box. Prepare the white cake mix and separate into two bowls. Add red food coloring to one bowl and green to the other. Bake as directed. Gather your

family to assemble the cake and discuss the symbolism. Begin decorating your cake by placing the chocolate cake layer on a plate first. Cover with white frosting. Add the red cake layer and cover with frosting. Finally, add the green cake layer and cover the entire cake with white frosting. Round Cake Layers: The round cake represents the world. Jesus came to the world. The cake shape is round, a circle that never ends. Just like God's love. *"God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life."* John 3:16

- **Chocolate Layer:** The darkness represents sin. It reminds us that our heart is full of sin. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23

- **Red Layer:** The red represents the blood that Jesus shed on the cross for our sins. *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:8

- **Green Layer:** The green represents growth. When we accept Jesus' forgiveness, we have new life in Jesus and begin to grow. *"Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old has gone! The new has come!"* 2 Corinthians 5:17

- **White Frosting:** The white frosting represents purity. When we accept Jesus as our Savior and confess our sin to Him, He forgives us and cleanses us white as snow. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:9

- **Candle:** The candle reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the world. *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."* Matthew 5:16

PRAY

Thank God for sending His Son into the world. Ask God to help you tell others about the Good News of Jesus!

SING

Silent Night



RESPOND

Share the meaning of the cake with family and/or friends who don't know Jesus!



December 20

Joyful Expectation of the Messiah

Written by Dennis Dean

READ *Luke 1:26-33*

Ask everyone what it means when they hear these words spoken. *We've been expecting you! Where have you been? I thought you'd never get here! I was about to lose hope! This is as slow as Christmas.* Now, explain to everyone you are waiting for a special delivery. Tell everyone while they are waiting you will give them a description of what you are waiting for. Pass out blank sheets of paper and ask them to draw what they think it might be.

Clues:

It comes in many shapes and colors.

The more it dries, the wetter it gets.

It's always on sale in January.

Athletes use it every time they play.

It can be very expensive or it can be very cheap.

Everybody needs one sometime during the day.

Suddenly pull out the surprise, which is a stack of towels. Ask everyone if this is what they were expecting? Why or why not? Explain that it fits the description you gave, but when it finally arrived, it was not what you thought it would be. That is exactly

what happened when God sent His Son to the earth as the long-expected Messiah. God's people had been waiting hundreds of years for the arrival of a promised Deliverer. His coming had been foretold in the Old Testament by men known as prophets. The people were looking for a king to come rule and reign. However, as had been predicted, He came the first time as a suffering servant for the sins of the world. There are many other prophecies to be fulfilled when He comes the second time.

PRAY

Thank you Jesus for coming to suffer and be the Savior of the World. Thank you Father, for being the servant that we needed instead of being the king that everyone was expecting. Help us to remember that you are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, so we can live in joyful expectation that you will come again.

SING

O Come, O Come Emmanuel



RESPOND

Why is it important to trust the prophecies of the Bible? What keeps people from recognizing Jesus today? Before it is too late, what should believers be doing if they are living in joyful expectation of the Messiah?

December 21

The Kingdom of the Messiah

Written by Carson Windle



READ *Luke 1:26-33, Mark 1:14-15*

"In the sixth month, the angel, Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'"

Luke 1:26-33

"Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'"

Mark 1:14-15

The time has come. Jesus, the King of kings, has come to establish his kingdom. The people of Israel had been waiting with anticipation for this day. The angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her that the Son she would bear would be a great King and that his kingdom would never end. We live in times of uncertainty, but one thing we can be sure of is that the Kingdom of God will never end. In Mark 1:14-15, Jesus is beginning his ministry and the first thing he says is, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel."* Jesus is laying out the groundwork for how to be a citizen of his kingdom. All one has to do is repent and believe in the gospel. The word repent means "to turn away from". To be in the kingdom of God, one must turn away from their sin and selfish ways and submit to Jesus. The second part of what Jesus says is that one must believe in the gospel to be in the kingdom. The Good News of Jesus coming to earth is that we cannot earn our way into the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus came, lived a sinless life, died a death reserved for us, and rose on the third day. He took our place, and offers us forgiveness for our sins, and freely invites us to live as citizens in his kingdom. As citizens of God's kingdom, our job is to reflect our king to the world around us.

PRAY

Thank God for sending Jesus to build his kingdom here. Thank God for the gift of salvation and the invitation to live as kingdom citizens. Ask God to help you reflect him better to the world around you.

SING

He Shall Reign Forevermore



RESPOND

Take time to allow all family members to talk about when they repented and believed the gospel. If your children are not yet saved, ask them what it means to repent and believe.



December 22

The Salvation of the Messiah

Written by Ethan Jago

READ *John 1:14, Matthew 1:21*

As a family, go around and ask each person in your group how they have ever received glory for something (achievement in sports, accolades, praise from teachers) and how did it make them feel? Why is it important to recognize people when they do good things? In John 1:14, we see the writer introduce us to doctrine in the beginning of his Gospel. Jesus is the Word (John 1:1). Jesus came to earth as fully God as His Son and lived with us. When Jesus was living on the earth, we saw His glory through the miracles He performed on the earth and how he interacts with His creatures and creation. The glory that Jesus was displaying is much different than the glory we pay tribute to each other with sports, school, and work. The glory that Jesus was displaying was giving to us Grace and Truth. Grace was extended to us by His actions on the cross, and Truth that he opened our eyes and revealed Himself to us as God's son. The coming salvation of Jesus as the Messiah was proclaimed to Mary in Matthew 1:21.

The grace and truth, that displayed the glory, is found in the answer at the end of this verse. “...*he will save his people from their sins.*” This is the glory that was displayed for us and for our benefit. The glory we receive on earth as humans lasts only for a short time. The glory Jesus displayed on the cross for our salvation is a continuing work!

PRAY

Thank the Lord for what he has done for us and for showing his glory.

SING

The Doxology



RESPOND

Talk as a group about what salvation is, and the implications of Jesus coming as God’s Son.



December 23

The Presence of the Messiah

Written by Jon Huff

READ *Matthew 1:22-23*

Have you ever wished you were Royalty? What would you do if you were king or queen for a day? In Matthew 1, we see a long list of Royalty. Name after name, we learn about the father passing his royal line to the child. Everything changes as Jesus is introduced in Verse 18. Jesus was part of David's royal line, but was born miraculously not as a child of Joseph, but the firstborn of God. Jesus was Royalty, in the line of King David and as God himself. Most Royalty are kept far away from their people. High fences and armed guards make most kings and queens inaccessible and unapproachable. This is not so with King Jesus. Jesus was called Immanuel, which means "God with us". God became a baby, who grew to be a man, who would die for our sins, so that we could know Jesus in a personal way. You know a King, he is a friend and he wants to speak to you and hear from you in a personal way.

PRAY

Spend some time thanking God for His nearness.

SING

Hark the Herald Angels Sing



RESPOND

How does God speak to us? Spend a couple minutes talking about how God has spoken to you from Scripture.



December 24

Adoring the Messiah

Written by Tim Hunter

READ *Matthew 2:9-11*

"After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." Matthew 2:9-11

What is something that you absolutely love? Who is someone in your life that you love? We all have people that we love in our lives, and we all have things in our life that we love and enjoy. These verses show us that Jesus is not just someone to obey, or someone to sing a couple songs about each Christmas. Rather, He is a person to love, the Messiah to Adore! We see that the wise men traveled on a long journey just to see Jesus, and they came with presents! Who do we give presents to at Christmas? We give them to those we love! The wise men recognized how amazing Jesus the Messiah was, and because of that, they showed him love and adoration. Even more, today we can look back and see all that Jesus has done for us, and how truly amazing He is. He is the

Holy God. He came to save us from our sins. He came to meet our needs. He is the one who gives us relationship with God. He seeks and saves the lost. He destroys the works of Satan. He is the only one who can satisfy our hearts forever, and His love is endless and incomparable to anything else. How could we not adore Jesus? Christmas is not just about a baby in a manger, it is about the Messiah to love. It is not just about acknowledging Jesus, but adoring Jesus. This Christmas, let us adore Him together! Go to the Candlelight Service this evening at the Pensacola Campus – 4pm/6pm/11 pm.

PRAY

Spend some time thanking God for His nearness.

SING

O Come Let Us Adore Him



RESPOND

Ask everyone, how we can adore Jesus today? How can we forget to adore Jesus in this Christmas season?

***CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT
PENSACOLA CAMPUS | 4PM, 6PM, & 11PM
FREE TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE MAIN OFFICE***



December 25

Peace in the Messiah

Written by Robert Lloyd

READ *Luke 2:12-14*

Wow, 2020 is almost over! This has been a messed up year! We have had Covid-19, hurricanes, the Bay Bridge shut-down, businesses temporarily closed, job loss for many, and our church shut down for six weeks. On top of all of this, we have gone through a very contentious Presidential election. We have watched as our elected officials behave like spoiled children. On second thought, I believe spoiled children behave better than that!

Today it's Christmas! This is supposed to be the most magical, wonderful time of the year! My wife starts decorating for Christmas before Thanksgiving. We watch Hallmark Christmas movies for weeks! We begin preparing for our family coming at Christmas, exchanging gifts, and all the wonderful parts of Christmas that make it so great! Yet, in Luke 2:12-14, we are reminded that none of these things that we do each year are the real reason for the season. In Luke 2, we find a group of shepherds *"keeping watch over their flock by night. And, an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them"*. Luke 2:8-9 We hear the conclusion of the message in verses 12-14, that the Angel brought to these shepherds.

Pretend for a moment that you are one of these shepherds. Listen to what is going on around you; you hear the sheep as they lay resting on the hillside. You hear a soft breeze blowing around you. Perhaps you hear the sounds of other wild animals who are living in the hillside around you. What are you thinking about on this night? Your family that you are separated from while you are out here taking care of these sheep? Perhaps. Perhaps you are thinking that this is really a pretty boring job I have! I am out here in this rugged land just simply guiding these sheep from one pasture to the next. Perhaps you are about to doze off. But then, the Bible says “suddenly”! How fast is “suddenly”? In a moment, God interrupts these shepherd’s lives in order to give them this most amazing message, *“you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger.”* Isn’t it just like God to surprise us! God is a specialist at creating moments of divine wonder! Ask yourself, what was the significance of the message? First of all, God was telling the shepherds that He had kept His Word, and fulfilled His promise to send the Messiah! Our God is the God of kept promises! Secondly, we see that our God desires peace on earth “among men”. Let’s face it, 2020 has been a year that is anything but peaceful! So how do we achieve such “peace”? I believe the answer is found in the last statement of v.14, *“with whom He is pleased”*. So, how do we please God? We please God when we enter into a personal relationship with this Messiah that the shepherds were told about! Romans 10:9 tells us how to do that; *“confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* May each of you find peace this Christmas!

PRAY

Father, I pray for your peace during this Christmas season. May we all be found to be men and women, boys and girls, with whom you are well pleased. In Jesus name, Amen.

SING

Joy to the World



RESPOND

Have you ever met the Messiah that this passage speaks of personally? What is holding you back today? There is no greater gift you could ever receive than to receive the free, gift of salvation the Messiah offers you today!

Merry
Christmas!



