

ADVENT

Awaiting The Messiah Who Came and Will Come Again (Prophecy, Fulfillment, Consummation)

A few notes about this study:

- It's simply an arrangement of the scriptures into 24 sections that can be used each day from December 1 - December 24 to keep everyone's focus on Jesus.
- Each Day is broken down into 3 main sets of scripture:
 - **Prophecy** - Old Testament foretelling about the coming Messiah
 - **Fulfillment** - Jesus' fulfillment of the prophecy during His earthly life
 - **Consummation** - Jesus' ultimate completion in His second coming
 - The entire reading for the day is less than 1 page, and it's intentionally kept short with a child's attention span in mind.
 - Since we jump around to so many books and verses, a brief context is provided.
 - I used the colors purple, pink, and blue in keeping with the traditional Advent colors (which are actually debatable and ultimately irrelevant)
- Along with the daily scripture, each post includes examination questions for you to use or add to as you see fit.
- On a few days, I also provide additional insights to illuminate the greater biblical and/or historical context of the passage.
- I tried to maintain a balance between the following (in order of importance):
 - Getting the intended message of scripture across fully and clearly
 - Making it as concise and short as possible
- The implementation with your family should be very laid back and simple.
 - Just read it each day as a family and talk about it. That's it.
 - It shouldn't take you more than 10 to 20 minutes.
 - We're using this along with a Lego advent calendar (see the last page), but that is absolutely not necessary
 - There are also songs, videos, and coloring pages to go along with each day's theme that can be found at <https://biblebasedfamily.com/advent>

I pray that these Scriptures will bless your family and point them to the only reason for this and every season.

Sincerely In Christ,
Daniel Dixon



December 1 **A Blessing For All Nations Through Abraham**

Prophecy: Abram's father, Terah, set out to Canaan (Israel) from Ur (Iraq) with his family but settled in Haran (Turkey) instead. After his father's death, God gave Abram this command and promise despite his wife Sarai's inability to have children.

Genesis 12:1-3 – Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”



Fulfillment: In this part of Paul's letter to the Gentile (non-Jewish) church in Galatia, he reminds them that salvation comes by faith and not works, just as it was promised to and exhibited by Abraham.

Galatians 3:8,14 – Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”... **14** He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Consummation: The apostle John is given a vision of what eternity will look like. In the midst of God's servants from Israel and several heavenly beings, he also sees all nations.

Revelation 7:9-10 – After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, **10** and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Examination:

- What did God promise to do through Abraham?
- How did God accomplish His blessing to all nations?
- What does God's blessing through Jesus mean for the future?

December 2

The Rightful Ruler from Judah Over All Nations

Prophecy: Jacob is foretelling a blessing on each of his sons (The 12 Tribes of Israel) while on his deathbed. Judah is given preeminence over his brothers and this promise.

Genesis 49:9-10 – You are a lion’s cub, Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him? **10** The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.



Fulfillment: Jesus’ genealogies connect Him to Judah, David, and others in two ways: physically by birth through Mary (Luke 3) and legally by adoption through Joseph (Matthew 1).

Luke 3:23,33,38 – Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli... **33** the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah... **38** the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Consummation: In the apostle John’s vision of the end times, he sees God’s hand holding a scroll with seven seals that represent judgments. Up until this point, no one in heaven or on earth is found worthy to open them.

Revelation 5:5b-6a,9-10,12b – “See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” **6** Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders... **9** And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. **10** You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth... **12b** “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Insights:

- Most Jewish and Christian scholars agree that “He to whom it belongs” or “Shiloh” (Genesis 49:10) referred to the coming Messiah.
- That means there would have to be a king and ruler in Judah until the Messiah came.
- During Babylonian captivity, the kings were subjugated, but judges remained to uphold the law and rule (Ezra 7).
- In 6-7 A.D., Herod Archelaus was exiled and rule was taken over by the Romans. The Bible and the Talmud also agree that the Jews lost their power to enforce the law as seen in the appeal to Pilot for capital punishment (John 18:31).
- So, at that time, some would say, “Woe unto us for the scepter has departed from Judah and the Messiah has not come.”
- Of course, we know that Jesus was already a young child living in Nazareth.

Examination:

- Why is Jesus called “The Lion of Judah”?
- What makes Jesus worthy to take the scepter and open the seals?
- What does Jesus’ rule mean for His followers?

December 3

A Prophet Better Than Moses

Prophecy: Deuteronomy means “second law” or “repeated law.” While Moses reiterates the importance of loving and obeying God in the land of Canaan, he also gives Israel hope for an even better prophet to come.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 – The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. **16** For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.” **17** The Lord said to me: “What they say is good. **18** I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. **19** I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name.



Fulfillment: The Jewish leaders were persecuting Jesus because He had healed a man on the Sabbath and claimed equality with God (John 5:18). Jesus calls them out, not for relying on the Old Testament, but missing the fact that it is actually about Himself.

John 5:39-40,45-47 – You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, **40** yet you refuse to come to me to have life... **45** “But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. **46** If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. **47** But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?”

Consummation: As the name suggests, Hebrews was written for the Jews to show them how Jesus fulfills the Old Testament as the promised Messiah, securing salvation and offering eternal hope.

Hebrews 3:3-6,4:14-16 – Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. **4** For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. **5** “Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house,” bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. **6** But Christ is faithful as the Son over God’s house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory... **4:14** Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. **16** Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Examination:

- What kind of prophet did God promise to send?
- What does Jesus claim about the Scriptures?
- What does Jesus as the better Moses and Great High Priest mean for believers?

December 4

The Root of Jesse and Son of David

Prophecy: Isaiah was a prophet in Judah during the 8th and 7th century BC, serving from King Uzziah to King Hezekiah. While foretelling about the impending exile, he also foretold specific details of the coming Messiah and His final kingdom.

Isaiah 11:1-11a – 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. **6** The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. **7** The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. **8** The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. **9** They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. **10** In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious. **11** In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people.



Fulfillment: As Paul and Barnabas came into new towns on their missionary journeys, they would often begin by sharing the gospel at a local synagogue (Jewish church). At Pisidian Antioch (Turkey) on a Sabbath, Paul shows how Jesus fits into and completes the Old Testament.

Acts 13:22-23, 36-39 – After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.’ **23** “From this man’s descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised... **36** “Now when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed. **37** But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay. **38** “Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. **39** Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.

Consummation: This is the last chapter in the Bible. John’s revelatory vision has concluded, and Jesus is making His final written appeal to all people.

Revelation 22:12-14,16-17 – “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. **13** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. **14** “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city... **16** “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.” **17** The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

Examination:

- What was Root of Jesse supposed to be and to do?
- What is the difference between David and his root, Jesus?
- How do we come to Jesus in response to His final call?

December 5

The Lord Over David

Prophecy: This song of King David addresses three figures: “The Lord” (Yahweh, God the Father), “lord” (Adonai, the Messiah), and “Melchizedek” (The King of Salem and High Priest of the Lord forever from Genesis 14 and Hebrews 5-7).

Psalm 110:1-4 – The Lord says to my lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” **2** The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying, “Rule in the midst of your enemies!” **3** Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy splendor, your young men will come to you like dew from the morning’s womb. **4** The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”



Fulfillment: In Matthew, after Jesus has masterfully answered several trap questions from the religious leaders, He asks one of His own about the Messiah from Psalm 110 that they cannot answer. In Acts, Peter proclaims this same passage at Pentecost along with the previously missing answer.

Matthew 22:41-46, Acts 2:32-36 – While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, **42** “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied. **43** He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, **44** “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.” **45** If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” **46** No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions... **Acts 2:32** God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. **33** Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. **34** For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand **35** until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”” **36** “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

Consummation: Some scholars believe that Melchizedek was the preincarnate Jesus. Others think that he was a representation of the Christ to come. Either way, the writer of Hebrews focuses on this connection to show how Jesus is our perfect, everlasting King and High Priest:

Hebrews 7:17,22,25-27 – For it is declared: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek”... **22** Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant... **25** Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. **26** Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. **27** Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

Examination:

- What two offices or positions was the Messiah supposed to hold?
- How can the Messiah be King David’s Lord if He is born after David as his son?
- What does Jesus as King and High Priest mean for His followers?

December 6

Born of a Virgin and Named Immanuel

Prophecy: The nation of Israel had been split into northern and southern kingdoms for generations, and the northern kingdom was planning to overpower Jerusalem in the south. To a terrified king Ahaz in the south, Isaiah brings God's message of hope for their time and an even bigger sign for the future.



Isaiah 7:14 – Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Fulfillment: This is the beginning of the incarnation (which means “taking on flesh” or “God becoming human”). While people mainly speak about Jesus’ virgin birth (as confirmed in Matthew 1:25), here we see the beginning of His human life with His virgin conception.

Luke 1:26b-28,30b-31,34-35 & Matthew 1:19-23 – 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”... **30b** “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... **34** “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... **Mt 1:19** 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”).

Consummation: Paul is using a metaphor with the church at Galatia that compares the position of a slave and a child to the master of the house. Both are in subjection under guardians until the child comes of age. And, until Christ came, we were all held under the law and in slavery to sin:

Galatians 4:4-7 – But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. **6** Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” **7** So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Examination:

- What is so significant about Jesus’ virgin conception and birth?
- Why was Jesus called “Immanuel”?
- How do we go from being slaves of sin to heirs with Jesus?

December 7 **Born in Bethlehem a Shepherd with Greatness Reaching the Whole Earth**

Prophecy: Writing in the 8th century BC, Micah speaks about God's judgment and forgiveness to a nation facing exile and to a future hope in the last days when God will firmly establish His eternal kingdom.

Micah 5:2-4 – “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.” **3** 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.



Fulfillment: Whether Jesus was actually born on December 25th or not, this is the real story of Christmas Day.

Luke 2:1-11 – In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. **2** This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. **3** And all went to be registered, each to his own town. **4** And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, **5** to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. **6** And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. **7** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. **8** 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.

Consummation: This is the benediction (or concluding blessing) to the book of Hebrews about our Great Shepherd, Jesus.

Hebrews 13:20-21 – Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, **21** equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Examination:

- Name at least 4 truths we learn about the Messiah from Micah's prophecy.
- Why does the concept of shepherding surround Jesus?
- How and why does God work through His believers?

December 8

The True Israel Called Out of Egypt



Prophecy: The 8th century BC prophet Hosea spoke to Israel about God's faithfulness despite their idolatrous adultery. While he's directly referring to the nation of Israel, it also extends to the True Israel and True Son of God.

Hosea 11:1 – When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

Fulfillment: Time has passed since Jesus' birth, and the young family now has a proper house in Bethlehem. We do not know the exact age of Jesus, but he is referred to as a "child" instead of a baby and must have been under 2 considering Herod's treacherous child eradication order (Matthew 2:16).

Matthew 2:10-11,13-15,19-20,22-23a – When [the wise men] saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. **11** 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... **13** Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." **14** And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt **15** and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son"... **19** 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"... **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, **23a** and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth.

Consummation: Hebrews 12 compares the Israelites' fear at Mount Sinai after coming out of slavery in Egypt to all believers' final joy at Mount Zion (God's dwelling place) after coming out of slavery in the personified Egypt of sin at the end of the age.

Hebrews 12:18-19,21-24a,28-29 – You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; **19** to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them... **21** The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." **22** But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, **23** to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, **24** to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant... **28** Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, **29** for our "God is a consuming fire."

Insights:

- **Israel** – A nation called out of Egypt, baptized by the Red sea (1 Cor. 10:2), sent to wander the wilderness, and given the promised land of Canaan.
- **Jesus** – The True Israel called out of Egypt, baptized by John, sent to be tempted in the wilderness, and who offers God's ultimate promised land.
- **Believers** – Grafted into Israel (Rom. 11:17), called out of sin, baptized in the Spirit, living in a wilderness world, and waiting for the final promised land.

Examination:

- How does Jesus' coming out of Egypt parallel with Israel's exodus?
- What do we learn about Jesus from the wise men's journey and gifts?
- How are believers also to be called out of Egypt?

December 9

His Arrival is Prepared by a Voice in the Wilderness

Prophecy: Malachi prophecies after the return of Israel from their Babylonian exile, approximately 400 years before Jesus' birth. While he declares God's final judgment as the nation continues to break God's covenant, he also echoes Isaiah's pre-exile message about the coming messenger who will prepare the way for the Messiah and usher in a new covenant.



Isaiah 40:2-5, Malachi 3:1,4:5 – Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. **3** 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... **Mal 3:1** "I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty... **4:5** See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes."

Fulfillment: Context – John the Baptist, not to be confused with the disciple John who wrote the book, was a relative of Jesus, miraculously conceived by two elderly parents, filled with the Holy Spirit before birth, and born to prepare the way for the Messiah (Luke 1). He spent His time in the wilderness preaching the message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 3:2).

John 1:19,23-27,29-31,34 – Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was... **23** John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" **24** Now the Pharisees who had been sent **25** questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" **26** "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. **27** He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie"... **29** The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' **31** I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel... **34** I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."

Consummation: After enacting judgment on both Satan and the entire world at the end of the age, God's promised restoration through Jesus has come at last.

Revelation 21:1-4 – Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. **2** I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. **4** 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Examination:

- Who was John the Baptist, and what did he come to do?
- What do we learn about Jesus from John's message?
- What does life look like for believers at the end of the age?

December 10

A Great Light to People Walking in Darkness

Prophecy: Isaiah has been relaying the doom and gloom coming toward northern Israel with the impending Assyrian invasion, but Chapter 9 reveals a reversal of this fate with a promise to bring the True Light into their darkness.

Isaiah 9:1-2 – Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations,

by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan— **2** The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.



Fulfillment: In Matthew, Jesus is beginning His ministry after being baptized by John, confirmed by the Holy Spirit, and tested by Satan in the wilderness. In John, Jesus is addressing the religious leader's questions about who He is, including a slight about prophets not coming from Galilee.

Matthew 4:13-17, John 8:12 – Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— **14** to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: **15** “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— **16** the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” **17** From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near” ... **Jn. 8:12** When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Consummation: At the end of the age, the sun, moon, stars, and even light itself will no longer be needed. They were created for this world, but there will be a new heaven and a new earth where the Godhead is all-in-all.

Revelation 21:23-27 – The city [of Heaven] does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. **24** The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. **25** On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. **26** The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. **27** Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Examination:

- How does the concept of light play a role throughout the biblical narrative?
- What was Jesus' preaching as His primary message?
- Who does and does not enter into Heaven?

December 11

A Miracle Worker Who Brings Freedom

Prophecy: Isaiah has been contrasting the worthlessness of idols to the power of God as Israel's Helper, and he specifically shows what this help will look like in the coming Messiah.

Isaiah 42:1,6b-7,61:1b-3 – “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations... **6b** I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, **7** to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness... **61:1b** The Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, **2** to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, **3** and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.



Fulfillment: In Luke, Jesus returns to His hometown of Nazareth to begin His ministry by declaring His Messianic connection to the book of Isaiah. In Matthew, Jesus again confirms this connection to John the Baptist, not by what He says but by proof in what He does.

Luke 4:16-21, Matthew 11:2-6 – He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, **17** and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: **18** “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, **19** to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” **20** Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. **21** He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing”... **Mt. 11:2** [John] sent his disciples **3** to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” **4** Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: **5** The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. **6** Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

Consummation: In John, Jesus comforts His disciples before returning to Heaven by giving them the assurance that His power will continue to work in them until He returns. Paul echoes this sentiment in Ephesians by giving glory to God for His immeasurable power at work through believers.

John 14:6,11-13, Ephesians 3:20-21 – Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me... **11** Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. **12** Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. **13** And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son... **Eph. 3:20** Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, **21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever!

Examination:

- What was the messiah going to be doing according to Isaiah?
- How can we know that Jesus is the promised messiah?
- Why can believers do even greater works than Jesus?

December 12 **A Teacher of Parables**

Prophecy: Psalm 78 comes from Asaph (one of David's worship leaders). In it, He sings the history of God's faithfulness despite Israel's continuous rebellion and refusal to listen. It ends with the hope of David, which we know is completed in the Christ to come. Also, when Isaiah sees a vision of God exalted on His throne, realizes the depths of his sin, receives forgiveness, and accepts the call to speak, God gives Him a similar message.



Psalm 78:1-4, Isaiah 6:9-10 – Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! **2** I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, **3** things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. **4** We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done... **Is. 6:9** He said, “Go and tell this people: “‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ **10** Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

Fulfillment: Jesus almost always spoke to the crowds and religious leaders in parables. Parables are seemingly simple stories that reveal deeper spiritual truths.

Matthew 13:10-11,13-17,34-35 – The disciples came to [Jesus] and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” **11** He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them... **13** This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. **14** In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. **15** For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’ **16** But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. **17** For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it... **34** Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. **35** So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.”

Consummation: Before Jesus was arrested, He gave his disciples instructions and hope for the future.

John 16:25-28,33 – “Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. **26** In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. **27** No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. **28** I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father... **33** I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Examination:

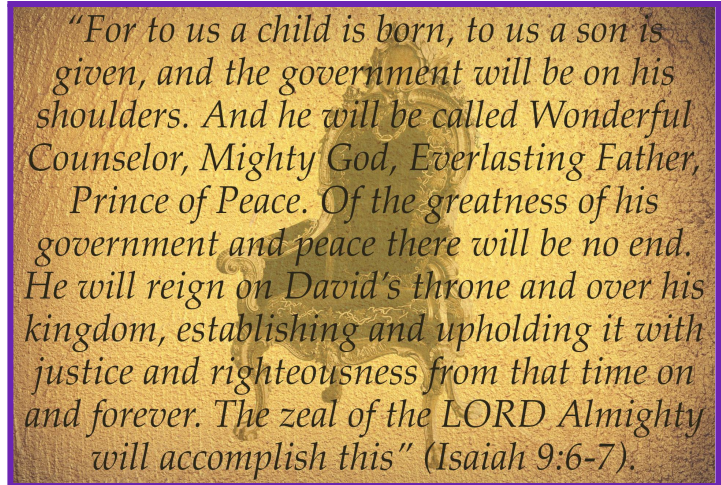
- What's wrong with everyone's senses?
- Why did Jesus speak in Parables?
- What does Jesus promise about living in this world?

December 13

A Baby Boy Will Bring God's Peace and Reign on the Throne Forever

Prophecy: This is a continuation of Isaiah's prophecy about the Great Light that will shine into the darkness from Dec 10th.

Isaiah 9:6-7 – For 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. **7** Of 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.



“For 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. Of 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” (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Fulfillment: In Luke, the angel Gabriel has appeared to Mary, telling her about God's redemptive plan. In Ephesians, Paul describes the hope and inheritance that believers now have in Christ.

Luke 1:30-33, Ephesians 1:20-23 – 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”... **Eph 1:20** [and God] raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, **21** far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. **22** And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, **23** which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Consummation: After many signs, wonders, and tribulations, the 7th trumpet is sounded that declares Jesus' eternal reign:

Revelation 11:15-17 – The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.” **16** And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, **17** saying: “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.

Examination:

- What do the Messiah's many names say about Him?
- What will Jesus' kingdom be like?
- What is the only proper response to Jesus' reign?

December 14

The Stone the Builders Rejected

Prophecy: Repeated over and over again, this is a song of God's steadfast love that endures forever.

Psalm 118:1,14,19,22-26a,28-29 – Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever... **14** The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation... **19** Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord... **22** The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. **23** This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. **24** This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. **25** Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! **26a** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord... **28** You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you. **29** Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!



Fulfillment: When Jesus' authority was questioned by the religious leaders at the temple in Jerusalem, He told them two indicting parables (The Two Sons and the Vineyard Tenants) and then concluded with this statement.

Matthew 21:42-46 – Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? **43** “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. **44** Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.” **45** When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. **46** They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

Consummation: In Acts, Peter and John have been arrested for healing in Jesus' name, and they are giving testimony before the Jewish leaders at their trial. In Ephesians, Paul is explaining the oneness achieved by Christ for all believers based on Himself as the foundation.

Acts 4:8b-12, Ephesians 2:18-22 – “Rulers and elders of the people! **9** If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, **10** then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. **11** Jesus is “‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.’ **12** Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved... **Eph. 2:18** For through him [Jews and Gentiles] both have access to the Father by one Spirit. **19** Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. **21** In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. **22** And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

Examination:

- Who are the “builders”, and who is the “Stone”?
- What does it mean that Jesus has become The Cornerstone?
- Why is this Cornerstone so important to eternal salvation?

December 15

The King That Will Come Riding on a Donkey

Prophecy: Zechariah writes in the 6th century BC after the Babylonian captivity, but before the rebuilding of Nehemiah. After calling Judah to repentance, justice, and mercy, pronouncing future blessings on Jerusalem, and announcing judgment for enemy nations, he also voices God's promise about the King to come.



Zechariah 9:9,10b – Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey... **10b** He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Fulfillment: Jesus has just raised Lazarus from the dead, and the word has spread. As He enters into Jerusalem, a large crowd gathers to see this miracle worker for themselves.

John 12:12-15 – The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. **13** So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" **14** And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, **15** "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

Consummation: The same Jesus that humbly mounted a donkey will one day come back gloriously mounting a white horse and leading the final battle of victory over the Beast and the kings of the earth at the end of the age.

Revelation 19:11-16 – Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. **12** His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. **13** He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. **14** And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. **15** From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. **16** On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Insights:

- It was common at that time to view a king riding on a horse as coming to bring war.
- If the king came riding on a donkey instead, they were seen as coming to bring peace.

Examination:

- In what manner was the messiah going to come?
- How is Jesus' second equine entry different from His first?
- What do we learn about Jesus from His many names listed in Revelation?

December 16

Betrayed for 30 Pieces of Silver

Prophecy: In the middle of calling out Israel's failed shepherds, God calls Zechariah to take over the role with the two symbolic staffs of "Favor" and "Union." Both of these are eventually broken in God's judgment over Israel as Zechariah becomes an archetype for the despised and betrayed Great Shepherd who is to come.

Zechariah 11:12-13 – I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. **13** And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—the handsome price at which they valued me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the house of the Lord.



Fulfillment: Judas, who controlled and often stole from the groups' moneybag (John 12:6), became indignant after expensive perfume was "wasted" on Jesus' feet and conspired to betray him. Later, his regrets finalize God's prophecy.

Matthew 26:14-15,27:3-7 – Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests **15** and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver... **27:3** Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, **4** saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." **5** And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. **6** But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money." **7** So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

Consummation: Years after Jesus' death and resurrection, the apostle Peter writes to dispersed believers about hope, holiness, and endurance.

1 Peter 1:13-15,18-21 – Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. **14** As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. **15** But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do... **18** For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, **19** but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. **20** He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. **21** Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Insights:

- 30 pieces of silver was (not ironically) the price for a slave's life.
- Exodus 21:32 – "If the bull gores a male or female slave, the owner must pay thirty shekels of silver to the master of the slave, and the bull is to be stoned to death."

Examination:

- Why did Judas betray Jesus?
- What is of true value, and how do silver and gold compare?
- Since riches cannot save us, how are we redeemed?

December 17

The Son of Man

Prophecy: Daniel was an exile in Babylon during the 6th century BC. He rose to power by trusting God, interpreting dreams, and displaying wisdom. Some time after surviving the lions' den, he was given a vision into the future. In it, he saw 4 beasts and God seated on His throne surrounded by worship. God strips the first 3 beasts of their power, and He slays them with fiery judgment. Then, Daniel sees the Son of Man approach.



Daniel 7:13-14 – In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. **14** He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Fulfillment: Jesus has been betrayed by Judas, arrested, and put on trial before the religious leaders in Jerusalem. Though many false witnesses had come forward, the council could not find evidence to convict Him, and kept pushing for answers.

Mark 14:60-64 – Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” **61** But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” **62** “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” **63** The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. **64** “You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” They all condemned him as worthy of death.

Consummation: At the end of the age, two camps have emerged. One remains faithful to God while the others have chosen to serve the deceptive beast. After angels pronounce the destruction of Babylon and judgment on those who have rejected God, John sees the awaited Son of Man appear on the clouds.

Revelation 14:14-16 – I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. **15** Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” **16** So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

Examination:

- What is given to the Son of Man by God?
- Why were the religious leaders enraged by Jesus' answer to who He was?
- What is Jesus coming back to do?

December 18

Quietly Suffers Our Punishment to Bring Peace

Prophecy: Isaiah tells of the good news that will come to Israel through the expected Messiah in an unexpected way as a suffering servant.



Isaiah 52:13-15a, 53:3-7,9-10a – See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. **14** Just as there were many who were appalled at him—his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness—**15a** so he will sprinkle many nations... **53:3** He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. **4** Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. **5** But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. **6** We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. **7** He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth... **9** He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. **10** Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin.

Fulfillment: Jesus has been betrayed and given over to be tried, executed, and buried:

Matthew 27:12,14b,27a,28-31,57-60 – When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer... **14b** not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor... **27a** Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus... **28** They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, **29** and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. **30** They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. **31** After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him... **57** As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. **58** Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. **59** Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, **60** and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb.

Consummation: Peter is encouraging believers to live out godliness through suffering, submitting as willing slaves of Christ and being examples to unbelievers by following in Jesus' footsteps.

1 Peter 2:21-25 – To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. **22** "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." **23** When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. **24** "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." **25** For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Examination:

- How was the Messiah different from all other kings?
- Why did Jesus have to go through so much suffering?
- In light of Jesus' sacrifice, what are believers called to do?

December 19

He Will Be Pierced But Have No Broken Bones

Prophecy: After Zechariah's declaration of the Good Shepherd to come, he foretells of Jerusalem's resurgence and offers up a gruesome picture of what will happen to the messiah. In Psalm 34, king David sings about God's goodness, provision, and deliverance for himself and the messiah to come.

Zechariah 12:10, Psalm 34:19-20 – And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son... **Ps 34:19** Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. **20** He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.



Fulfillment: Jesus has willingly accepted crucifixion and graciously endured the wrath of God for all humanity's sins.

John 19:31,33-37 – Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down... **33** But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. **34** Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. **35** The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. **36** These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," **37** and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

Consummation: In Corinthians, Paul calls the church to put away immorality and be transformed into the image of Christ. In Revelation, before John relays his vision, he opens the book with worship for the Everlasting One who was pierced.

1 Corinthians 5:7b-8, Revelation 1:5b-8 – For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. **8** Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth... **Rev. 1:5b** Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, **6** and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. **7** "Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him." So shall it be! Amen. **8** "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Insights:

- The passover lamb's bones were not to be broken.
- Exodus 12:43a,46 – The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the regulations for the Passover meal... **46** "It must be eaten inside the house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones."

Examination:

- How do we know for sure that Jesus was dead (and therefore actually resurrected)?
- What does it mean that Jesus was the "firstborn"?
- How are Jesus and Passover connected?

December 20

Death by Crucifixion While Lots are Cast for His Clothes

Prophecy: While David is singing about suffering and deliverance in his own life, he also foreshadows the messiah's death by crucifixion, a means of execution that wouldn't even be invented for hundreds of years.

Psalm 22:14-18 – I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. **15** My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. **16** Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. **17** All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. **18** They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.



Fulfillment: Jesus has been unfairly tried, brutally scourged, and sentenced to death.

John 19:23-24,28-30 – When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. **24** “Let’s not tear it,” they said to one another. “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.” This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, “They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.” So this is what the soldiers did... **28** Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” **29** A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. **30** When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Consummation: Paul writes to the church at Colossae (Turkey), helping them to avoid false teachers and bad doctrine by understanding the true gospel message of Jesus.

Colossians 2:13-15, 3:12-14 – When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **14** having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. **15** And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross... **3:12** Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

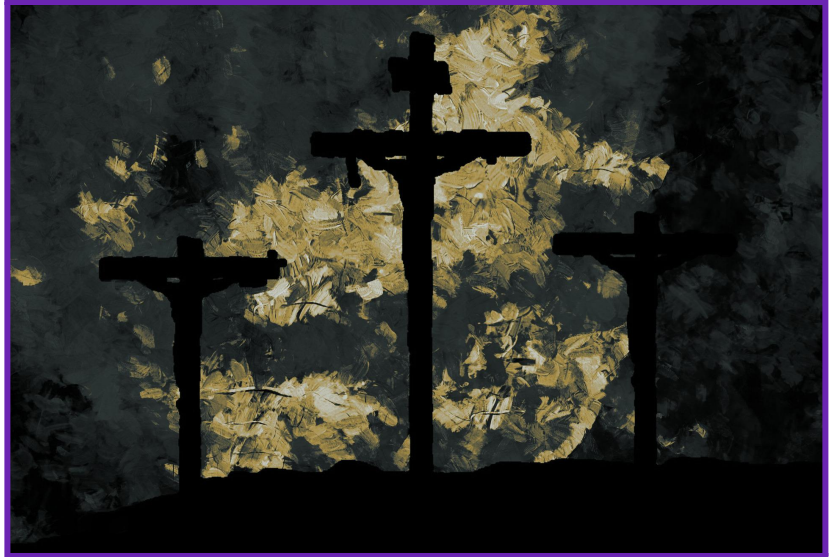
Examination:

- What condition were all people in before the cross?
- What was “finished”?
- Jesus’ clothes were taken so that believers could clothe themselves in what way?

December 21
The Sun will be Darkened
and There Will be Mourning
for an Only Son

Prophecy: Amos prophesied in the 8th century BC., calling Israel to repentance. While referencing the days of judgment that are coming, he also foretells of a certain future day.

Amos 8:9-10 – “In that day,” declares the Sovereign Lord, “I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. **10** I will turn your religious festivals into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day.



Fulfillment: While Jesus is on the cross, events occur that can only be described as miraculous.

Luke 23:44-48 – It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, **45** for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. **46** Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. **47** The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” **48** When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away.

Consummation: At the end of the age, Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, is the only One found worthy to open a scroll with seven seals. He has already opened the first 4 seals that unleash colored horses with riders that bring judgment and the 5th seal which reveals the slain saints calling for final judgment.

Revelation 6:12-17 – When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, **13** and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. **14** The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. **15** Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, **16** calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, **17** for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

Examination:

- Why did God choose to darken the sun?
- What is significant about the temple curtain being torn in two?
- What is going to happen to the heavenly lights at the end of the age?

December 22

Forsaken by God and Insulted by Humanity

Prophecy: This is the same psalm of David from Day 20 that foretold of torture by crucifixion and lots cast for the Messiah's clothes.

Psalm 22:1,7-8 – My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?... **7** All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. **8** “He trusts in the Lord,” they say, “let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”



Fulfillment: Jesus is on the cross to satisfy God's wrath and atone for humanity's sin.

Matthew 27:39-42,46,50 – Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads **40** and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!” **41** In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. **42** “He saved others,” they said, “but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him... **46** About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”)... **50** And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

Consummation: In light of Jesus' sacrifice, Paul calls believers to share their faith and joyfully endure the same mistreatment as their Savior.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15,20-21,6:4b-10 – For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. **15** And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again... **20** We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. **21** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God... **6:4b** As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; **5** in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; **6** in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; **7** in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; **8** through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; **9** known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; **10** sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Examination:

- Why was Jesus forsaken?
- How does Christ's atoning death change the way believers live?
- How can believers find joy in difficult circumstances?

December 23 **Resurrected, Conquering Death and Interceding for Sinners**

Prophecy: This is the continuation of Day 18 where we looked at Isaiah's description of the suffering servant who quietly bears humanity's punishment to bring peace.

Isaiah 53:11-12 – After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. **12** Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.



Fulfillment: It's now the 3rd day since Jesus was crucified, verified as dead, and placed in a sealed tomb under a Roman guard.

Matthew 28:1-6a – After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. **2** There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. **4** The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. **5** The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. **6a** He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.

Consummation: This is the first scene in John's apocalyptic vision, and he sees Jesus in the middle of seven lampstands that symbolize seven churches.

Revelation 1:13-18 – among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. **14** The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. **15** His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. **16** In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. **17** When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. **18** I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Examination:

- Why is Jesus' resurrection so important?
- What do we learn about Jesus from John's description in his vision?
- How can believers overcome the fear of death and judgment?

December 24

The Temple Will Be Destroyed After the Anointed One is Put to Death

Prophecy: Daniel recognizes God’s just judgment for the exile, pleads for God’s forgiveness, and asks Him to restore the kingdom for His own glory. In response, God sends the angel Gabriel to give Daniel insight about the future of Jerusalem and the temple.

Daniel 9:24-25a,26b-27 – “Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place. **25** “Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens’... **26b** the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. **27** He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven.’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”



Fulfillment: Jesus has just arrived at the outskirts of Jerusalem riding on a donkey in what is generally referred to as the Triumphal Entry.

Luke 19:41-44 – As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it **42** and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. **43** The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. **44** They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

Consummation: In Jerusalem during the week leading up to the cross, Jesus has entered the temple, driven out the money changers, taught in parables, and rebuked the religious leaders for their hypocrisy.

Matthew 24:1a,2,6-8,13-15,42 – Jesus left the temple... **2** “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down”... **6** You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. **7** Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. **8** All these are the beginning of birth pains... **13** but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. **14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. **15** “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand... **42** “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

Insights:

- The 2nd Temple of Jesus’ time was destroyed in 70 AD by the Romans.

Examination:

- Why was the temple destroyed?
- When will the end of this age come about?
- What are believers called to do concerning the end of the age?

How we do it

Caution: How we do it may not work for your family. You know your kids better than we do. Feel free to adapt our ideas to make them work for you:

- We use a homemade Lego advent calendar.
 - Made from 24 burlap pouches per kid (for us that's 96).
 - We wrote the numbers 1-24 on the pouches with 4 different paint pens.
 - We purchase a Lego set with somewhere around 400-500+ pieces (You could use a Premade Lego Advent set as well).
 - We then split the sets into 24 sections.
 - We try to make it somewhat even, but you're really finding 24 stopping points in the directions.
 - The instruction book pages are cut up and put into the bag with the pieces needed for the completion of that day only (This step takes some work).
 - We also blackout or cut out any pictures that show what they're building (more on this later).
 - We hang them randomly with burlap twine and clothespins.
 - Every morning the kids get together and find their next bag (We often move them around at night to make it more fun).
 - This part is a bonus for the adults. The kids actually get out of bed quickly, and we don't have to deal with the usual fussiness and drama.
 - While they build, I play the songs that go along with the theme.
 - After building, we read the scriptures, watch the video, and talk about it while they eat breakfast.
- Why this way:
 - Of course, it's fun for the kids, and it gets them excited about Advent every morning.
 - More importantly, it also provides a visual picture of the waiting and anticipation of Advent.
 - Legos: The kids don't know what they're building. They just know that it's a lego set. But, they do have some pieces of the big picture. So, they guess and talk about what it can be (which can actually be quite funny). Anticipation builds, and they can't wait to find out what it will ultimately be like.
 - Jesus: The Israelites didn't know what the Messiah would actually be like. But, they had prophecies or glimpses into God's plan. So, they would talk about it and discuss it, waiting and hoping for the Messiah to come. We see it backwards now, but we still await the final picture of His second coming.
 - If you spend 24 days on Jesus, you've gotten across the real reason for Christmas and hopefully avoided the normal commercialism and stress of the holidays.
- On the 25th, we make a cake and celebrate Jesus' birthday.
- Find even more details at <https://biblebasedfamily.com/advent-lego-calendars/>



Final Disclaimer: Some days go better than others. If your kids are like ours, there will be some drama; and that's okay. Just do your part, and trust God with the results.