

A SEASON OF PEACE

ADVENT DEVOTIONS FOR SENIORS



Great will be his authority,
and there shall be endless
peace for the throne of David
and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold
it with justice and with
righteousness from this time
onward and forevermore.

ISAIAH 9:7

Introduction

I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will bless them and multiply them and will set my sanctuary among them forevermore. ✚ **EZEKIEL 37:26**

Long ago, God established a covenant of peace with his people and promised a sanctuary for us all. That sanctuary is Jesus, the holy Son of God who comes at Christmas to dwell among us and surround us with his peace. The season of Advent provides us with an opportunity to find comfort and rest in the peace of Christ whom we worship and adore.

The devotions in this booklet, written by seniors for seniors, supply an extra measure of that peace that is so needed now in our world and in this stage of living. No matter what factors may unsettle us for a time or momentarily shake up our sense of well-being, be reminded each day of Advent that Jesus brings a peace that soothes and surpasses any suffering or struggle we may experience.

The Prince of Peace is born, and his rule will stand firm through the ages. Let the Scripture, reflections and prayers on these pages serve to confirm that message, calm your troubled hearts and fill your spirit with joy in Christ's presence always.

MARK ZIMMERMANN, editor

SUNDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

A Mind of Peace

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. ✚ ISAIAH 26:3 (ESV)

Is your mind at rest this Advent season, or do you have difficulty sleeping at night and making it through endless days when worries fill your thoughts? Health problems, financial struggles and concern for family and friends can cripple your celebration of this “Season of Peace.”

The hymn “Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord” offers a positive prayer to the Lord: “As your coming was in peace, / Quiet, full of gentleness, / Let the same mind dwell in me / Which is yours eternally.” Micah’s prophecy about the birth of the promised Messiah in Bethlehem Ephrathah includes the words “and he shall be their peace” (Micah 5:5). In that spirit, Isaiah offers perfect peace for the one “whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” Enjoy peace of mind, because, as “Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord” tells us, the Lord “at last to us did send / Christ, the sinner’s help and friend.”

STEPHEN J. CARTER | Oakville, MO

LORD, FILL MY MIND *with your peace. Amen.*

SHARE: Share your peace of mind quietly with those around you.

READ: Micah 5:2-5; Luke 1:67-79

MONDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Family Tree

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ✚ ISAIAH 11:1

Online ancestry sites are popular for researching family backgrounds and creating family trees. The family tree of Israel's King David, the son of Jesse, had become a ruined stump of unfaithfulness and idolatry. Yet God promised to bring new life—a green and growing shoot—out of that stump. A new king would be born in David's royal line, a king who would rule forever in righteousness and peace.

Jesus, the Son of God, is the “righteous Branch” raised up for David's family line (Jeremiah 23:5). The righteous King, born in Bethlehem, came to give his life to atone for our sins. Through faith in Jesus, we are children of God “and joint heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17). We are joined to Jesus' family tree!

CAROL GEISLER | Orange, CA

HEAVENLY FATHER, *thank you for adopting me as your child. Amen.*

DECORATE: Find a Christmas ornament or decoration that reminds you of Jesus our King.

READ: Isaiah 11:1-9; Romans 8:14-17

TUESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

The Light

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ❖ **ISAIAH 9:2**

For me, early morning walks are the best—but they can be difficult this time of year! During Advent, the sun doesn't rise until after 7 a.m. where I live. A couple years ago, my niece gave me one of those hats with a light on it, one of the best gifts I've ever received.

As Christians, we know that Christ's light is always shining on us. But this time of year, we can be tempted to cut short our prayer time because so much else is going on. Let's remember to work those other activities in after our time with the Lord instead of the other way around.

MELANIE RIGNEY | Arlington, VA

JESUS, HELP ME *to put you first, regardless of the time of day or year. Amen.*

SPEND: Spend an extra five minutes in prayer today. Let your light reflect his.

READ: Isaiah 9:2-4; Ephesians 5:7-9

Sharing

Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none... ✚ **LUKE 3:11**

John the Baptist is no gentle herald of Advent. During this season of expectation, John reminds us that we are not just waiting for the Christ Child, but for the return of the Lord. He will judge us with mercy and with justice. Be prepared, John tells us.

He challenges us to “bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Luke 3:8). When the people ask what they should do, he tells them to be honest in their affairs and to share what they have with others in need.

Advent is a time for almsgiving, certainly. As we buy presents and prepare meals, we must keep in mind those in great need all about us. It is also a time to be honest with ourselves, as John encourages. It is a time to repent of the times we are dishonest or selfish or simply insensitive to the sufferings of others.

GREG ERLANDSON | *Hyattsville, MD*

HELP US, LORD, *to be giving as we prepare the way for you. Amen.*

GIVE: Find what we can give to another.

READ: Luke 3:7-15

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Our lives should be full of peace, even in our later years. The daily devotions for older adults in this large-print special edition highlight the message of having peace in the Lord always. The readings for each day of Advent help seniors reflect on the spiritual experiences of Advent, both past and present, and encourages them to faithfully share with younger generations the reason for our peace: Jesus. This rich and enlightening collection of Advent devotions reflects the wisdom and life experience of its various authors. Enjoy a fresh perspective each day.

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