

Family Advent Devotional



Wonders OF His Love

Finding Jesus
in Isaiah

Champ Thornton

ILLUSTRATED BY
Jeremy Slagle

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Introduction

The word *advent* means arrival. For kids it may mean the never-ending weeks before the arrival of Christmas gifts.

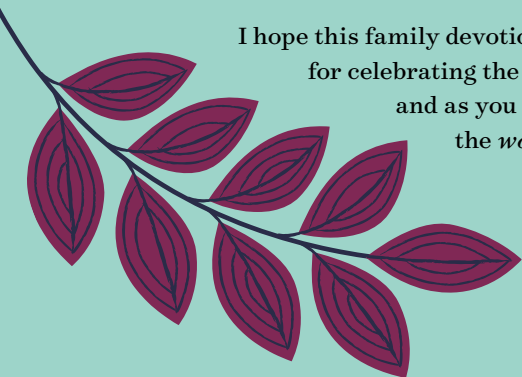
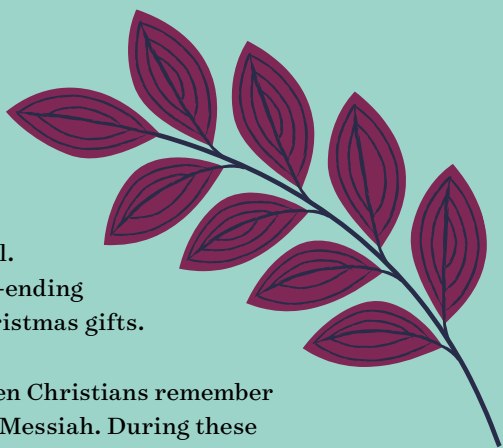
But the season of Advent is when Christians remember the long-awaited arrival of the Messiah. During these weeks, as we look forward to Christmas, we stand in the sandals of those who waited centuries for the arrival of the One God had prophesied would come.

One of these prophets was Isaiah. His prophecy spans 66 chapters and contains over 37,000 words in English. Isaiah uses some of his words to paint pictures—flocks and fruit, roots and roads, swimmers and shepherds. He helps us see the real-world connections between God's truth and God's world.

Wonders of His Love: Finding Jesus in Isaiah will help your family visualize the main portrait Isaiah paints—of the promised and long-awaited Messiah.

In each week of this family devotional, there are five short devotionals to read aloud. Each one is intended for even little children to grasp. You'll also find fun bonus sections, as well as crafts and activities to help make family memories together.

I hope this family devotional will help you prepare for celebrating the arrival of the Messiah—
and as you prepare, for delighting in
the *wonders of his love*.



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Week One

The First Wonder

Jesus Is the Light of the World
and He Makes Us See

Day 1: Picture It

Light Shines in the Darkness

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. Isaiah 9:2

Have you ever tried to walk in the dark? Let's try something simpler. Close your eyes. No looking around.

Now without opening your eyes—try to touch your nose. Easy, right?

Close your eyes again. In your mind, pick out something in the room related to Christmas—a wreath, a stocking, an ornament. Try to point at it. Keep pointing. Open your eyes. Were you close?

Can you imagine living in the dark?
Always night, and never day?

Some animals love the dark.
They sleep during the day and play at night.

Bats and rats. Owls and aardvarks.
God made them able to see at night.

But how would you do in the dark? Could you find your toys?
Your room? Your friends? Your nose?

We're not made for the dark. We need the light.

But for thousands of years, most people lived in darkness. Not in darkness of night but in darkness of heart. Ever since the

first people sinned against God, they were born not being able to see what they were doing, and they couldn't see what God was doing.

They were in the dark. They thought they knew what God wanted. They thought they knew the right way to him. They thought if they could just worship the right God, it would be OK—so they worshiped hundreds of gods just to be safe.

They thought if they could just be good enough, it would be OK—so they tried to be perfect. And then sometimes (lots of times) they just gave up trying and did whatever they wanted.

But like walking in the dark, without God no one could find their way. And people ended up getting hurt. In the dark, they tripped on things and crashed into each other. Without God, they stumbled and fumbled along.

But the darkness wasn't around them, it was in them. They couldn't just turn on the light. They needed someone to open their eyes, to lead them from darkness to light.

And someone did.

God gave light to his people. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah announced what God was going to do about the darkness in people's hearts. He promised: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone" (Isaiah 9:2). Jesus is the promised Light of the World.

Questions

What's so bad about living in the darkness of the heart?

Why is it so good that Jesus is the light of the world?

Day 2: A Closer Look

Jesus Is the Light

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. Luke 2:8–16

On the night when Jesus was born, the nighttime sky shone like day—bursting with blazing light and angel song. A Savior had been born.

When the shepherds came to see Jesus, they stepped out of the dark streets into the light of that tiny room. And for the first time, they could see the Son—whose life would shine and whose death would bring the darkness to an end.

And when the child grew up, whatever he said and did were like rays of early morning sunlight piercing the night's darkness (John 1:5).

How did Jesus bring light to the world?

He took every dark thing and shone the light of his love on it. When he cleansed the lepers, you could see the light of his love. When he healed the sick, his light shone. When he raised the dead, light broke into the darkness. His light of love was the light of life (John 1:4).

Questions

What did Jesus do in the Bible that amazes you the most? Why?

What has Jesus done for you that amazes you the most? Why?

Day 3: A Promise to Remember

You Will Never Be Alone

I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. Isaiah 42:16b

Are you sometimes worried that you are all alone?

It's true that wanting to go our own way and not God's way (what the Bible calls sin) has separated us from God (Isaiah 53:6). We are far from God, and we can't get back. We are lost in darkness. But Jesus can bring us back.

Jesus always walked in the light (John 8:12). He always went God's way (Philippians 2:8). He always loved God and loved people. He didn't fight with his brothers and sisters. He didn't make fun of anyone. He didn't disobey his parents.

So when he died on the cross, he didn't give his life for his own sins. He gave his life for ours (1 John 3:16). All we have to do is turn to him and ask for forgiveness and he will forgive and welcome us into his family. And he gives us new eyes to see God.

Now we can be sure that God will always be with us (Hebrews 13:5). We will never be forsaken. We will never be all alone. We can see clearly to follow Jesus. He is the light of the world.

Because of him, we will live in the light of God's love, not only at Christmas but every day of every year.



Questions

What would heaven be like if Jesus weren't there?

Would you still want to go if Jesus wouldn't be there?