

SCRIPTURE FROM THE GOSPELS AND THE PROPHETS

# THE Christmas Story

*For a child will be born  
to us, a son will be given  
to us; And the government  
will rest on His shoulders;  
And His name will be  
called Wonderful, Counsellor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
the Prince of Peace.*



ROSE  
PUBLISHING

*The* **THE WONDERFULLY** familiar Christmas story took place 2000 years ago, but it was many more centuries in the making. In speaking through the ancient prophets, God foretold how He would bring His beloved Son into the world.

**THE BIRTH** of Jesus took place in an historical setting that the prophets foretold. The underlying story of His genealogy, in itself, was a Divine masterpiece of intrigue, suspense, and prophetic fulfillment. But the quiet events of that first Christmas morning, so long ago, have become commonplace in our modern traditions. Wise men and shepherds are familiar Christmas symbols as they gather around the tender baby who lies in a manger, while a chorus of angels proclaims the Lord's good will to mankind. But how did the prophets envision this story? What hopes had they formed in the hearts of men, and what is the hope to which we look?

**LET THE** story unfold afresh between the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament writers.



## *What is Advent?*

**ADVENT IS** a season of four Sundays that mark the beginning of a new church year. The ancient Christian church celebrated Advent as a kind of fresh start to faith and worship. Advent is a time to anticipate and spiritually prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Savior: God's gift of love to us. At the same time, Advent anticipates and hopes for Jesus' glorious return at the end of the age.

**THE WORD** "advent" comes from the Latin *advenio* meaning "coming" or "arrival."

**THE TRADITIONAL** Bible readings for Advent teach how the prophets, kings, and forerunners prepared the way for the coming Messiah.

**MANY CHRISTIANS** celebrate Advent with a special time of devotions including Bible reading, prayer, singing, and lighting candles on an Advent wreath.

## *Advent Colors*

**PURPLE HAS** traditionally been the main Advent color, symbolizing repentance and fasting. A royal color, purple looks forward to reception of the coming King who is celebrated during Advent. Today, however, many churches use blue instead of purple.

**PINK OR** rose is used during the third Sunday. It represents joy, anticipating the coming celebration.

**WHITE IS** the color of the center candle, representing Christ as the sinless, pure Savior.



# The Advent of Peace

IN A world full of trouble and doubt human hearts yearned for peace, yet it ever eluded them. For true peace begins with God, and it was well beyond their means to achieve it. Comfort and joy, darkness and dread, hung together in a balance, and only the Lord Himself could tip the scales in our favor. On behalf of lowly man came a lowly yet sinless savior, to redeem us all and bring forgiveness, and our reconciliation with God. In times of great peril, the peace He gave us would arise from within Himself.

THE NATION stirred with trouble as His coming drew near.

*And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.*

—LUKE 2:1

*And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. —LUKE 2:3–6*

*“But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”*

— MICAH 5:2



BUT WHEN they came to Bethlehem, no room was made for them at the inn. So Mary brought forth her firstborn Son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. As it was spoken by the prophet:

*“The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider.” —ISAIAH 1:3*



*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid* —LUKE 2:8-9

*“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD will arise over thee, and His glory will be seen upon thee.”* —ISAIAH 60:1-2

*And the angel said unto them, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, goodwill toward men!”* —LUKE 2:10-14

**THIS FULFILLED** the words of Isaiah: *“Sing, O ye heavens, for the LORD hath done it! shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth*

*into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel.”*

—ISAIAH 44:23

*G*entle Mary laid her Child  
Lowly in a manger.  
He is still the Undefined,  
But no more a stranger.  
Son of God of humble birth,  
Beautiful the story.  
Praise His name in all the earth.  
Hail! The King of Glory!

*And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.” And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds; but Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.* —LUKE 2:15-19



**THE COMING** of the Messiah would challenge every man. Some, who loved the things of this world, would fear and oppose Him, nurturing ungodly desires in their hearts; while others longed for the day of His coming and the joyous new life He would bring. For these last, the shining of a star meant the rising of a king, full of truth and grace, who would one day rule the world in righteousness forever.

**NOW WHEN** Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem:

*“The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” —ISAIAH 60:3*

*And the Wise Men came before Herod saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” —MATTHEW 2:2*

*“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel...” —NUMBERS 24:17*

*“And when Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And*

*when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.” —MATTHEW 2:3–4*

*“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords from us.’” —PSALM 2:2–3*

**QUOTING FROM** the prophet Micah’s writings around 700 BC, the chief priests and scribes told King Herod that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. So Herod secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star had appeared, and sent them under a pretense, saying:

*“Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also.” —MATTHEW 2:8*

**BUT HIS** real intention was to slay the Christ child.

*When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.*

*When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshiped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*

—MATTHEW 2:9–11



*“The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him . . . and He shall live; and to Him shall be given the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised.”* —PSALM 72:10–15

AND “. . . *the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover*

*thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.”*

—ISAIAH 60:5–6

AFTERWARD, BEING divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, the wise men departed for their own country another way. And when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,

*“I . . . called My Son out of Egypt.”*

—HOSEA 11:1

AND *“His king shall be higher than Agag, and His kingdom shall be exalted. God brought Him forth out of Egypt.”*

—NUMBERS 24:7–8



# Suggestions for Celebrating Advent

First Sunday in Advent: <b>HOPE</b>	Second Sunday in Advent: <b>PEACE</b>	Third Sunday in Advent: <b>JOY</b>	Fourth Sunday in Advent: <b>LOVE</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE or CHRISTMAS DAY</b>
Light the first Advent candle.	Light the first and second Advent candles.	Light the first, second, and third Advent candles.	Light the first, second, third, and fourth Advent candles.	Light all the candles on the Advent wreath, including the Christ candle.
Read: Isaiah 11:1-10 Luke: 1:26-38 Isaiah 7:10-14 Matthew 1:18-24	Read: Micah 5:2 Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11 Isaiah 2:1-5 Matthew 3:1-6	Read: Isaiah 9:6-7 John 1:19-34 Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 Philippians 2:1-11	Read: Malachi 3:1-5 Romans 8:18-25 Isaiah 52:7-10 Revelation 21:1-4	Read: Isaiah 9:1-6 Luke 2:1-20 John 1:1-18 Titus 2:11-14
Sing: <i>O Come, O Come Emmanuel</i>	Sing: <i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	Sing: <i>Come, Thou Long- Expected Jesus</i>	Sing: <i>Savior of the Nations, Come</i>	Sing: <i>Joy to the World</i>

## ADVENT OR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

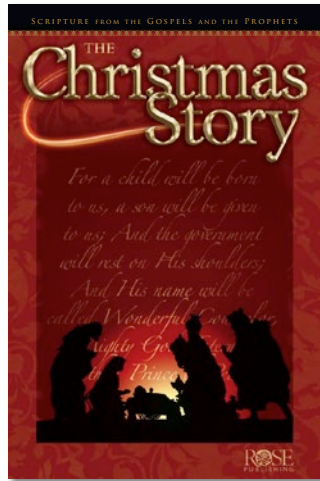
For an Advent or Christmas program, use panels 1-11 as a dramatic reading. See suggestions below for using only a few or several performers.

### LOW PREPARATION:

- Three readers (narrator, Old Testament reader, New Testament reader)
- Congregation sings carols where marked

### HIGH PREPARATION:

- Any number of readers (narrator, plus several Old & New Testament readers)
- Place Old Testament readers on one side of stage or one balcony; place New Testament readers opposite
- Children or adults may perform a silent pageant or tableau of the actions during the readings
- Carols may be performed by a soloist, choir or children's group

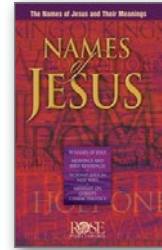


Learn More

## The Christmas Story Pamphlet

This beautiful pamphlet tells the story of Jesus' birth and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Perfect for a Bible study during Advent or as a church handout at Christmas, it uses the traditional wording from Matthew and Luke's Gospels, starting with the angelic announcement of John the Baptist's birth and culminating with the gospel story and a forward look toward Christ's second coming. Featuring beautiful artwork and a convenient size, this pamphlet fits neatly inside a Bible cover and can be unfolded to reveal the story within 14 panels.

Pamphlet ..... 978-1-59636-420-2 ..... \$4.99

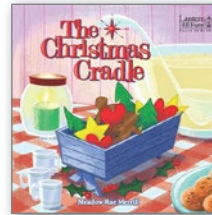


Learn More

## Names of Jesus

Jesus' names hold special insights that will strengthen your walk as a believer. You will know the Christ's names along with Scripture references from both the Old and New Testament, the meaning of each name, and why it is so important to believers. Knowing and understanding the names of Jesus will enrich your quiet time and help you build faith and trust in the Lord.

Pamphlet ..... 978-1-59636-059-4 ..... \$4.99

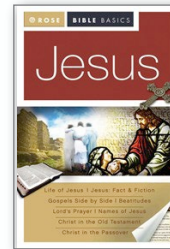


Learn More

## The Christmas Cradle

Join Molly and her cousins, Jacob and Sammy, as they learn important lessons on the true meaning of Christmas, generosity, and the Good News of Christ. With stunning illustrations by Drew Kervi, this is sure to become a holiday favorite for your entire family. It even features practical ways for families to create their very own Christmas cradle at home!

Board Book ..... 978-1-62862-789-3 ..... \$11.99



Learn More

## Jesus

How is Jesus different from all other religious leaders in the world? Part of the full-color Rose Bible Basics series, *Jesus* provides you with a solid introduction to the life of Jesus, his teachings, and the significance of his death and resurrection. Each chapter of this book will help you discover the life-changing impact of Jesus of Nazareth.

PDF Download ....978-1-4964-9638-6 ..... \$9.99



www.tyndale.com/rose-publishing  
csresponse@tyndale.com  
or call 1-855-277-9400



Money Back Guarantee!

