

Prepare HIM ROOM

A Jesse Tree Advent Devotional

RW REVELATION WELLNESS®



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Encounter

Jesus from Genesis
through the story of
His birth...



What is *Advent*?



Advent is the first season of the Church calendar (or liturgical year), observed four weeks before Christmas Day. You can count the four Sundays before Christmas Day to determine the season of Advent.

It is a season of preparation and anticipation for the mystery of the Incarnation — the fullness of God in human flesh, Jesus. It is a season to reflect on Jesus' birth and look forward to His return.

We observe Advent with preparation, reflection, and anticipation practices, such as meditating on the story of Scripture, slowly decorating the house with Christmas decorations, giving generously, and drawing near to Jesus in prayer. In other words, we're preparing to celebrate Christmas!

What is the *Jesse Tree?*

“ A shoot will come up
from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch
will bear fruit. ”

Isaiah 11:1

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus shared with two of His disciples “what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself beginning with Moses and all the Prophets” (Luke 24:27). He showed His disciples that His birth, death, and resurrection were not a random act of God, but God’s plan from the beginning.

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God cursed the serpent and told him that the woman’s offspring would crush his head (Genesis 3:15). The promise of a snake crusher is carried throughout Scripture, but especially in the stories of David. David, the son of Jesse, is a priestly king and a man after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22). In so many ways, he seems to be the promised Messiah. Yet, he is still as fallen as the rest of humanity.

But God’s plan isn’t thwarted. Despite David’s failure, God again promised that a Savior would come. But more specifically, a Savior would come through the line of Jesse. Isaiah prophesies, “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit” (Isaiah 11:1).

The fruitful shoot from the line of Jesse is Jesus.

The Jesse Tree is a tradition that derives its name from this prophecy. In this simple tradition of reading Scripture passages from Genesis to the Nativity and hanging corresponding ornaments throughout Advent, you will build your own Jesse Tree of God’s faithfulness. Each day, God’s promises for a mighty Redeemer will grow before you until you celebrate Jesus’ birth on Christmas Day.





How to use Prepare Him Room

This devotional series will help you encounter Jesus from Genesis through the story of His birth.

Along with each daily reading is an ornament featuring a symbol related to the passage. After you read the passage and devotional, you can hang the ornament on the tree. Throughout Advent, your tree will fill up with symbols to help you recall the story of Scripture and rejoice at God's faithfulness.

In addition, each reading has simple reflection questions and embodiment cues. You can do this Advent devotional alone or invite others to join you! There is a great benefit to learning and meditating on God's Word together!

There are a variety of ways you can do this devotional with others:

- Alternate readers for the Scripture passage and devotional.
- Discuss the passage and devotional together using the discussion questions.
- If you're reading with children, try reading the assigned Scripture passage using a storybook Bible.
- Get moving! Invite the children (and grownups) to act out the passage of Scripture if appropriate.
- Invite a different person to hang the ornament each night.
- Sing an Advent themed carol to close the devotional time.

We hope this devotional blesses you and leads you closer to Jesus throughout Advent!



*O' Come,
O' Come
Emmanuel*



day 1

I

The Beginning

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.” Genesis 1:31

READ GENESIS 1:1–2:3

Maria Von Trapp sings in *The Sound of Music*, “let’s start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.”¹ Similarly, in our Advent journey, we begin at the beginning of the Bible, in God’s work of creation. While the conversation about creation often hovers around the literal timeline, the creation story itself begs us to meditate on something different.

Through acts of creating, ordering, and filling, we see a God who “is before all things, and in him all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17). God Himself gave the design, details, and function of everything in this world. Including, and especially, the creation of man and woman!

Then, what is the line God says over and over? What line do we know in our heads but don’t let sink into our hearts?

He saw that it was very good.

This is where we begin our Advent journey because this is the reason Jesus came: to restore and redeem God’s very good creation. This is something worth celebrating, right?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Pause: Meditate on the Scripture with this breath prayer.

Inhale: God saw all He made.

Exhale: It was very good.

¹Julie Andrews, 1965. “Do-Re-Mi.” *The Sound of Music*. 20th Century Studios.



day 2

The Fall

“The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’” Genesis 3:13

READ GENESIS 3:1-19

There was a garden filled with good things to eat. A garden filled with the presence of God. And we were hungry. Not because God withheld something good from us. We were hungry because the enemy whispered a lie of scarcity into our ears to make us doubt God and to make us forget the purpose for which we were created.

Man, the climax of God’s creation and His own image in the flesh, listened to the word of a serpent that slithered on the ground. The creation God declared good was now defiled and broken, bearing the consequences of sin in every fiber of his and her being.

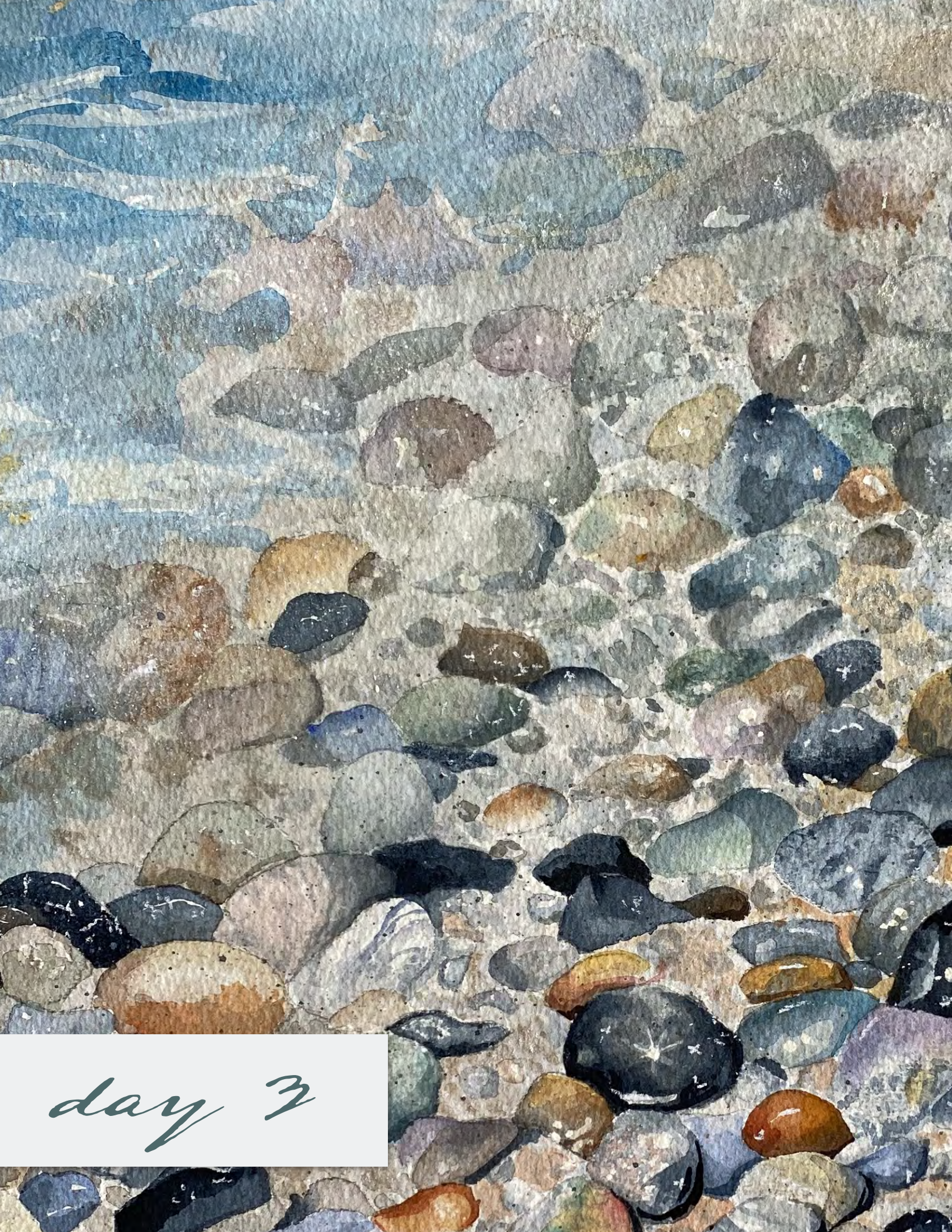
What was God going to do?

Rather than allow Adam and Eve to live eternally in their sins, He exiled them from the garden. But God had a plan to save them—a seed of the woman would crush the serpent’s head.

In all our anticipation of Christmas Day, let us remember our own hunger and sin. For why did our Messiah come? To save us from our sins, which lead us away from the wellspring of life and into the pit of death. O’ Come, O’ Come Emmanuel!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Pause: Listen to a version of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" and pray about the hungers that draw you away from God.



day 3

3

The Flood

“I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.” Genesis 9:11

READ GENESIS 6:5–22 & 9:8–17

Has someone you loved ever taken something precious to you and smashed it to pieces? What was your response? Did you feel like that relationship could ever be restored?

This is the problem at this point in salvation history. Humanity smashed God’s creation to pieces by rebelling against His authority over all creation. By the time of Noah, “every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time” (Genesis 6:5). Because evil had reached such a great height, God decided to bring judgment on sin through a flood. In a great act of de-creation, all life was destroyed by the waters except Noah, his family, and all the animals aboard the ark.

Because of Noah’s righteousness, their lives were spared. God poured out His blessing to this family and promised to never destroy the earth in a flood again. Then, He kept His promise even when His people rebelled again. His faithfulness never ends!

Friend, remember that through Christ, you have also passed through the waters of judgment. Through Jesus’ faithfulness on the cross, you’ve been delivered into a new life. You are a new creation, rescued and redeemed!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Pause: Meditate on today’s
Scripture using this breath prayer.
Inhale: His faithfulness.
Exhale: Never ends.



day 4

4

God's Promise

“He took him outside and said, ‘Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’” Genesis 15:5

READ GENESIS 15

Soon after the ark settles on land, Noah and his sons fall into sin. His sons are scattered throughout the land. We are back where we started, running from God, turning His blessing into a curse. But God's plan isn't foiled. Instead, the Promise Keeper chooses another man, Abraham, to be in His presence and to carry His blessing. Right when we expect God to withhold and withdraw, He draws us in deeper and offers us greater promises.

God tells Abraham his offspring will be as numerous as the stars in the sky. But, as the years wear on and his wife bears no children, Abraham doubts God's promise. Did He really say I would bear children?

Like Adam and Eve before him, Abraham tries to go his own way. Defying God, Abraham bears a child with his servant. Assuming this child would become his heir. But, God, in his mercy, does what He says He would.

“Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him.” Genesis 21:2

But Isaac, Abraham's promised son wouldn't be the end of the family tree. Many years later, another branch would sprout from this tree: our shining hope, Jesus.

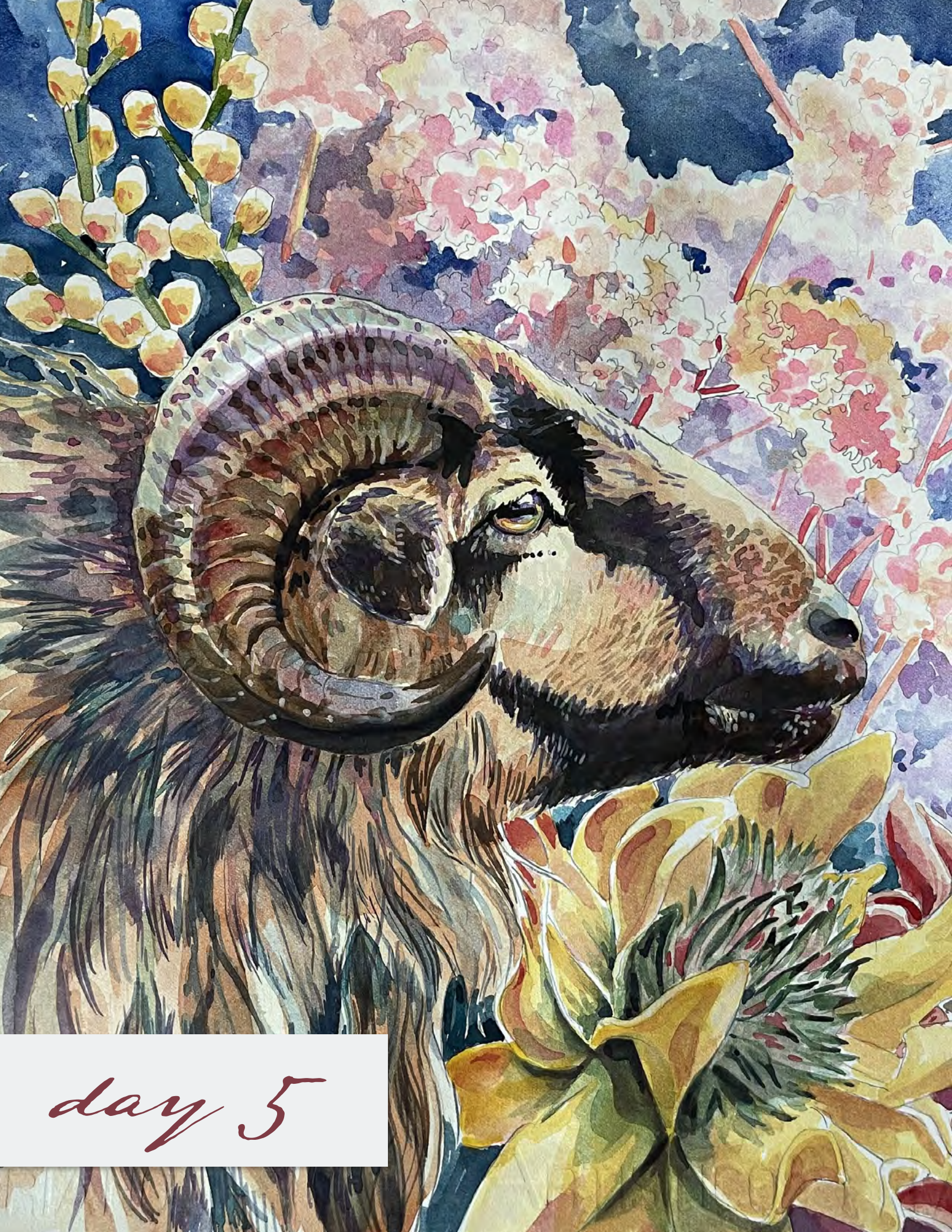
In Jesus, we see God draw closer again by healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, and dying on our behalf. Now, in Jesus, we get to be called family, brothers and sisters of Christ Jesus! Rejoice!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Pause: Today, let's meditate on
God's faithfulness.

Inhale: God draws us deeper.

Exhale: He keeps His promises.



day 5

He will provide

“Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.” Genesis 22:13

READ GENESIS 22:1-19

The story of Abraham almost sacrificing his beloved son Isaac isn't easy to read. Why would God ask Abraham to do this? What did this mean for God's promise to Abraham? Would Abraham actually do it?

While we can learn many viewpoints from biblical scholars, we know one thing is true. As Sally Lloyd Jones insightfully writes, “Every story whispers His name.”²

The trajectory of this story is changed when God Himself provides a sacrifice for Abraham. As Abraham is about to plunge the knife into his son, God stops him. Isaac is saved, and a ram caught in the thicket is sacrificed instead.

Even here, so many years before Jesus arrives, God shows us that He will provide the sacrifice needed for salvation. He will surrender all for the sake of the world. What wondrous love is this, O my soul!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Practice gratitude: Listen to a version of “What Wondrous Love Is This.” Name three things God has provided this year.

² Sally Lloyd Jones, *The Jesus Storybook Bible*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zonderkids, 2007), 17.



day 6

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6

The Lord is in this place

“Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.'" Genesis 28:16

READ GENESIS 28:10–22

Have you ever been somewhere that seemed alive with the presence of God? Almost as if you could see, smell, and hear Him? Maybe you couldn't help but fall to your knees in praise.

Jacob, Isaac's son, had a similar experience on his journey from Beersheba to Haran.

While sleeping, Jacob dreamt of a stairway reaching between earth and heaven. Angels ascended and descended it, and the Lord reaffirmed His promises to Jacob. When Jacob awoke, he realized that the Lord was there. The Lord was with him.

Jacob's dream led him to set up a pillar in that place, foreshadowing the Temple where God would dwell with man. By the Spirit in us, we can be living temples where the goodness of heaven fills the earth. We can be people who cause others to realize that “the Lord is surely in this place.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Be Still: Wherever you are, take 30 seconds to stand still and be silent. Become aware of God's presence.



day 7

Great Deliverance

“But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.” Genesis 45:7

READ GENESIS 37:12-36 & 45:1-15

In Genesis, no story points quite so thoroughly to Jesus as the story of Joseph’s suffering and rise to power to save his people through a famine. It is a story fit for the big screen with conflict, scandal, injustice, reconciliation, and incredible redemption. You cannot deny the hand of God in any of the twists and turns.

Even more importantly, we see God’s intent to save His beloved people by the willing hand of a faithful human. While Joseph saved many through the famine, Jesus can save all from the sting of death. When you trust in Jesus, you are delivered by His loving hand!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Speak: Read today’s verse out loud. Reflect on what it means for your heart, mind, body, and soul.



day 8

I will be your God

“I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” Exodus 6:7

READ EXODUS 6:1-13

Exodus is the foundational story for the Jewish people, defining who they are and, most importantly, who God is. Under the leadership of Moses and by the power of God, they went from being slaves of Egypt to children of the Most High.

Moreover, they were children of a Father who kept His promises. God honored the covenant He established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Exodus. But, He didn't just honor His obligation and then leave. God promised Himself to them.

Like a groom to His bride, God takes the Israelites to be His people and gives Himself to be their God. In his commentary on Exodus, Jay Sklar writes, “For the Lord, redemption is always for the sake of relationship.”³

Through Jesus, God ultimately rescues you from the death-dealing burden of sin and restores you back into union with Himself. By the blood of Jesus, you are His, and He is yours!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Connection: When you talk to people today, make eye contact and listen to their words. Turn your body and attention fully toward them. Notice their body language.

³Jay Sklar, “Exodus,” The Gospel Coalition Commentary, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/exodus/#section-19>.



day 9

9

Saved through Faith

“Deliver our lives from death.” Joshua 2:13

READ JOSHUA 2

What does it mean to fear the Lord? What does fear of the Lord have to do with life?

For Rahab, a non-Israelite woman from Jericho, fearing the Lord meant yielding to His power and purposes before her own. The city of Jericho, where Rahab lived, would be taken over by God’s people. While everyone in the city was “melting in fear” because of the Israelites and their God, Rahab’s fear caused her to submit to the Lord, who “is God in heaven above and on the earth below” (v 9, 11).

In submission, she showed kindness toward two servants of the Lord who were scouting out the land God promised them. Rahab hid the spies on her roof and helped them escape Jericho safely. In faith, she was bold enough to ask that they would save her and her family from death. The spies agreed. When the walls fell down around Jericho, Rahab and her family were safe inside their home until the battle ended. Not only did her faith save her and her family, but it put her in the family line of Jesus (see Matthew 1:5)!

If a woman from an enemy nation can be folded into the family of the Messiah, then we all have hope! Your sins are not too much for the death of Jesus to cover. Your mind is not too broken for Jesus’ resurrection to redeem. By grace, you have been saved through faith. Alleluia!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Pause: Use your breath to meditate on today’s verse.
Inhale: I have been saved.
Exhale: Through faith.



day 10

10

Wherever you go

“Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” Ruth 1:16

READ RUTH 1

After losing her husband and two sons, the widowed Naomi calls herself bitter. She sends away her two daughters-in-law, knowing that she can't offer them another son in her old age. This bitter woman wants to retreat to her hometown alone.

But Ruth, one of her daughters-in-law, refuses to leave. Instead, she chooses to go with Naomi to a place that isn't her home, to a people who are not her people, and to trust in a God she didn't know. Do you know what happened next?

God transformed a story of bitterness and loss into a story of sweet abundance and provision. If you're in a situation where the road ahead is unknown, remember that you trust a God who you do know. You can be confident that God sees you and His wisdom covers you, just as He covered Ruth.

Because He promises never to leave you or forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:8) and because you live by the Spirit and can keep in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25), you can confidently say to Him, "God, where You go, I'll go. Where You stay, I'll stay."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Body Scans: Take a second to scan your body and notice any aches. Pray for God's peace and healing.



day 11

II

God looks at the heart

“But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’” 1 Samuel 16:7

READ 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

Even though God is holy and perfect in every way, throughout the Bible (and even still today) He chooses to use insignificant, unknown, and even deeply flawed people to represent Him and lead His chosen people.

Following the first king of Israel’s disobedience, God appoints another king; David. Right when we think God would be wise to choose a new king with great skills, experience, and vision — someone who seems the most fit for the job — God chooses a shepherd boy to be king. Why? God looks at the heart.

Against all of our expectations, the first qualification for Israel’s king isn’t a certain set of skills or experience but a heart that is set on God. This is the kind of person God can form into a king who follows the ultimate King. This is the kind of person God uses to do His will on earth.

If you feel unqualified for the tasks and responsibilities God has given you, let this story be an encouragement. Skills can be learned and experience can be gained, but a heart set on God is worth more than gold.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? How does this passage point to Jesus?

Gratitude: Put your hand over your heart and thank God for the tasks on your to-do list.



day 12

The throne

“Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me;
your throne will be established forever.” 2 Samuel 7:16

READ 2 SAMUEL 5:1–5 & 7:1–16

If you're not accustomed to celebrating Advent, it might feel like a wet towel on the usual weeks-long Christmas festivities. But, if you let it, Advent can actually serve as a balm for your wearied spirit. It can be an intentional season to dig a well of steadfast joy that overflows into a season of celebration.

We prepare for Christmas because Jesus isn't just the reason for the season; He is the King of heaven and earth. His Kingdom doesn't last only through December; it lasts forever!

Let's use this time to know and love our Father more. Then, our celebration can be an extension of our worship instead of meaningless indulgence.

What does worship look like for you this Advent?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? What does this passage tell you about yourself?

Observation and Curiosity: Look at your Christmas tree and reflect on God's everlasting love.



day 13

13

He is God

“So now, O Lord our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O Lord, are God alone.”
2 Kings 19:19

READ 2 KINGS 18:1–16 & 19:14–19

When the King of Assyria taunts faithful King Hezekiah, we see the enemy’s tactics on full display. In the hearing of many Israelite people, the chief commander of the Assyrians calls the Israelites to doubt God’s saving power. He says Hezekiah is a deceiver and the Lord is not dependable. He bends and twists God’s Word for destruction.

Maybe the lies of the enemy have been loud, discouraging, and difficult for you to ignore lately. Or, perhaps the enemy’s lies have sounded strangely comforting, familiar, and easy. If so, take heart and take instruction from King Hezekiah. In the face of lies, Hezekiah doesn’t waste words on the enemy. Instead, he runs to the temple of the Lord and lifts his fears to God in prayer.

Like Hezekiah, you can lift up your burdens to God in prayer. Contend with Him that all the kingdoms of the earth will know Him, and all your tears will be wiped away. Know that He hears your prayers and is faithful to His Word!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What does this passage tell you about who God is? How does this passage point to Jesus?

Kneeling Prayer: From a kneeling or a sitting position, stretch your arms up high and inhale. Exhale and drop your hands to your knees, palms up. Talk to Jesus about the lies you are hearing and receive His truth.



day 14

For such a time

“And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” Esther 4:14

READ ESTHER 4

Do you ever wish you lived in another time or another place? Do you ever think you can only be qualified to serve God if you were this or you had that? What if you were right where you needed to be, just as you are?

The Book of Esther tells the story of a woman who seems the least likely to make a difference. Her religion, gender, and nationality put her at the bottom of the pile in terms of power. Luckily, that's not how the story ends. For all the disadvantages that marked Esther's life, she saved her people from death in an act of selfless bravery.

Esther's faith helped her step up to the challenges before her, and the Lord's favor brought her from the role of a captive to the position of queen.

Friend, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you are equipped to live faithfully and bravely in the face of any storm. You were made for such a time as this.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What do you notice in this story? How does this story point to Jesus?

Body Blessings: “God bless my _____ to _____.” Work through various body parts. Example: God bless my feet to be strong today for the hard labor ahead.



day 15

L. Lindsey
HORNKOHLE 2018

A light has dawned

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.” Isaiah 9:2

READ ISAIAH 9:2-7

Like Lent, Advent is traditionally a time of reflection, repentance, and preparation. We are invited to prepare our heart, mind, spirit, and body for the coming of Christ. How are your heart, mind, spirit, and body doing in light of our hope in Jesus? Are you living in fear, or are you living in love?

If you need a reminder of the King we serve, this famous Messianic passage in Isaiah gives us just what we need.

Our King is a light in the darkness. He is worthy of our joy. He shatters burdens and oppression, and everyone with power in this world bows to Him. He rules an everlasting Kingdom with justice and righteousness. Reset your heart, mind, spirit, and body with this truth today!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What stands out to you in this passage? What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?

Worship: Listen to “The Light Came Down” by Josh Garrels on a family walk or while doing evening chores. Thank Jesus that you have seen His great light.



day 16

Root of Jesse

“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.” Isaiah 11:10

READ ISAIAH 11

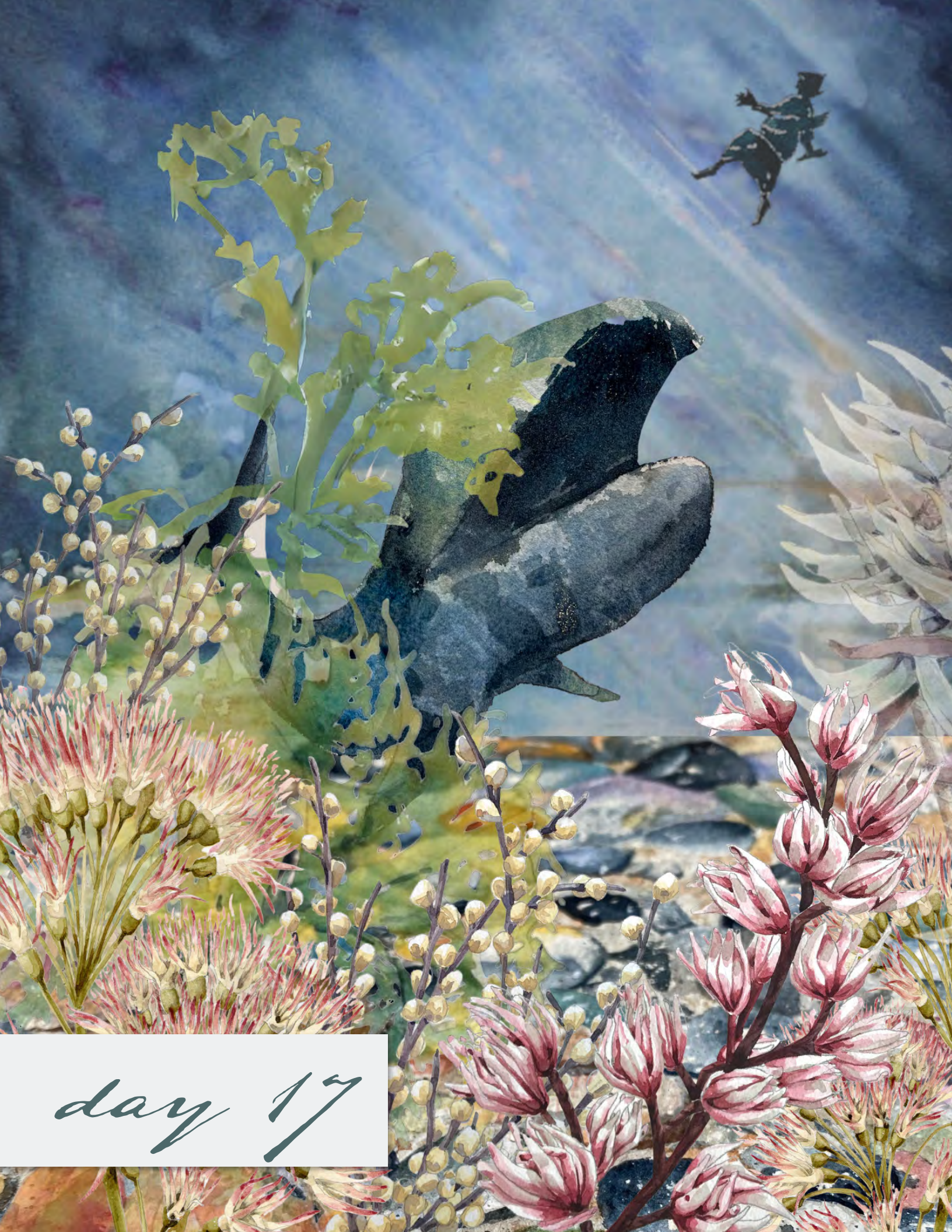
Take a few minutes to read all of Isaiah Chapter 11. Are you filled with hope? Does your heart beat faster with anticipation for this goodness to be fully fulfilled? Or, has the hope in your mind not yet reached your heart?

Press play on your favorite version of the hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” and close your eyes. Lay down or sit up straight in a comfortable position. Put one hand over your heart and the other on your belly. Take deep breaths as you listen to the lyrics. Ask God to meet you with His peace, counsel, and authority in your heart, emotions, and burdens.

The work of Emmanuel at that first Christmas and again at His second coming is not a fanciful wish or daydream. Our hope in Christ’s promises isn’t a platitude that looks nice on a Christmas greeting card. The shalom, justice, and restoration that Jesus will bring upon His return is even more certain than the sun rising tomorrow. His redeeming work is for all of you – your heart, mind, spirit, and body. Rejoice! Rejoice!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What stands out to you in this passage? What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?

Move in Love: Dance, jump, spin, sing; do whatever it is that embodies the hope and joy you have in Christ.



day 17

Deliver us

“And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?” Jonah 4:11

READ JONAH 3 & 4

If you want to know about the heart of God, read the Book of Jonah. If you want to know about the depravity of man, read the Book of Jonah. In just four short chapters, we get the gospel in a nutshell, or better yet, in the belly of a fish.

Jonah was commanded with the task of calling Nineveh to repentance and faith. Instead, Jonah flees from God to a ship on the sea in the opposite direction of Nineveh. Why? Because he thought they were undeserving of God’s mercy. Thankfully, Jonah’s disobedience and unfair judgment wasn’t a barrier to the love of God. God saw the Ninevites and Jonah for who they were, and He still offered them forgiveness.

We all have a tendency to run from God. But let this story remind you that you can’t flee from His presence. Instead, you can believe in Him, humble yourself, and receive His forgiveness in Jesus.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What do you learn about God in this passage? What stands out to you in the story of Jonah?

Butterfly Hugs: Cross your arms over your chest and alternate shoulder taps. Right, Left, Right, Left. Breathe.



day 18

Coming with the clouds

“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.” Daniel 7:13

READ DANIEL 7

It's safe to say that our culture loves superhero movies. Just look at how many superhero movies have come through theaters in the past few years. The idea of a capable, powerful, and willing savior captures our imagination.

In Daniel Chapters 7 and 8, Daniel's vision reads like an epic superhero movie plot. Nearly blasting you out of your seat, the scene opens on a dark, stormy sea. Four strange and terrifying monsters rise up from the tumultuous waters. They have horns and animal heads, wings, iron teeth, and boastful mouths. More terrifying than the typical villain, they destroy everything within their reach.

But just when all seems lost, the Ancient of Days appears seated on a flaming throne. Suddenly, the beasts were rendered powerless. One is slain and thrown into the blazing fire. All eyes turn to the clouds where “one like the son of man” approaches the Ancient of Days like a victor waiting to receive his crown. Thousands surrounding the Ancient of Days bow to the son of man in worship.

The rich symbolic imagery, typical of the apocalyptic genre⁴ “gives us a heavenly perspective on our earthly circumstances.”⁵

So, while Jesus didn't literally don a cape and mask to fight terrifying sea monsters, Daniel's vision points us to Jesus, who wore a crown of thorns and hung on a cross to defeat the powers of death and sin. Unlike the temporary victory of our movie superheroes, the victory won by Jesus is everlasting and results in our salvation!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What do you learn about Jesus through Daniel's vision in Daniel 7:13-14?

Breathing Exercise: Inhale for five counts. Hold for three counts. Exhale for seven counts. Repeat twice.

⁴ Mitch Chase, “Four Earthly Kingdoms and an Everlasting Kingdom (Daniel 7:1-28),” The Gospel Coalition Commentary:

Daniel, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/daniel/#section-13>

⁵ Tim Mackie, “How to Read the Bible Apocalyptic Literature Script,” BibleProject, June 9, 2020 <https://d1bsmz3sdihplr.cloudfront.net/media/Script%20References/h2r19-apocalyptic-script-reference.pdf>



day 19

Their peace

“And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.” Micah 5:4

READ MICAH 5

Write this verse on a notecard or a piece of paper. Underline or circle any of the words or phrases that stand out to you. What does this verse say about God? What does this verse say about you?

Take a moment to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the places where you need God's shepherding or where you long for His peace. In the busyness of each day, our need for God is often pushed to the periphery. Invite God to meet you in these lonely, sad, or needy places.

Before you go to the next activity of the day, consider the people you will interact with. How can you carry God's care, compassion, hospitality, and peace with you wherever you go? How can you invite others into the Father's love?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What do you learn about Jesus in this passage?

Stillness and Silence Break: Stand still for 30 seconds and be silent. Meditate on the Lord's glory.



day 20

A Promise

“After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, ‘Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.’” Luke 1:24–25

READ LUKE 1:1-25

There are five more days until Christmas! Have you counted the fruit of what the Lord has done for you this year? Have you told God of your gratitude for His work in your life?

In this passage of Luke, we meet Zechariah and Elizabeth, who are “advanced in years” and barren. Elizabeth says that this barrenness brought her reproach among her people. But we can also imagine that being childless brought her much pain and sorrow as well. Still, she and Zechariah faithfully did their work for the Lord. While performing his priestly duties, Zechariah was told by an angel that Elizabeth would bear a son.

After so many years of barrenness, Zechariah doesn’t believe the angel. But, God’s promise proves true, and Elizabeth becomes the mother of the man we know as John the Baptist. The childless woman bore a child, and the whole community would rejoice with her.

Today, we invite you to share what the Lord has done in your life this year. Testify to His goodness and abundance!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Why do you think Luke chose to include the story of John the Baptist’s birth in his Gospel?

Stretching: Stretch your back by doing cat and cow stretches from sitting or standing. Give God thanks for your mobility.



day 21

e. lindsey hornkohl 2013

The Lord's servant

“Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”
Luke 1:38

READ LUKE 1:26–38

If we were to describe Mary in one word, it would be humble. She is poor, powerless, single, and pregnant. But most of all, she's humble in her posture toward God. She does not assume God's favor, expect to bear God's Son, or assert her will over God's.

Instead, she bows her will, reputation, and body to God's compassionate heart. Because Mary knows God's heart toward the poor, weak, hungry, and dead in spirit, she is not afraid to serve Him. In serving God, she bears the Savior of the world.

What does it mean for you to have a posture of humility toward God today? Remember, it is a glorious privilege to be the Lord's servant.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What do you learn about God in this passage? What does it mean for you today?

Breath Prayer:
Inhale: Behold.
Exhale: I am the servant of the Lord.



day 22

Eyes have seen

“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation.” Luke 2:29–30

READ LUKE 2:22–39

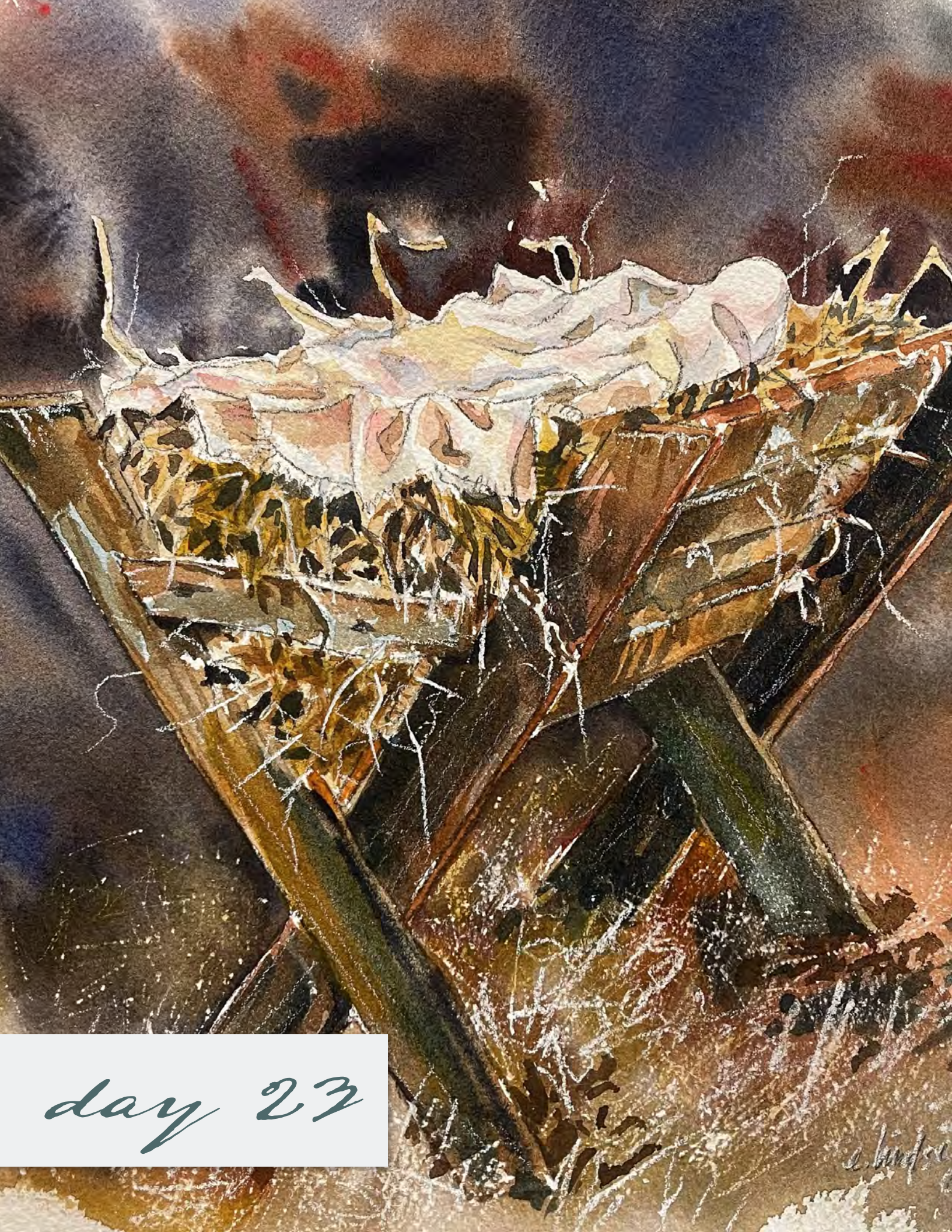
Luke introduces us to Simeon, a man whom the Holy Spirit told that he wouldn't die before he saw the Messiah. When Jesus was presented at the Temple according to Jewish law, Simeon was there waiting for Him. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Simeon took Jesus into his arms and prayed a prayer of blessing and gratitude to God.

In some church traditions, the Song of Simeon is a part of evening prayer. It calls to mind the sure promise of God for the salvation of all who trust in Him.

This evening, we invite you to pray the Song of Simeon in Luke 2:29–32. As you pray, consider how you have seen God move today. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you remember how Jesus has been your rescue and hope today. Then, fall asleep with the peace of God covering you like a blanket.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Why do you think Luke chose to include this passage in his Gospel? What does it teach you about Jesus?

Pray Together: Pray the Song of Simeon aloud with others.



day 23

a. lindse

Emmanuel

“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel.’”

Matthew 1:23

READ MATTHEW 1:18–25

The late Tim Keller wrote, “I’ve become convinced that what makes the difference for Christianity is the incarnation. No other faith says God became flesh...Christmas and the incarnation mean that God went to infinite lengths to make himself one whom we can know personally.”⁶

God became flesh, doing in Himself what man could not do on their own but what needed to be done for salvation. This is the wonder and the mystery of the incarnation. This is the beauty and joy we celebrate during Christmas.

God with us.

Take time today to wonder and savor this truth. Sit with your family and friends to recall the life and work of Jesus Christ in the manger and on the cross. Enjoy your time with Him because He came for you. Amen!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What do you learn about God in this passage? What does it mean for you today?

Grounding: Sit tall in your chair and feel the weight of your body in the chair. You are supported by the love of God.

⁶Timothy Keller (@timkellernyc), “I’ve become convinced that what makes the difference for Christianity is the incarnation,” Twitter. December 26, 2018.



day 24

Christmas Eve

Good News

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” Luke 2:10

READ LUKE 2:8-21

Merry Christmas Eve! As your celebrations begin and guests start arriving, let's take one more moment to gather ourselves in the glory of Christ. We have been preparing our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits for this celebration.

Still, you may encounter disappointments and disagreements. You may be experiencing loss or grief. You may find that all your worries and sorrows do not disappear when the gifts are opened and the eggnog sipped. Do not fear!

These were the words the angel first spoke when he announced the good news of Jesus' birth to the startled shepherds watching their flocks. They were likely dirty, tired, and may have come in contact with dead animals. Coming into the presence of God or any spiritual being while ritually unclean could have meant death for them.

But, their uncleanness, their unpreparedness, was met with comfort. Jesus, after all, was not entering the world in its perfect, sinless state. Jesus was entering a world still burdened and broken by the wide and deep effects of sin. But Jesus did this willingly and eagerly.

This Christmas, don't worry about your mixed emotions or imperfections ruining the Christmas celebration. Instead, bring all of it to Jesus because He knows and cares for you. This good news of great joy will meet you wherever you are. Praise God!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What sorrows or joys are you carrying as you enter into the Christmas season?

Box Breathing: Inhale for four counts. Hold for four counts. Exhale for four counts. Hold for four counts. Repeat.



day 25

day 25

Christmas Day

Jesus is born!

“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.” Luke 2:7

READ LUKE 2:1–7 OR MATTHEW 1:18–25

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! He does not come on a chariot. He does not come in flowing garments and gold. He is born to a virgin, wrapped in swaddling cloths, and laid in a manger. But this tiny baby is the Savior of the world.

From the moment of Jesus’ conception to His death on the cross, “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong” (1 Corinthians 1:27). This is the economy of God’s Kingdom. Small is big, and weak is strong.

Between opening gifts and feasting on delicious food, take time to meditate on Jesus’ humble beginnings. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see the seemingly small tasks and responsibilities He’s given you that have lasting impact in the Kingdom. Then, continue your celebrations with confidence, knowing nothing is wasted or inconsequential in the hands of God. Merry Christmas!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: What stands out to you in this passage?

Eat Slow: Enjoy your Christmas feast! Eat slowly to taste each flavor and enjoy the gifts God has given you.



*Thank you for
Preparing Him Room.*

Be sure to check out more resources on our website:
RevelationWellness.org

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