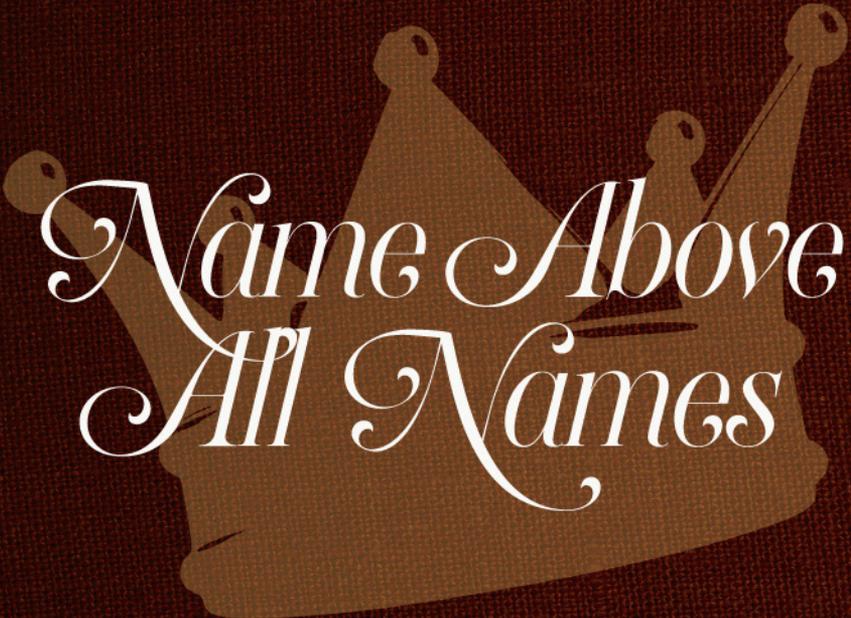


ANKENY BAPTIST CHURCH



*Name Above
All Names*

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



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ADVENT READING PLAN

WEEK 1 — The Setup: The Promised Messiah

(Prophecy · anticipation · genealogy · announcement)

These readings prepare our hearts for the names of Jesus.

DECEMBER 1
Luke 1:1-4
God gives us truth through eyewitnesses so that we may have “certainty” about Jesus.

DECEMBER 2
Genesis 49:8-12
Jesus is the promised ruler from Judah—God keeps His promises even over centuries.

DECEMBER 3
Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-5
The child born will reign forever in justice and righteousness—His kingdom will have no end.

DECEMBER 4
Micah 5:2-4
The Messiah comes from Bethlehem, a small place, showing God delights in working through the unlikely.

DECEMBER 5
Matthew 1:1-17
Jesus' ancestry reveals that God's redemptive plan shapes history.

DECEMBER 6
Matthew 1:18-25
He is “God with us,” the One who saves His people from their sins.

DECEMBER 7
Matthew 2:1-12
Wise men still seek Him—and worship is the right response to the King.

WEEK 2 — Wonderful Counselor

“His name will be called Wonderful Counselor...” — Isaiah 9:6

DECEMBER 8
Matthew 2:13-15
God guides and protects Joseph step by step—He still leads those who listen.

DECEMBER 9
Matthew 2:16-18
Even in tragedy, God's purposes remain unshaken.

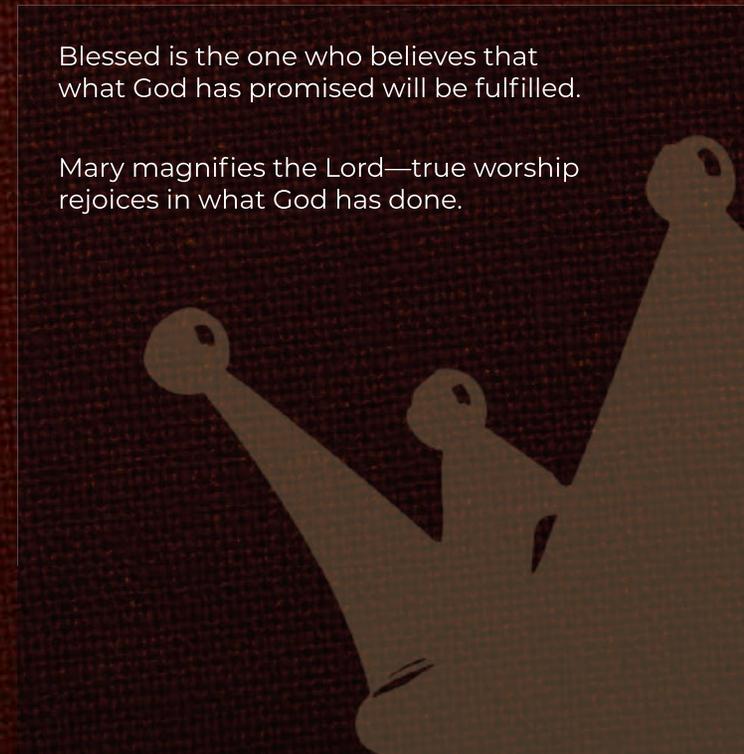
DECEMBER 10
Matthew 2:19-23
Jesus is placed exactly where He needs to be—God's guidance is never random.

DECEMBER 11
Luke 1:5-25
God hears our prayers, even when the answer seems delayed.

DECEMBER 12
Luke 1:26-38
Nothing is impossible with God—He invites us to trust His word.

DECEMBER 13
Luke 1:39-45
Blessed is the one who believes that what God has promised will be fulfilled.

DECEMBER 14
Luke 1:46-56
Mary magnifies the Lord—true worship rejoices in what God has done.



WEEK 3 — Mighty God

“His name will be called... Mighty God...” — Isaiah 9:6

- DECEMBER 15**
Luke 1:57-66
God’s mercy and power are seen in the birth of John—He prepares the way for the Mighty One.
- DECEMBER 16**
Luke 1:67-80
God visits and redeems His people—He brings salvation and light.
- DECEMBER 17**
Luke 2:1-7
The King of the universe arrives in humility—nothing can stop His coming.
- DECEMBER 18**
Luke 2:8-21
The gospel is good news of great joy—Jesus saves.
- DECEMBER 19**
Luke 2:22-40
Jesus is the salvation prepared for all people—He brings hope to those who wait on Him.

WEEK 4 — Everlasting Father & Prince of Peace

“His name will be called... Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” — Isaiah 9:6

- DECEMBER 20**
John 1:1-5, 18
The eternal Word became flesh—Jesus reveals the Father to us.
- DECEMBER 21**
John 1:6-8, 15
John points away from himself so others will see Jesus—the true Light.
- DECEMBER 22**
John 1:9-14
The Word took on flesh and dwelt among us—He came near.
- DECEMBER 23**
John 1:16-17
We receive grace upon grace—Jesus brings truth and mercy we could never earn.
- DECEMBER 24**
Isaiah 52:13–53:12
Jesus is the suffering servant who carried our sins and brings us peace.
- DECEMBER 25**
Revelation 21:1-8
He makes all things new—our Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace reign forever.



WEEK 1

The Promised Messiah

Nevertheless, the gloom of the distressed land will not be like that of the former times when he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the future he will bring honor to the way of the sea, to the land east of the Jordan, and to Galilee of the nations.

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
a light has dawned
on those living in the land of darkness.

You have enlarged the nation
and increased its joy.

The people have rejoiced before you
as they rejoice at harvest time
and as they rejoice when dividing spoils.

For you have shattered their oppressive yoke
and the rod on their shoulders,
the staff of their oppressor,
just as you did on the day of Midian.

For every trampling boot of battle
and the bloodied garments of war
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

ISAIAH 9:1-6

Before we get to the names of the Messiah, it helps to understand the context. Isaiah was a prophet in Judah during a very dark time in Israel's history. The nation was divided, surrounded by powerful enemies, and struggling with sin and disobedience. They had repeatedly turned from God, worshipping idols and ignoring His commands. Because of their rebellion, God allowed hardship, oppression, and fear to fill the land. The people felt trapped in the shadow of death, uncertain if hope would ever come.

Think of a small town where all the lights have gone out. Streets are dark, and people are unsure where to step. Suddenly, a bright light appears in the distance, guiding everyone safely forward. That's what Isaiah is showing us: a great light is coming into a dark world.

Isaiah 9:1-2 says:

Nevertheless, the gloom of the distressed land will not be like that of the former times when he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the future he will bring honor to the way of the sea, to the land east of the Jordan, and to Galilee of the nations. The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness.

Even though Israel had disobeyed God, He promised a Savior would come—a light to pierce the darkness. This light is Jesus. When Isaiah says, “A child will be born to us,” he points to the humanity of Christ. When he says, “A son will be given to us,” he highlights Christ's deity—the pre-existent Son of God coming into the world.

Verse 6a says, “The government will rest on His shoulders,” showing that this child would not only come to save but also to rule. This prophecy points both to Jesus' first coming and to His future reign over an eternal kingdom. God's plan had not been thwarted by Israel's disobedience; instead, it promised hope, restoration, and an unending kingdom.

MEMORY VERSE

For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

ISAIAH 9:6

REFLECTION

Where in your life do you feel trapped by darkness
or uncertainty?

How can you reflect the light of Jesus to others this
Christmas—through encouragement, kindness, or
sharing the hope of Christ?

Take a moment to thank God for sending the Messiah, the
Light of the world, who brings hope, life, and a kingdom
that will never end.

WEEK 2

Wonderful Counselor

For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

ISAIAH 9:6



Isaiah 9:6 — “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... and His name shall be called... Wonderful Counselor.”

Life is full of questions, decisions, and moments when we need guidance. Who can we turn to when we don’t know what to do? Isaiah tells us that Jesus, the promised Messiah, is our Wonderful Counselor. That means His wisdom is perfect, His understanding is limitless, and His advice is always good.

When Jesus walked on earth, people came to Him with every kind of need — confusion, sickness, fear, and sin. He listened. He cared. And He spoke words of truth and hope. Even today, through His Word and His Spirit, Jesus still gives us the counsel we need. He helps us see clearly when life feels uncertain.

James 1:5 says,

“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God — who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly — and it will be given to him.”

What a promise! We’re never without guidance when we walk with the Lord. The One who created us knows what’s best for us, and He invites us to trust His wisdom instead of relying only on our own understanding.

Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor because His wisdom leads to peace, joy, and life. Whether you’re a child trying to make good choices, a teen facing pressure, or an adult carrying responsibility, you can turn to Him for help and direction.

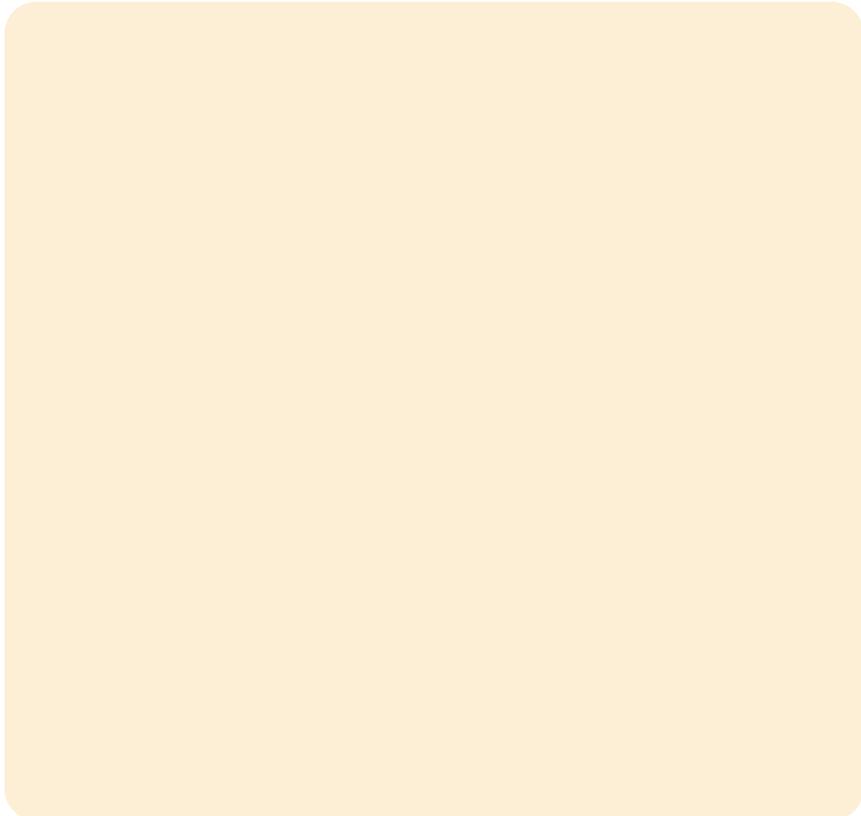
MEMORY VERSE

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

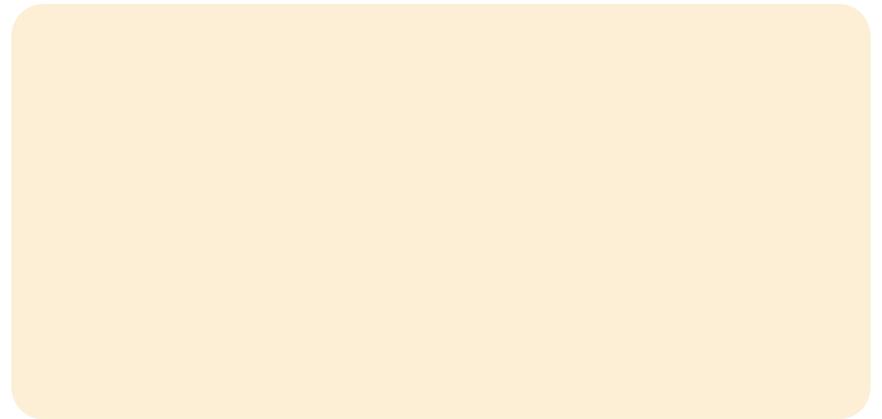
Proverbs 3:5-6

REFLECTION

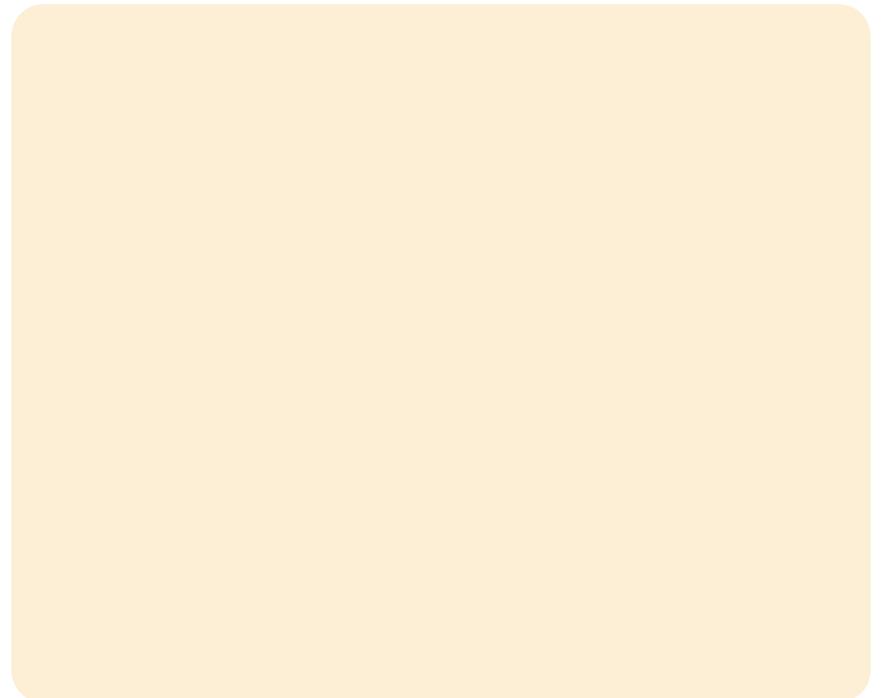
Where do you need God's wisdom right now?



How can you make space this week to listen to the Wonderful Counselor — maybe through prayer, reading Scripture, or quiet reflection?



Take a moment to thank Jesus, our Wonderful Counselor, for His perfect wisdom and gentle guidance in every season of life.



WEEK 3

Mighty God

For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, **Mighty God**,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

ISAIAH 9:6

MEMORY VERSE

“Ah Lord GOD! Look! You made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm.
Nothing is too difficult for you.”

Jeremiah 32:17



When you think of God, what characteristics or attributes come to mind? Perhaps you think of His perfect knowledge, or maybe His love. Allow me to introduce you to our Mighty God! He is all-powerful, fierce in strength, Commander in Chief, the God of creation—the One on whom we can completely rely.

This is exactly the attitude of Isaiah 9:2–6. The prophet helps us see the greatness of our God in these verses by recounting the acts of God—what He has done and what He will do for His people, Israel. In verse 3, Isaiah praises God directly, proclaiming, “You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy.” What else has God done? He has “shattered their oppressive yoke and the rod on their shoulders, the staff of their oppressor.”

When Isaiah speaks of these acts of God, they are actually a reflection of what God will do in the future. How do we know this? Because verse 6 tells us that God will send Israel a child—a Son will be “given to us.” Since we have the completed Word of God, we know that this Son is Jesus Christ! Yet in this passage, He is given four additional names: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. These names affirm Christ’s deity, meaning that He is equal with God.

“Mighty God” is the second name given to Jesus in this prophecy. But what does it mean? Of all the names, why did the Bible choose to describe the coming Son this way? This title shows us that He can be trusted! We see this idea in verse 4: “just as you did on the day of Midian.” This is a reference to Gideon’s victory over the Midianites and the capture of their two commanders in Judges 7:25. Just as Gideon and his 300 men trusted God in battle, Isaiah trusted God as he wrote down His words. He knew that whenever God promises something, it’s as good as done. That’s one reason the verbs appear in the past tense—“have seen,” “enlarged,” “increased,” “shattered,” and so on. Even though Jesus had not yet come in Isaiah’s time, Isaiah knew that God never lies and always fulfills His promises.

We have so many examples of God’s faithfulness to fulfill His promises. Think of how God worked through Joseph’s life to provide food for Israel and his family. Or when God’s people were enslaved in Egypt and God used a man named Moses to rescue them in a mighty way. Fast-forward to the New Testament—Jesus transformed Saul into Paul, who went on to write most of the New Testament letters!

God works in our lives, too. He is all-powerful and all-knowing. In Romans 8:28 we read, “We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to His purpose.” Reflect on God’s faithfulness and worship Him today for sending His Son to bring joy to the world! Get excited to celebrate Jesus’ birth this Christmas. Spend time as a family reflecting on what God has done for you.

What a Mighty God we serve!

Additional Passage to Reflect on God’s Faithfulness: Psalm 105

WEEK 4

Everlasting Father

For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

ISAIAH 9:1-6



Think of a father teaching his child to swim. The child clings tightly to the edge of the pool, afraid to let go. But the father stands a few feet away, arms open, gently saying, “I’ve got you—trust me.” Slowly, the child pushes off, eyes fixed on the father’s face. The father never looks away, ready to catch, guide, and steady. That’s a glimpse of how Jesus cares for us. His watchful love never fades, His strength never fails, and His presence never wavers.

At first, the title Everlasting Father can sound confusing—after all, this prophecy is about Jesus, the Son! But Isaiah is showing us that

the Messiah would reflect the heart and care of a perfect Father—one who lovingly provides, protects, and never leaves His children.

“This Deliverer will also be called the Everlasting Father. Many people are puzzled by this title because the Messiah, God’s Son, is distinguished in the Trinity from God the Father. How can the Son be the Father? Several things must be noted in this regard. First, the Messiah, being the second Person of the Trinity, is in His essence, God. Therefore He has all the attributes of God including eternity. Since God is One (even though He exists in three Persons), the Messiah is God. Second, the title ‘Everlasting Father’ is an idiom used to describe the Messiah’s relationship to time, not His relationship to the other Members of the Trinity. He is said to be everlasting, just as God (the Father) is called ‘the Ancient of Days’ (Dan. 7:9). The Messiah will be a ‘fatherly’ Ruler. Third, perhaps Isaiah had in mind the promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16) about the ‘foreverness’ of the kingdom which God promised would come through David’s line. The Messiah, a Descendant of David, will fulfill this promise for which the nation had been waiting.”

— John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*

When we call Jesus our *Everlasting Father*, we’re reminded that His care has no limits. He’s not distant, distracted, or temporary. He loves His people with a faithful, forever love. He knows our needs, hears our prayers, and holds us close. Just as a good father guides and provides, Jesus leads His people with tenderness and strength. Isaiah 9:6 is not merely a warm metaphor, but a profound declaration: the Messiah is the one whose fatherly love spans eternity, who will never fail to protect or provide for His people, and whose reign and care have no end.

Many people today carry hurts from broken family relationships or absent fathers. But Jesus offers something completely different—an unchanging, everlasting relationship. Through faith in Him, we are adopted into God’s family and can rest in His never-ending love.

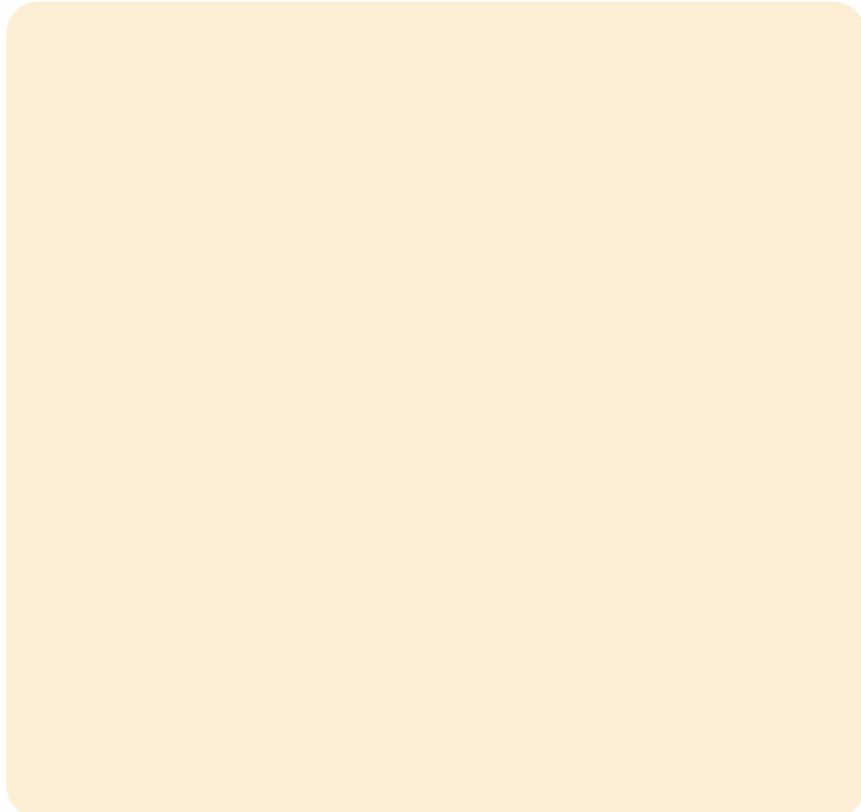
MEMORY VERSE

“Look! I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay each person according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

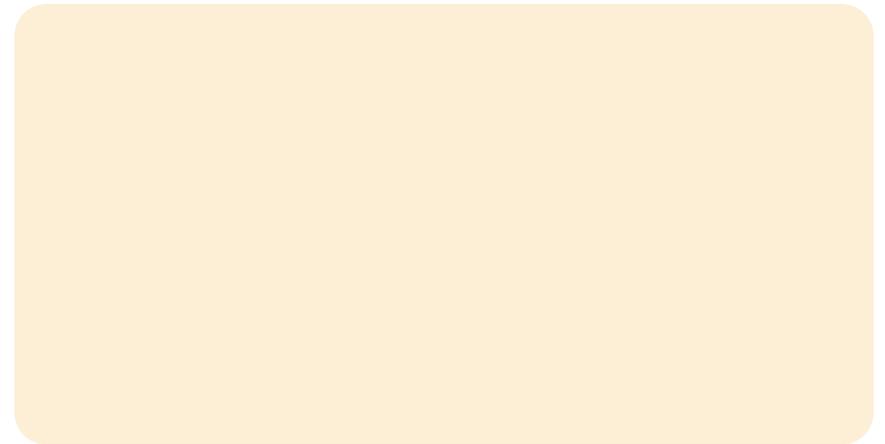
Revelation 22:12-13

REFLECTION

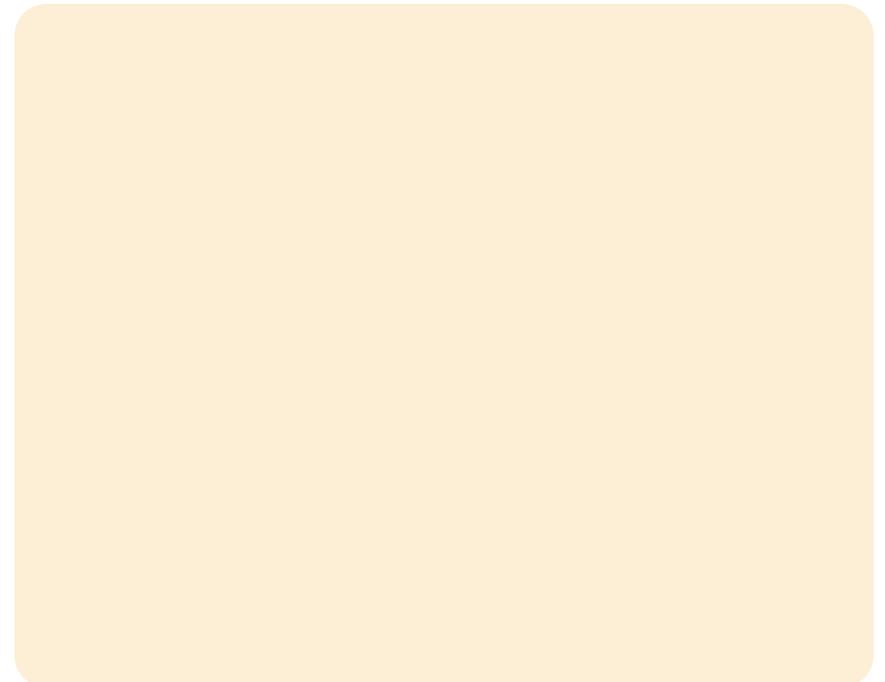
How does it comfort you to know that Jesus’ love never ends?



How might you show His compassionate, fatherlike care to someone this Christmas—maybe through a word of encouragement, a visit, or simply taking time to listen?



Take a moment to thank Jesus, our Everlasting Father, for His unchanging love and faithful care that never runs out.



CHRISTMAS EVE

Prince of Peace

For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, **Prince of Peace.**

ISAIAH 9:6

Isaiah 9:6 – “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... and his name shall be called... Prince of Peace.”

Peace can be hard to find. The world is filled with conflict, anxiety, and uncertainty — and even our own hearts can feel restless. But Isaiah tells us that the promised Messiah would be called the Prince of Peace. That title means more than the absence of war or worry. It points to Jesus as the One who brings true and lasting peace — peace with God, peace within, and peace among His people.

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus made peace between sinners and a holy God. We were once separated by sin, but through faith in Christ, we are reconciled and welcomed into God’s family (Romans 5:1). This peace is not fragile or temporary; it rests on the finished work of the cross. The Prince of Peace doesn’t just calm storms around us — He calms the storm within us. When life feels uncertain, we can rest knowing our relationship with God is secure.

And one day, the Prince of Peace will return to make all things new. Wars will cease, tears will be wiped away, and the world will finally know the peace it was created for. Until that day, Christ’s followers are called to live as peacemakers — reflecting His character in our homes, our church, and our community. We bring His peace to others when we forgive, when we speak gently, and when we point people to the Savior who alone can give peace that lasts.

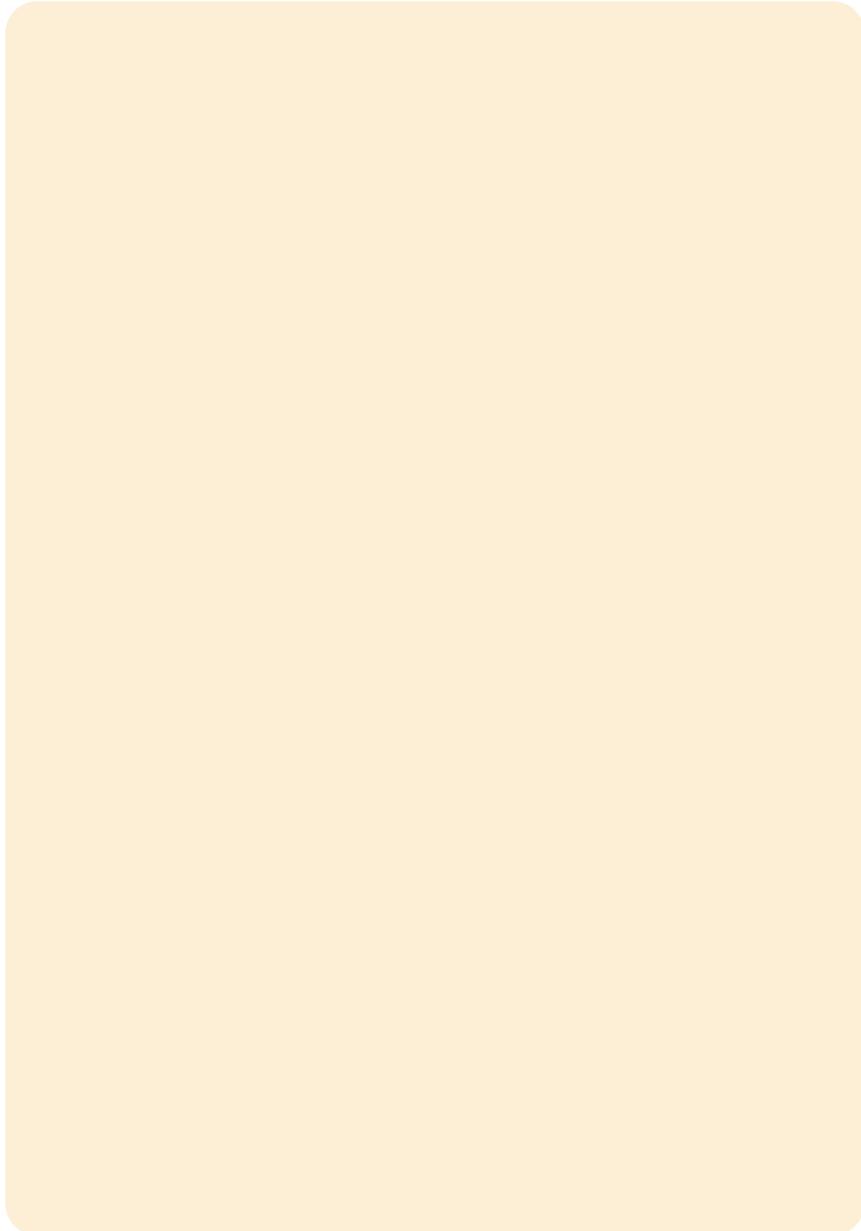
MEMORY VERSE

“For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile everything to himself, making peace through the blood of his cross—whether things on earth or things in heaven.”

Colossians 1:19-20

REFLECTION

What are some ways Jesus brings peace into your life? How can you share His peace with others this Christmas — through kindness, reconciliation, or serving someone in need?



Take a moment to thank Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who has given us peace with God, made peace with others possible, and through Whom we have the promise of His peaceful kingdom to come.

