



## Waiting for Jesus Then and Now The (Empty) Stable

Right now we are beginning the season of Advent. At the end of Advent is Christmas. The word "advent" means "coming." It is the season when we remember the coming of Jesus Christ, God's only son, into the world. Have you ever waited for something for a long time? God's people had been waiting for a very long time for God to send a Savior to them and keep all of his promises. That Savior was Jesus—who was born long ago in a stable in Bethlehem. The baby Jesus would grow up to save all of God's people. Yet that is not all of the good news. It was God's plan to send Jesus to the world twice. He came long ago and he is coming back again. Like the people of Israel, we are waiting for him to come.

Jesus, thank you for coming down into our world! As we learn about your coming help us to see what you have done for us. Help us to be ready for you to come again.  
Amen.

Bible Readings:  
Psalm 130;  
1 Thessalonians 4:15-18



## God is the Giver of Life and the Restorer of the World The Green Plants

The whole world was created by God. Can you name something that God made? God made everything that we see around us—the earth, the water, the plants, the animals. Even the bright sun and the moon were set in space by God. And God made every person that lives and ever has lived. After God made the world, he said that it was good. But it was only good as long as the people obeyed God. Then Adam and Eve, the first people, chose to disobey and stopped trusting God. Ever since that day sin and death have been a part of our world. But God always had a beautiful plan to rescue the people and restore his creation. The coming of Jesus is at the center of God's plan.

O God, we praise you because you are good, and you made good things. Even when sin and death entered our world, you always had a plan to restore it.  
Thank you, God.

Bible Readings:  
Psalm 104:24-30;  
Romans 8:18-25



## We Have All Gone Astray The First Sheep

Do you remember what "Advent" means? We have learned that in Advent we are remembering when Jesus came and waiting for him to come again. But why did God send Jesus into the world? God sent Jesus because every person in the world has a big problem. We are all sinners—we all do wrong things. We disobey God just like Adam and Eve did. The Bible says we are all like sheep: we wander off our own way, far from God. We can't get back to God on our own. Jesus needed to come to save us from our sins and bring us back to God. By doing this, Jesus showed that God is righteous and merciful. He showed God's glory.

God, we confess that we all wander off our own way. We confess that we have sinned against you. Please forgive us for our sins. Thank you for sending Jesus into the world to bring us back to you! Amen.

Bible Readings:  
Isaiah 53:4-6;  
Romans 3:19-26



## Jesus Died to Save Us The Lamb

Do you remember that we have all sinned against God? The wrong things we do hurt us and they can hurt others. But most of all, when we sin we are disobeying God. God is holy, so our sins mean we must die. Our sins need to be forgiven by God. In the time before Jesus came, God forgave the people's sins by having a lamb die instead of the people. This was part of the Law that God gave to Moses. The Law was pointing ahead to Jesus' coming. It was to show what Jesus would do. He would die for our sins instead of us. Jesus is called the Lamb of God because he died on the cross to save us. God saves us through Jesus.

Dear God, thank you for having such an amazing plan to save us from our sins! Thank you for sending Jesus to be the lamb. Help us to trust in Him.  
Amen.

Bible Readings:  
Exodus 12:21-27;  
Acts 8:26-38



Day 5

### Jesus Is the Light of the World The Lantern

Do you know what it is like to sit in the darkness? It is like being blind. You can't see anything. Have you ever been in the dark and then someone came and turned on the light? There is a verse in the Old Testament that tells what it would be like for the world when Jesus came. It says, "the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2). That was what it was like when Jesus came to earth. He brought light into the whole world! The light he brought is the truth about God and hope for all people. He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Dear Jesus, we praise you for shining your light when we were in the darkness. We know that there are many people in the world who are still in the dark. Let your light shine through us, in how we live, that they might see it and believe in you, too. Amen.

Bible Readings  
Isaiah 9:2-7;  
John 1:1-9



### God Promised a Great King The First Wise Man

This is one of the "wise men," or magi. In Jesus' time wise men served foreign kings. Do you know what a king is? A king is the ruler of a nation. He is the leader of everyone that is in his kingdom, for as long as he lives. Long, long ago God promised his people many times that he would raise up a great king for them. He promised them that this king would do only what is right and good. The people of Israel had many kings, but most of them did not do what is right and did not lead the people in God's ways. Each of Israel's kings died, and then the people would need a new king. But God's promised king would rule forever and ever - his kingdom would never end. All of Israel was waiting for God to send them this great king. Then there would be justice and righteousness and peace in their land . . . forever.

Dear God, we long for your peace to reign in this world. We thank you for promising a king whose reign would never end. Amen.

Bible Readings  
Isaiah 11:1-9;  
Hebrews 1:7-13

Day 7



### Jesus Is the Promised King - Over All the World The Second Wise Man

We have learned that God promised he would raise up a great king for the people of Israel. God's people were waiting for this great king who would do only what was good and right and who would defeat Israel's enemies. God's king would rule not only over the people of Israel but over the whole world. The greatest king that Israel ever had was named David. David's kingdom spread over a wide land and many people. But David did not rule over the whole world. The king that God promised was Jesus! Jesus was going to be a king like David, but Jesus was going to be far greater than David ever was. Jesus was born to be king over all people and all of creation.

Dear Jesus, you are the greatest king. You are the King of kings and the Lord of lords and we praise you! Amen.

Bible Readings  
Matthew 22:41-46;  
John 18:33-38



### The Angel Comes to Mary Mary

This is what happened when the time was right for Jesus to come. In the city of Nazareth there lived a young woman who was faithful to God. Her name was Mary. One day God sent an angel to Mary, to tell her that she would have a special baby. Her baby would be called the Son of God, and he would be a great king whose kingdom would last forever. Do you know who her baby was going to be? God had chosen Mary to be the mother of Jesus! Even though it was so incredible, Mary believed what the angel said. She sang praises to God for making her the mother of Jesus and keeping his promises to his people.

Dear God, Thank you for sending Jesus at just the right time. We praise you because you use humble, ordinary people in your plan. Help us to believe your word like Mary did. Amen.

Bible Readings  
1 Samuel 2:1-10;  
Luke 1:46-55