



Advent | December 15  
Weekly Devotionals

*If available, light your HOPE, PEACE, and JOY candles on your Advent wreath.  
Take a moment to be still in the presence of God, inviting him to renew your joy.*

**Opening Prayer:**

*Show us your unfailing love, O God, our Savior,  
and grant us your salvation.*

*Listen to what the Lord our God says:*

*He promises peace to his people,  
who are his beloved saints.*

*The Lord will indeed give what is good.*

*Righteousness goes before him  
and prepares the way for his steps.*

*May the Lord make his holy face to shine upon us in this time of Advent.*

*May we see God's face and so know peace. Amen.*

*—based on Psalm 85:7-13, NIV*

## Read Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing, Daughter Zion;  
shout aloud, Israel!

Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,  
Daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup>The Lord has taken away your punishment,  
he has turned back your enemy.

The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you;  
never again will you fear any harm.

<sup>16</sup>On that day  
they will say to Jerusalem,

“Do not fear, Zion;  
do not let your hands hang limp.

<sup>17</sup>The Lord your God is with you,  
the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;  
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
but will rejoice over you with singing.”

<sup>18</sup>“I will remove from you  
all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals,  
which is a burden and reproach for you.

<sup>19</sup>At that time I will deal  
with all who oppressed you.

I will rescue the lame;  
I will gather the exiles.

I will give them praise and honor  
in every land where they have suffered shame.

<sup>20</sup>At that time I will gather you;  
at that time I will bring you home.

I will give you honor and praise  
among all the peoples of the earth

when I restore your fortunes  
before your very eyes,”

says the Lord.

## Read Isaiah 12:2-6

Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust and not be afraid.

The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense;

he has become my salvation.”

<sup>3</sup>With joy you will draw water

from the wells of salvation.

<sup>4</sup>In that day you will say:

“Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;

make known among the nations what he has done,

and proclaim that his name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup>Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things;

let this be known to all the world.

<sup>6</sup>Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,

for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

### ***Pause and Reflect:***

*Where do you need your joy in the Lord renewed? What phrase in the previous Scriptures stands out to you? Take a moment to pray through that phrase, inviting the Lord to remind you of his saving grace toward you. Ask for renewed joy in your life. Take a moment to pray a prayer of thanksgiving for the glorious things the Lord has done.*

## Read Luke 3:7-18

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup>Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup>The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> “What should we do then?” the crowd asked. <sup>11</sup> John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

<sup>14</sup>Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

<sup>15</sup>The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup>John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." <sup>18</sup>And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

***Intercessory Prayer:***

*Brothers and sisters,  
as we joyfully await the glorious coming of the Christ,  
let us pray for the needs of the church, our community, and the world.*

***Prayers of the People—take some time to pray to Jesus about the needs of the church and the world.***

*God of joy and exultation,  
you strengthen what is weak;  
you enrich the poor  
and give hope to those who live in fear.  
Look upon our needs this day.  
Make us grateful for the good news of salvation  
and keep us faithful in your service  
until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Concluding Scripture: Read Philippians 4:4-7**

<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup>Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Concluding Prayer:**

*O God of the exiles and the lost,  
you promise restoration and wholeness  
through the power of Jesus Christ.  
Give us faith to live joyfully,  
sustained by your promises  
as we eagerly await the day when they will be fulfilled  
for all the world to see,  
through the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*