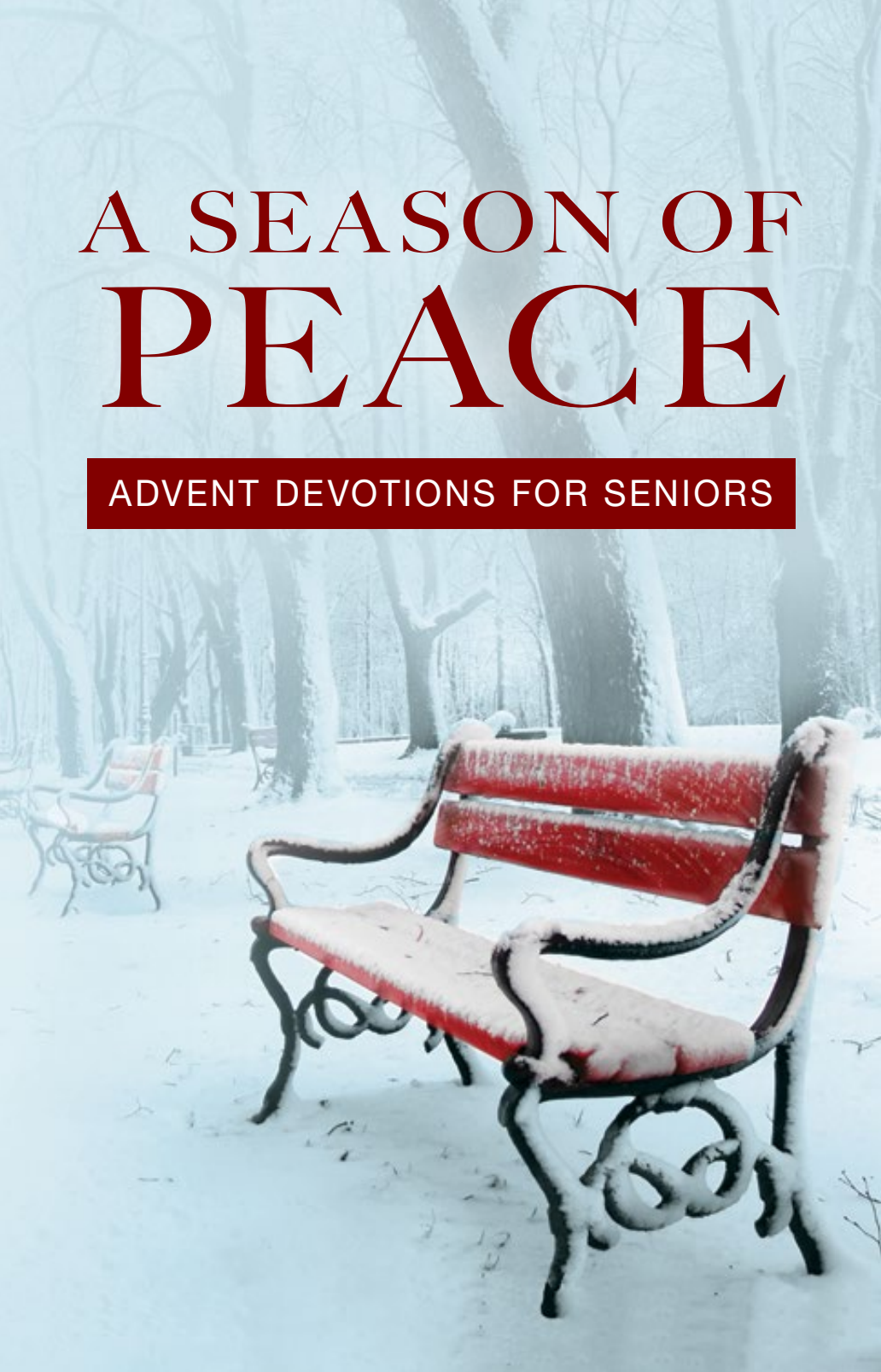
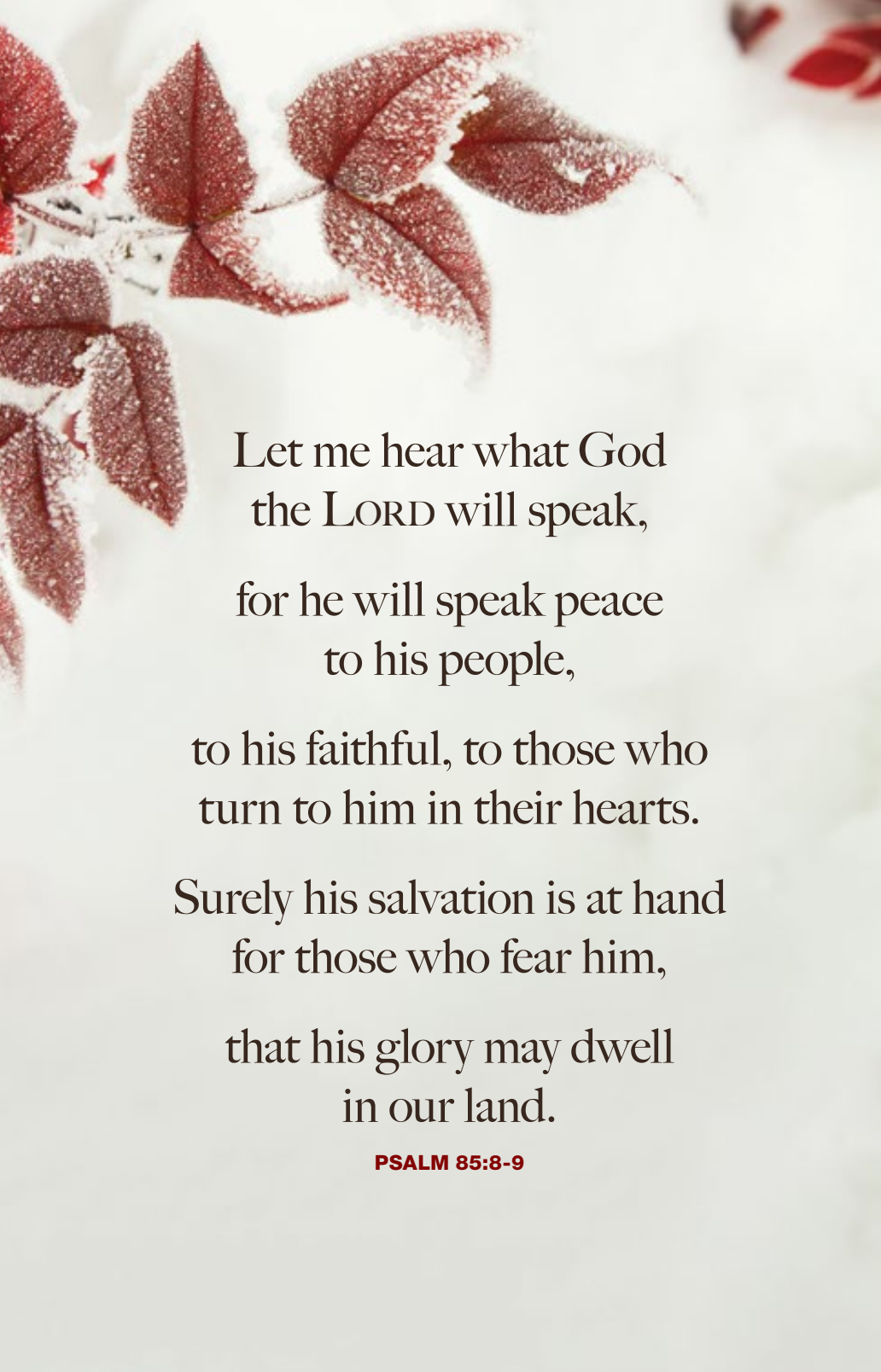


A SEASON OF PEACE

ADVENT DEVOTIONS FOR SENIORS



A close-up photograph of several red leaves, possibly from a rose bush, covered in a layer of white snow. The leaves are in the upper left corner of the frame, and the rest of the background is a soft, out-of-focus white.

Let me hear what God
the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace
to his people,

to his faithful, to those who
turn to him in their hearts.

Surely his salvation is at hand
for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell
in our land.

PSALM 85:8-9

Introduction

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ❖ **PHILIPPIANS 4:7**

We live in a world that features chaos and struggle of many kinds, and this is nothing new. Because of sin, life on this earth can be unsettled and unsteady. Enter Jesus, a small baby in a busy, bustling town of Bethlehem. His birth in the midst of upheaval is the kind of peace that we need—the kind that reaches deep into the heart, soul and mind of all who believe in him. That is what we celebrate this Advent season as we await the arrival of the Prince of Peace.

The peace that Jesus brings changes our lives forever. It serves as a shield and protection. No longer are we afraid of this world and its troubles. No longer are we afraid of sin. No longer are we afraid of death. The peace that Jesus gives through his birth provides us with the confidence of knowing that he has overcome the world, he forgives our every trespass through the cross and he opens the way to life after death through his resurrection.

Peace be with you, in his name, as you read these devotions this season.

MARK ZIMMERMANN, *editor*

SUNDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Spell “ADVENT”

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...

✦ **COLOSSIANS 3:15**

A is for Alleluia: We praise the Lord with shouts of joy for all he has done and continues to do for us.

D is for Dedicated: We honor all those people who share the love, forgiveness and joy within our lives.

V is for Victory: We celebrate each day, knowing that Christ has won the victory over death.

E is for Easter: We know that we are Easter people and alleluia is our song, because of Christ’s birth and resurrection.

N is for Now: We know that we live, serve and celebrate Christ now, every day and not only when we feel like it.

T is for Team: We belong to the Church, God’s people, who pray, celebrate, serve and support one another, because Christ loves and forgives all of us!

RICH BIMLER | *Bloomington, IL*

LORD, THIS ADVENT *we await your coming at Christmas, even though we know we already celebrate your birth, life and resurrection every day. Amen.*

SHARE: Spell out the word ADVENT with others, and share your faith-thoughts together.

READ: Psalm 27:14

MONDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

What Are You Expecting?

You also must be ready... ❖ **MATTHEW 24:44**

How many shopping days until Christmas? Are you ready for Christmas? Will you meet all your expectations in decorating the house and tree, making cookies and wrapping presents? All those preparations are important in order to celebrate Jesus' birth. All those preparations help to set the tone for the celebration of Christ. In addition to those activities, have you set expectations for your spiritual life for this season? Have you set aside time for Advent devotions? Do you light the Advent wreath each day? Are you attending weekly Advent services?

As Christians, we are expecting to see Jesus at his Second Coming. Believers have the great hope of Christ's Second Coming. The coming of Christ will be a day of great rejoicing. We have the sure hope of heaven because of Jesus.

DAVID BEVER | Las Vegas, NV

LORD, PREPARE MY HEART *to celebrate Jesus' birth.
Help me to be ready for Christ's Second Coming. Amen.*

PREPARE: Prepare your heart to be ready for Christ's triumphal return through prayer and meditation.

READ: Matthew 25:1-13

TUESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Welcoming Jesus

Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! ✚ **MARK 11:9**

Hymn writer Paul Gerhardt poses an honest Advent question: “O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?” With the Palm Sunday text before us, we recognize that Advent is about welcoming Jesus. With full knowledge of our bondage to sin, Gerhardt poetically points first to God’s love that caused the Incarnation and brought salvation, his peace in knowing his sins are forgiven, his joy in festive songs and psalms and his blessed hope for the Lord’s Second Coming.

Because God first welcomes us to his eternal kingdom through Jesus, we can welcome Jesus during Advent humbly and joyfully as we also welcome others, including children of all ages, to his love, peace, joy and hope.

STEPHEN J. CARTER | Oakville, MO

WELCOME, LORD JESUS, *to our hearts and homes this Advent as we worship you and serve others. Amen.*

CONSIDER: Consider a caring way to introduce a “little one” this week to Jesus’ love.

READ: Mark 11:1-10; Mark 9:33-37

WEDNESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

The Call to Change

But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard.” ❖ LUKE 1:13

Advent is a time of transformation when God invites us into a deeper relationship. Our faith constantly calls us to change, even when we are in our later years. Think of the unexpected news for Elizabeth and Zechariah, both up in years, yet joyfully willing to accept the gift of new life. The angel promises them no ordinary child but one filled with the Holy Spirit—to prepare a nation for the coming of Christ.

Perhaps our transformation this Advent will be gentle, more ordinary, but no less necessary to see the Nativity scene with new eyes and a humble heart. The more often we recognize how God is asking us to be transformed, the better prepared we’ll be to respond joyfully and with hope.

DEBORAH MEISTER | *St. Louis, MO*

LIFE-GIVING LORD, *strengthen me with renewed faith and bless me with full awareness of your presence today. Amen.*

FIND: Find a picture of the Nativity. Imagine being present in the scene and note how you feel in this different environment.

READ: Luke 1:5-25; Ephesians 4:22

THURSDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

On That Day

On that day the branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel. ❖ ISAIAH 4:2

The phrase “on that day” appears throughout the prophets’ proclamations, more than 40 times in the Book of Isaiah alone. This entire season of Advent is oriented toward “that day.” But does it sometimes feel as if we are forever looking to a future that will never arrive?

Advent may feel like we are in a constant state of longing, but the truth is that the world is already transformed by Emmanuel’s arrival on the scene. In every moment, Jesus is accomplishing the work that the Father sent him to do, by the power of the Holy Spirit. We now know that freedom from the oppression of sin and death is possible “on that day,” and that makes this day glorious in a way that the prophets could never have imagined.

STEVE PABLE | *Neenah, WI*

LORD, MAY I USE EVERY DAY *to prepare my heart for your coming—from this day until “that day.” Amen.*

ASK: What promises have I seen the Lord fulfill in my life? What promises are yet to come?

READ: Zephaniah 3:14-20

FRIDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Advent Peace

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...

✦ ROMANS 5:1

Decades ago, my four-year-old at the time pointed to the Christmas card I was making. “Peace?” she asked in dismay. “Why did you write that word?” I tried to explain how Jesus’ birth brought us peace with God—that God was happy with us because of Jesus. “Oh,” she nodded thoughtfully, “I thought you meant like ‘Peace and quiet.’”

I remembered her words through the chaos of holiday preparations that year. That peace reigned through Christmas services and gift-giving and outlasted cranky preschoolers and restless adults. Through our years as parents and grandparents, that peace with God has been with us, and when the last cards and the chaos are finally finished, that peace will be ours eternally.

EILEEN RITTER | *Byron Center, MI*

GIVE US PEACE, LORD, *amidst our Christmas chaos, the peace that Jesus brought that first Christmas. Amen.*

SHARE: You can share the peace that Jesus brought by sharing a kind word with someone today.

READ: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

A SEASON OF PEACE

ADVENT DEVOTIONS FOR SENIORS

Our lives should be full of peace, even in our later years. The daily devotions for older adults in this LARGE PRINT special edition highlight the message of having peace in the Lord always. The readings for each day of Advent help seniors reflect on the spiritual experiences of Advent, both past and present, and encourages them to faithfully share with younger generations the reason for our peace, who is Jesus. This rich and enlightening collection of Advent devotions reflects the wisdom and life experience of its various authors. Enjoy a fresh perspective each day.



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