

Scripture Passage: Isaiah 9:2,6-7

Memory Verse: Isaiah 9:6

Theme Song: Unto Us

Big Idea: Jesus is the promised Messiah.

ADVENT: WEEK 1

Advent, the celebration of Christ's coming, begins four Sundays before Christmas and concludes on Christmas. The five-part Family Advent Kit consists of four weekly devotionals plus a fifth devotional to be used on Christmas. If you celebrate Advent as a family, consider creating an Advent wreath. An Advent wreath hold fours candles and a fifth candle, called the Christ Candle, is placed in the middle. One candle is lit each week, with the Christ Candle lit last of all, on Christmas Day. Before you begin each time of family worship, light the appropriate candle(s) on the Advent wreath to remind your family that you are celebrating the arrival of the Messiah, Jesus.

READ

Read Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 aloud to your family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

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

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

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SING

Play “Unto Us” from the *Doorpost Songs: Unto Us* album and sing together. Think about how you can model worship for your family as you sing together. If needed, print copies of the lyric sheet for your family.

MEMORIZE

Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestions below or choose your own. Use the long version for older children and the short version for preschoolers.

Long Version (Isaiah 9:6)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Short Version (Isaiah 9:6)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

LEARN

Read the Big Idea and short devotional aloud to your family. If you have time, use the discussion questions at the end of the devotional.

What’s the Big Idea?

Jesus is the promised Messiah.

Family Devotional

Have you ever waited for something you *really* wanted? Maybe you’ve been waiting all year for Christmas to come around so you could get that *one special thing* on your Christmas list. Sometimes it can be difficult to wait. It might feel like Christmas will *never* get here. But you wait hopefully because you know and trust that Christmas will come again.

The people of God knew what it was like to wait. God had made them a promise. He had promised to send the Messiah, the Saving One, the one who would restore God’s kingdom and make everything right again, the one who would save God’s people from evil rulers who made them like slaves, the one who would set them free again.

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But God's people weren't just waiting a year for Christmas to come around again. They had been waiting for a *long time*. In fact, the Bible verses we read today were part of God's promise that the Messiah would be born, but they were written almost 700 years before the birth of Jesus. Can you imagine waiting 700 years for Christmas to come?

And then, one starry night in a tiny town called Bethlehem, all of the waiting ended and he arrived. The Messiah was born! Jesus was here! The Son that God had promised to send almost 700 years before was finally born. He was going to restore God's kingdom – not by creating a new nation or government, but by making it possible for us receive forgiveness and to know God.

Every year at Christmas we celebrate the arrival of the Messiah. In fact, the four weeks before Christmas are called Advent, and the word “advent” means “arrival.” During Advent we remember that God always keeps his promises. We feel the anticipation that God's people must have felt as they waited for the Messiah to be born. And we celebrate that God *did* send the Messiah – the Saving One – and his name is Jesus.

TALK

Talk about what you have learned as a family. Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. Can you think of a time when you had to wait a long time for something? How did you feel while you were waiting?
2. Look at the verses we read today. What can we learn about the promised Messiah from these verses?
3. Who is the Messiah?
4. Why do we celebrate Advent?

PRAY

Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank God that he always keeps his promises.
- Thank God that he sent Jesus to be the Messiah, the Saving One.
- Pray that Jesus would help us to experience the anticipation of his arrival.
- Pray that God would remind us that the best gift of Christmas is Jesus.