

What Advent Reveals About Christ's Second Coming

The four Sundays before Christmas are known in the Christian tradition as Advent. The word itself means “coming” or “arrival,” as in “for a visit.” During the Christmastime season of Advent, we prepare to again observe God’s “coming” or “visit” to earth and to our lives and circumstances as the light of the world and the Christ of Christmas.

Advent Reminders

Purposeful preparation for Advent observances in homes and churches includes four significant candles, arranged on a wreath of evergreen, in a perfect circle to symbolize the eternity of God. In the center of the circle is placed a larger white candle, known as the “Christ Candle.” It alone is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Each candle has a different meaning, based on the Bible’s teachings about the incarnation of Christ. Each week’s candle can help us focus on one of the four virtues Jesus brought us: hope, love, joy and peace. Individually and collectively, the symbolic candles can help us prepare our hearts to appreciate the “advent” or “coming visit” of the babe of Bethlehem.

The light of God’s love for us can help us become lights in the lives of those around us. The Advent season and activities can prepare our hearts with the joy and gladness of an increasing awareness of God’s presence among us. His name is Emmanuel, which means “God with us.”

Advent Revelations

The Advent season reminds us of Lord’s first coming and also of our hope for the Second Coming of Jesus. In His first advent, the Son of God came as a baby, grew in wisdom and

stature, and taught with authority as a prophet. He willingly gave up his sinless life to save us from our sins. He is our only hope of eternal salvation and deliverance from the kingdom of darkness.

Best of all, He is coming again to reward or judge the living and the dead and to establish His everlasting kingdom of light over all the earth,

Let us rejoice and be glad, as we celebrate anew Christ's birth and redeeming visit. And let us eagerly look forward to His promised second visit! It is sooner now than when we first believed!

In this way, each Advent Sunday can become a teachable moment for believers of all ages to review the history and meaning of Christ's first visit and give renewed understanding to the promise and hope of Christ's second visit.

The prophet Isaiah projected the advent's truth when He said:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light has shined" (Isa. 9:2).

Our Advent preparations help us welcome the light, which has come into our world, and witness to that light, as we share these truths and celebrate with others. By lighting one special candle each Sunday of Advent, we prepare to meaningfully magnify the birth of Jesus, the holy visitor.

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