



DAILY BREAD  
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS  
ADVENT 4 —YEAR A

**INVOCATION**

L: In the name of the Father  
and of the Son +  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**G: Amen**

**PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 24**

**A: Let the Lord enter;  
he is the King of glory.**

L: The earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it,

**G: the world, and all who live in it;**

L: for he founded it upon the seas

**G: and established it upon the waters.**

L: Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?

**G: Who may stand in his holy place?**

L: He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

**G: he will receive blessing from God his  
Savior.**

L: Lift up your heads, O you gates;  
be lifted up, you ancient doors,

**G: that the King of glory may come in.**

L: Who is this King of glory?

**G: The LORD strong and mighty,  
the LORD mighty in battle.**

L: Lift up your heads, O you gates;  
lift them up, you ancient doors,

**G: that the King of glory may come in.**

L: Who is he, this King of glory?

**G: The LORD Almighty – he is the King of  
glory.**

**A: Let the Lord enter;  
he is the King of glory.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**READING & MEDITATION** *see next page*

**PRAYER**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**VERSE OF THE DAY**

**A: The virgin will be with child and will give  
birth to a son, and they will call him  
Immanuel. (Matthew 1:23)**

**BENEDICTION**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

**A: Amen**

## READING AND MEDITATION:

**Fourth Sunday in Advent:** God will come to save his people, just as he promised. He saves them through the virgin born Son of David who is also the Son of God, Immanuel. The Church prays for God to come in power to take away the burden of our sins. Since the Garden, there has been only one promised plan to do that: God would take on flesh and blood. Immanuel comes—God in the flesh—exactly as promised to save his people. The use of the *Great O Antiphons* on this Sunday highlights God's promises kept by invoking an Old Testament title for Christ and anticipating the promise kept by the Christ-child.

## THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 1:18-25

Joseph found himself in the middle of an unwelcome nightmare: his bride to be was pregnant, and he was not the father. As a righteous man, he could not go forward with the marriage; as a merciful man, he could not expose Mary to public disgrace. How long did it take for him to fall asleep with broken betrothal promises on his mind? During the night, Joseph sees an angel who calls him “the son of David.” Joseph's father was Jacob, but the angel reminded Joseph that he was a descendant of kings. Starting this night, he would act as one of David's line again: he would care for the promised Son who would reign on David's throne. God had come to save his people, just as he promised. He would do it through the child in Mary's womb. Joseph believed the promises of God kept in Christ and named the child, “The LORD saves,” knowing full well he was Immanuel.

*My takeaways:*

## FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 7:10-14

Such grace that God would even speak to a wicked king like Ahaz! What God said is even more surprising. He didn't just promise deliverance and ask that Ahaz blindly trust him. God offered a sign to an unbelieving king to prove that he would keep his promise and save his people. How foolish of Ahaz to refuse! How sinful to make a pretense of piety! God, however, would let no sinful king stand in the way of deliverance for his people. So God chose the sign. Not merely a sign of Judah's physical safety, God chose a sign that would prophesy the deliverance of the whole world from sin and death. A virgin would give birth to God in the flesh for the salvation of his people. In Christ Jesus, God kept every promise made. *My takeaways:*

## SECOND LESSON: ROMANS 1:1-7

After thousands of years of God's promises, Paul looks back and sees every one of them kept in Christ. All of Scripture promised the gospel message summarized in the name: Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus, the man born of Mary, is also our Lord, God himself. This God-man was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power to be the Christ who would save God's people from their sins. Any doubts about Jesus of Nazareth evaporated with the Easter morning dew: the resurrection declared to the world he was Immanuel, God with us. God kept every promise in Christ to give us what we so desperately needed: Grace and peace to you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

*My takeaways:*

## SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 7:1-17

This supplemental lesson expands the First Lesson to include both the geopolitical scene and the intermediate fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Both highlight the day's theme that God will save his people just as he promised. When the people of Judah heard that Aram and Ephraim had allied against them, they were shaken. No wonder! Under King Ahaz, Judah had already lost in battle to Aram—with many prisoners carried away. They had also lost to the Northern Kingdom under Pekah. Consider the scope of their defeat in 2 Chronicles 28: in a single day Pekah killed 120,000 soldiers—including the prince, the officer of the palace and the second-in-command of the kingdom. He also captured 200,000 wives, sons and daughters. The magnitude of this defeat must have weighed heavily on the national consciousness. And now, Aram and Ephraim had joined forces to attack Judah; Judah had no chance whatsoever! Until God spoke and said, “It will not take place, it will not happen.” God will save his people, just as he promised. The enemies stacked against the people of God have proven impossible for us to withstand. The devil, the world, and our sinful flesh have defeated us again and again. We stand no chance in the battle; we must be lost. Until God speaks and says, “It will not take place, it will not happen.” Immanuel has come, just as God promised—the Savior of his people.

*My takeaways:*

***What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?***