

BEHOLD THE SAVIOR



A 25-Day Christmas
and Advent Devotional

YM360



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BY AMY DILLER
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ABOUT THE DEVOTIONAL

It's the best time of the year! Christmas is almost here, and over the next 25 days, we get to spend time learning more about Jesus, why His birth is so wonderful, and what we should be thinking about as Christmas Day gets closer and closer!

You know that feeling of excitement and anticipation you have when you think about all the awesome things that Christmas might have in store? That's a feeling that many people in the Christmas story know very well! Isaiah. Mary. Joseph. John. The shepherds. The wise men. In fact, if you think about it, the whole earth was waiting for the moment that Jesus would come onto the scene!

In the same way, the days leading up to Christmas are a time when we get our hearts and minds ready to celebrate the moment that Jesus was born. And that's just what this book is for! Every day, you'll have a Bible verse that focuses on a specific part of the Christmas story. Once you've read that verse, you get to read a message written just for you! There are questions after each message and an activity you can do with your family. How fun is that!?

You might notice a certain word come up a lot in the Bible verses you'll be reading over the next 25 days. That word is "behold," and when you behold something, you're paying special attention to a very important person or thing. That's what these days leading up to Christmas are all about – learning how we can focus all our attention on the most important Person ever, Jesus.

Christmas is a time for celebrating Jesus' birth because of how truly wonderful it is. That's where this book comes in. As you and your family go through "Behold the Savior," you will learn how you can spend the whole month of December preparing to celebrate God's gift of His Son. If you have any questions about Jesus or how you can know Him better, make sure you talk to an adult who already knows Him. They'll be excited to help you!


MERRY CHRISTMAS!

DAY 1

BEHOLD!

Your eyes see things wherever you go. Sometimes, you look at things you've seen many times before and don't even think much about them. But then you see something amazing and gaze at it in awe because it's so fantastically wonderful. Not only do your eyes see it, but your brain also stops to wonder, and your heart feels astonished. You give that thing or person your full attention. There is a word that names this experience – behold. Behold means to be sure to see a remarkable thing or person. In other words, "Don't miss this!"

In John 1:29, John the Baptist sees Jesus and tells the people to behold Him. John didn't want others to just see Jesus with their eyes and miss out on beholding Him. Jesus was no ordinary person; He was God come to live on the earth as a man. John desired to make sure people understood just how glorious Jesus was. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus provided forgiveness for sin and a way for people to become part of God's forever family. This is the most marvelous reason to **BEHOLD** Jesus, not only at Christmas time but every single day.



The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

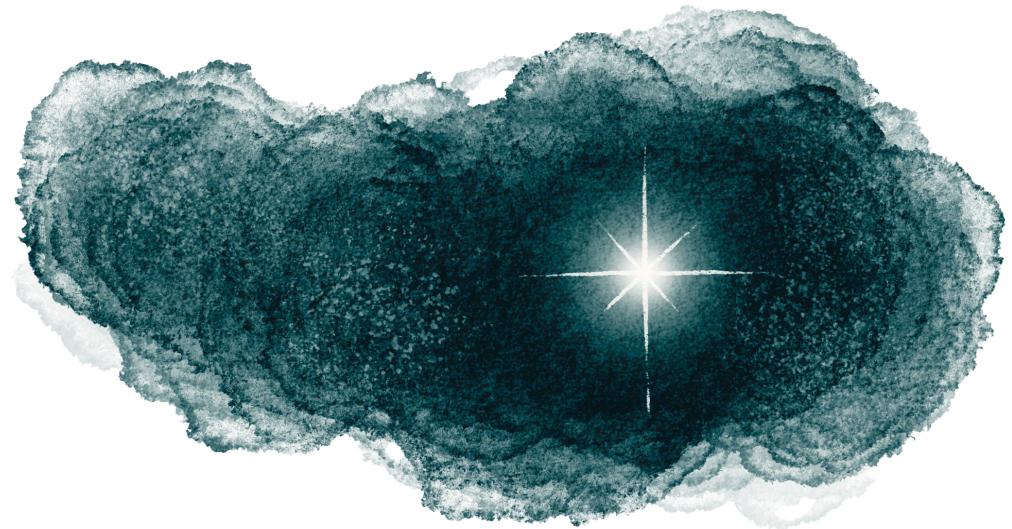
- John 1:29

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Jesus worthy of your full attention?
2. What are some ways you can make sure you behold Jesus every day?

ACTIVITY

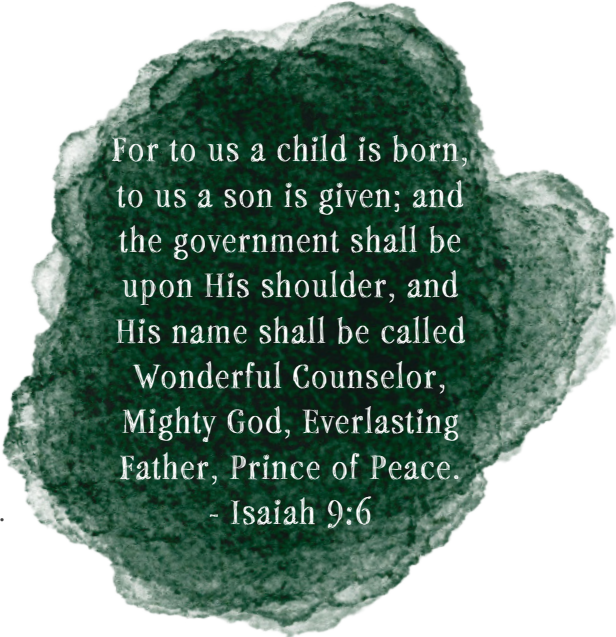
During these days leading up to Christmas, we will be focusing on the word "behold." To keep this idea in the front of your mind, as a family, create a sign with "behold" on it to hang somewhere in your house where everyone can see it. Make it bright and fancy to remind you that it means something extra special!



DAY 2

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Did you know that names have meanings? Going back thousands of years, names were given based on things like events that happened close to a child's birth, special characteristics of the child, an important meaning to the family, or a purpose for the child. Most of the names that are used today have come from words in other languages. Some are very old names, going all the way back to Old Testament times. Your parents might have chosen your name because they liked how it sounded or what it meant.



For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given; and
the government shall be
upon His shoulder, and
His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting
Father, Prince of Peace.
- Isaiah 9:6

Unlike most of us who have three names – first, middle, and last – Jesus was given many more! God was the one who was Jesus' name giver. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God told the prophet Isaiah things about Jesus. God shared some names that tell us a lot about what Jesus is like. A few of these names are listed in today's Bible verse. They are glorious names because they're all about the wonderful ways Jesus acts toward people. The best part is we can count on Jesus to always live up to the meanings of His names!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Jesus has so many names?
2. What special names would you give Jesus?

ACTIVITY

Using your Bibles and computer, search for more of Jesus' names. (Make sure an adult supervises internet searches.) Look up the verses where these names are written in the Bible. Start with the 4 in today's verse, and then see if you can find 20 more and write each one on a small piece of paper. Put the papers in a jar. Starting today, choose one name each day to read and think about. Then, thank God for that wonderful name and what it tells you about Jesus.



DAY 3

A SPECIAL GREETING

Think about one of your best friends. Did you become friends because someone else told you to? Of course not! You became friends because you liked the other person, and they liked you. You shared some of the same interests. Once you make a friend, how do you treat them? You're kind to them, you show them special attention, and you give them your stamp of approval. In other words, you favor them because they're important in your life. You give it to them as a gift because of who they are.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"
- Luke 1:26-28

God sent the angel Gabriel to a young woman named Mary to deliver some astounding news. When Gabriel came, he didn't simply say, "Hi, Mary. How're you doing?" Gabriel greeted her in an extra special way by telling Mary that she was favored and God was with her. What a wonderful hello! God didn't send Gabriel to share His favor with Mary because He picked her randomly; He chose her for a reason. Just like you choose your friends based on who they are, there was something about Mary that God approved of – she followed Him and obeyed His laws. Because God saw Mary's faithfulness to Him, He chose to show her favor and bless her with an amazing purpose for her life.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What does favor mean?
2. What does it look like to show favor to someone?

ACTIVITY

To favor someone is to show gracious kindness to them. Talk as a family about ways you can show kindness to others – siblings, parents, neighbors, and even people you don't know. Maybe you could bake a treat and deliver it to a neighbor or pay for someone else's meal at a restaurant. Perhaps you could bless parents or grandparents by helping

around the house without being asked. Maybe it's simply deciding to share smiles and greetings with people you see throughout your day. Choose one or two things your family can do for others this Christmas season to show gracious kindness.

