



Advent Peace

Beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, the celebration of Advent is a time of preparation and expectant waiting for the promised Savior. Each Sunday of Advent focuses on a particular liturgical theme. In our first article, we talked about [Advent hope](#); in this second article, we will explore Advent peace.

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On the second Sunday of Advent, many churches will light the second candle in the traditional [Advent wreath](#). This blue or purple candle symbolizes **peace**. Believers will also read and reflect on scriptures about the peace God promised and ushered in during the first advent of Jesus (his birth), and the cosmic peace that will be consummated by Christ's second coming. Let's look more closely at the meaning of Advent peace.

God's Promised Shalom

You likely already know the Hebrew word for peace: *shalom*. The word *shalom* occurs over 250 times in the Old Testament and over the centuries religious scholars have spilled plenty of ink reflecting on its complex meaning and use. Today, the term *shalom* has become so commonplace that people often use it interchangeably with the English word *peace*: on protest signs, in sitcom banter, or even on kitschy home decor (e.g., "Shalom y'all!").

However, in English, the word *peace* tends to mean something like "the lack of war or conflict." And while the biblical concept of *shalom* encompasses this sort of peace, it is only a part of what God

promised his people in the days before the first advent of Jesus Christ. As noted in the HarperCollins Bible Dictionary, shalom includes peace, but also “wholeness, and well-being.” Shalom is the ideal—for our individual lives and for that of God’s creation at large; it’s a return to God’s original creation, before it was marred by humanity’s sin.

Throughout the Old Testament, God unfolds his plan for re-establishing his shalom on Earth. Through the line of Abraham, God tells his people that they will bless all of humanity. He made “a covenant of peace” with them ([Ezekiel 34: 24-25a](#)) and promised to restore all things by sending a Savior. This promised Messiah would be “... called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**. Of the greatness of his government and **peace** there will be no end” (Isaiah 9:6-7). He himself *would be our peace* ([Micah 5:5](#)).

Fullness of Peace to Come

Many of us are familiar with the words of Luke 2 from Christmas plays past, “...the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.’ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth **peace** to those on whom his favor rests’” (Luke 2:10-14). We know that Christ came to usher in a new era, and that by dying in our place, we can by faith “have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

Today, we take refuge in Jesus Christ’s words: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:27). Through God’s Holy Spirit we experience this peace, which transcends all understanding and guards our hearts and minds ([Philippians 4:7](#)). But God does not mean for us to just sit back and indulge in this peace. He calls us to work along with the Spirit to restore God’s shalom here on Earth (Matthew 5:9).

And so, as we reflect on God’s peace this Advent season, may we be reminded of our role: to actively make peace as we await the fullness of God’s shalom through the second Advent of Jesus Christ. How can you help usher in God’s peace this Christmas season? Some ideas might be to set aside extra time for personal devotions, help a busy or overburdened friend, or provide a meal for a family facing the anxiety of hunger. Advent is the perfect time to commit to pursuing peace in your life and that of the greater world as we look ahead to the time of shalom:

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.” And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:3-4).

If you’re looking for a resource to help you focus on the peace of the Advent season, check out Today’s free, Advent devotional series, [“Waiting in Expectation.”](#)

<https://today.reframemedia.com/blog/advent-peace>

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