



Unending JOY

DAILY ADVENT DEVOTIONAL READINGS
BCEC 2020

NLT VERSION

*They will enter
Zion with singing;
unending joy will
crown their heads.
Gladness and joy
will overtake them
and sorrow and
sighing will flee away*

Isaiah 35:10

Unending Joy
Daily Advent Devotional Readings
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Introduction

It has always been a dream of mine to write a book, a novel or a memoir? A book that's worth pouring time, sweat and effort getting written, a book that's worth getting published, a book worth people spending their valuable time investing in by doing the simple act of reading. Instead, I gift you this book, which I know has been worth every minute compiling: a devotional book that instead of being filled with stories, contains something even better, the ultimate weapon, that's beautifully written, God-breathed and useful for teaching us, rebuking us, correcting us, training us in righteousness: His Word.

This is a Christmas gift to you and your walk with God. I pray that it will help you flourish and grow deeper in your walk, experiencing a deeper sense of His ever-increasing, everlasting, unending joy, especially as we come to the end of 2020. May the pages of this devotional inspire, transform, encourage, challenge, move and breathe life into your soul, daily. And may it help you develop a habit to pick up his sword, the word after you have completed this book.

Everyday there are set readings with questions which you have the option of answering. There are also action prompts, usually prayer, but occasionally a task which can be useful to challenge you and others to do together. The focus of this can either be for yourself individually, your family/household, the church community, the nation or as wide as the world.

Please do share with your lifegroup leaders or someone on the pastoral team if you've had any special moments or encounters during this Advent season—it's always super encouraging and inspiring to hear what God is saying to brothers and sisters in our church.

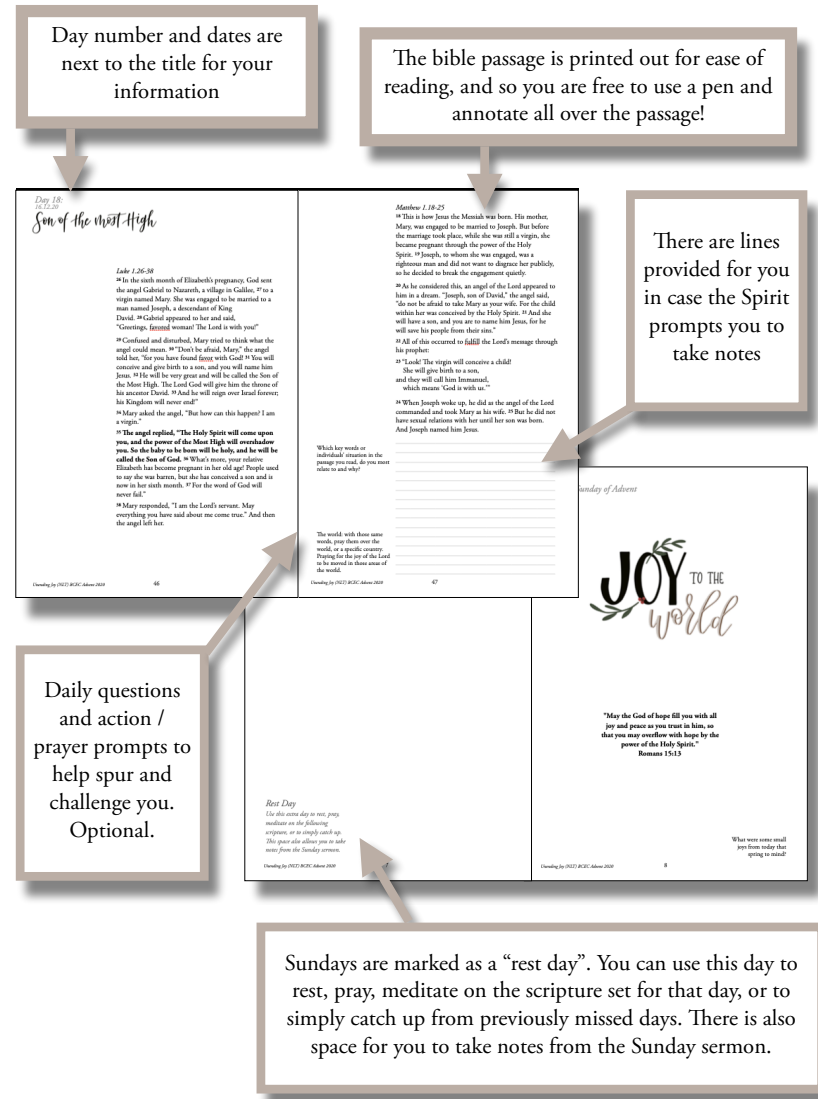
Special thanks to Henna for the artwork and beautiful calligraphy. And big heartfelt thanks to Dan Li for helping me with this project!

May God's word on the following pages speak and bless your soul with unending joy!
Love, Ansy

How to use this book

While there are many methods out there on how to spend time with God in His word, here are some tips to help you get the most out of reading scripture in this Advent Devotional book during the next 27 days.

1. Find a quiet spot that you know you won't fall asleep in, maybe have plenty of light to help you focus better on the words and as you let God speak to you.
2. Before you start reading the set scripture, pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal either something new, or an old truth you need reminding about.
3. Spend some time reading and be open to the Holy Spirit's leading.
4. If you are printing this book, there's space for you to take notes, scribble or doodle. If you're reading this via an electronic device, feel free to add comment and annotating the pages. Alternatively, you can journal alongside this devotional.



Day 1:
29.11.20

The First Sunday of Advent



May the God of
hope fill you with
all joy and peace
as you trust in Him,
so that you may
overflow with hope
by the power of
the Holy Spirit

Romans 15:13

Rest Day

*Use this extra day to rest, pray,
meditate on the following
scripture, or to simply catch up.*

*This space also allows you to take
notes from the Sunday sermon.*

What were some small
joys from today that
spring to mind?

Day 5:
3.12.20

God's Covenant

Genesis 12:1-9

12 The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

⁴ So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan, ⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.

⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the LORD, and he worshiped the LORD. ⁹ Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.

Genesis 21:1-7

21 The LORD kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. ² She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would. ³ And Abraham named their son Isaac. ⁴ Eight days after Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. ⁵ Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

⁶ And Sarah declared, “God has brought me laughter. All who hear about this will laugh with me. ⁷ Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse a baby? Yet I have given Abraham a son in his old age!”

Genesis 22:15-18

¹⁵ Then the angel of the LORD called again to Abraham from heaven. ¹⁶ “This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that ¹⁷ I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. ¹⁸ And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

John 8:54-58

⁵⁴ Jesus answered, “If I want glory for myself, it doesn’t count. But it is my Father who will glorify me. You say, ‘He is our God,’ ⁵⁵ but you don’t even know him. I know him. If I said otherwise, I would be as great a liar as you! But I do know him and obey him. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced as he looked forward to my coming. He saw it and was glad.”

⁵⁷ The people said, “You aren’t even fifty years old. How can you say you have seen Abraham?”

⁵⁸ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!”

Romans 4:13-25

¹³ Clearly, God’s promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God’s law, but on a right relationship with God that comes by faith. ¹⁴ If God’s promise is only for those who obey the law, then faith is not necessary and the promise is pointless. ¹⁵ For the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!)

¹⁶ So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we are all certain to receive it, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham’s. For Abraham is the father of all who believe. ¹⁷ That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, “I have made you the father of many nations.” This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.

¹⁸ Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, “That’s how many descendants you will have!” ¹⁹ And Abraham’s faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah’s womb.

²⁰ Abraham never wavered in believing God’s promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. ²¹ He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises. ²² And because of Abraham’s faith, God counted him as righteous. ²³ And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn’t just for Abraham’s benefit. It was recorded ²⁴ for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

Root of David

2 Samuel 7.8-16

⁸ “Now go and say to my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies has declared: I took you from tending sheep in the pasture and selected you to be the leader of my people Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before your eyes. Now I will make your name as famous as anyone who has ever lived on the earth! ¹⁰ And I will provide a homeland for my people Israel, planting them in a secure place where they will never be disturbed. Evil nations won’t oppress them as they’ve done in the past, ¹¹ starting from the time I appointed judges to rule my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

“Furthermore, the LORD declares that he will make a house for you—a dynasty of kings! ¹² For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will secure his royal throne forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will correct and discipline him with the rod, like any father would do. ¹⁵ But my favor will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from your sight. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever.”

Jeremiah 23.1-8

“What sorrow awaits the leaders of my people—the shepherds of my sheep—for they have destroyed and scattered the very ones they were expected to care for,” says the LORD.

² Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to these shepherds: “Instead of caring for my flock and leading them to safety, you have deserted them and driven them to destruction. Now I will pour out judgment on you for the evil you have done to them. ³ But I will gather together the remnant of my flock from the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their own sheepfold, and they will be fruitful and increase in number. ⁴ Then I will appoint responsible shepherds who will care for them, and they will never be afraid again. Not a single one will be lost or missing. I, the LORD, have spoken!

⁵ “For the time is coming,” says the LORD,

“when I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David’s line.

He will be a King who rules with wisdom.

He will do what is just and right throughout the land.

⁶ And this will be his name:

‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’
In that day Judah will be saved,
and Israel will live in safety.

⁷ “In that day,” says the LORD, “when people are taking an oath, they will no longer say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who rescued the people of Israel from the land of Egypt.’ ⁸ Instead, they will say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the people of Israel back to their own land from the land of the north and from all the countries to which he had exiled them.’ Then they will live in their own land.”

Day 8:
6.12.20

The Second Sunday of Advent

JOY AND gladness

The Word
became
flesh and
made dwelling
among us.
We have
seen his glory,
the glory of
the one and
only son, who
came from
the father, full
of grace and truth

John 1:14

Rest Day

Use this extra day to rest, pray,
meditate on the following
scripture, or to simply catch up.

This space also allows you to take
notes from the Sunday sermon.

What were some things of today
that make your heart glad?

Day 14:
12.12.20

The Nations will be glad

Micah 4.1-7

⁴ In the last days, the mountain of the LORD's house
will be the highest of all—
the most important place on earth.
It will be raised above the other hills,
and people from all over the world will stream there to
worship.
² People from many nations will come and say,
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of Jacob's God.
There he will teach us his ways,
and we will walk in his paths.”
For the LORD's teaching will go out from Zion;
his word will go out from Jerusalem.
³ The LORD will mediate between peoples
and will settle disputes between strong nations far away.
They will hammer their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will no longer fight against nation,
nor train for war anymore.
⁴ Everyone will live in peace and prosperity,
enjoying their own grapevines and fig trees,
for there will be nothing to fear.
The LORD of Heaven's Armies
has made this promise!
⁵ Though the nations around us follow their idols,
we will follow the LORD our God forever and ever.
⁶ “In that coming day,” says the LORD,
“I will gather together those who are lame,
those who have been exiles,
and those whom I have filled with grief.
⁷ Those who are weak will survive as a remnant;
those who were exiles will become a strong nation.
Then I, the LORD, will rule from Jerusalem
as their king forever.”

Psalms 46.4-11

⁴ A river brings joy to the city of our God,
the sacred home of the Most High.
⁵ God dwells in that city; it cannot be destroyed.
From the very break of day, God will protect it.
⁶ The nations are in chaos,
and their kingdoms crumble!
God's voice thunders,
and the earth melts!
⁷ The LORD of Heaven's Armies is here among us;
the God of Israel is our fortress. *Interlude*
⁸ Come, see the glorious works of the LORD:
See how he brings destruction upon the world.
⁹ He causes wars to end throughout the earth.
He breaks the bow and snaps the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
¹⁰ “Be still, and know that I am God!
I will be honored by every nation.
I will be honored throughout the world.”
¹¹ The LORD of Heaven's Armies is here among us;
the God of Israel is our fortress. *Interlude*

Day 15:
13.12.20

The Third Sunday of Advent

JOYful Mysteries

After me comes
the one more
powerful than
I. The one
whose sandals I
am not worthy
to stoop down
and untie. I
baptize you with
water but He
will baptize
you with the
Holy Spirit

Mark 1:7b-8

Rest Day

Use this extra day to rest, pray,
meditate on the following
scripture, or to simply catch up.
This space also allows you to take
notes from the Sunday sermon.

What took you by
surprise today?



But when the fullness of
time has come, God sent
forth His Son, born of a
woman, born under law,
to redeem those who
were under law, so that
we might receive
adoption as sons. And
because you are sons,
God has sent the Spirit of
His Son into our hearts,
crying, "Abba Father!" so
that you are no longer
a slave, but a son and
if a son, then an
heir through God.

Galatians 4:4-6

What were some joyful
moments from today you
can give thanks to God for?

Rest Day

Use this extra day to rest, pray,
meditate on the following
scripture, or to simply catch up.
This space also allows you to take
notes from the Sunday sermon.

Bonus:

Year in Review 2020 reflection questions for personal journaling or sharing in small groups.

1. What are some things from this year that you're thankful for?
2. Why do you think hope is so important? And how do you remain hopeful in a world full of hopelessness?
3. Was there a moment this past year that you felt was an "enlightening" moment for you? What was it?
4. Share four achievements you are particularly proud of from this year.
5. What significant event happened in 2020, in which your reaction towards it surprised you, because in previous times you would react a certain way, but this time round, in 2020, your attitude towards it changed (for the better or for worse)?
6. What's been a verse / inspirational quote that has kept you motivated this past year?
7. Name seven people you are grateful for that went above and beyond this year for you.
8. What was one thing from this year that you wished you didn't waste time on? And how can you ensure it won't happen again next year?
9. Is there something that you wished you had done differently this past year?
10. List your top 10 songs of 2020 (most listened to or your favourites of this year).
11. Is there someone you need to forgive from this year? Why? Why have you been putting it off?
12. Using 12 words, sum up each month of this past year.
13. Is there someone you need to apologise to, from this year? Why? Why have you been putting it off?
14. What was an unexpected joy of this year? What was an unexpected obstacle of this year?
15. What bad habit would you most like to kick from 2020?
16. What major milestones happened with your family this past year. How has this affected you
17. Describe an event in the world that has impacted you this year. How? Why?
18. What were some answered prayers of this year?
19. If you were to be so bold, what audacious prayer request do you want answered for next year?
20. Who is the person you most want to invest and encourage in the next year?
21. What skills or hobbies would you like to improve, develop or start next year?
22. Describe one thing you'd like to achieve by this time next year. Why is this important to you?
23. What aspects of God did you learn or relearn this year? And what areas of theology would you like to learn about next year?
24. Write a message of advice to the "future you" so you can read it this time next year.

