

**Monday, December 9. Read Psalm 72:1-14.** Psalm 72 begins with King David praying for his son, Solomon, to become a great king for the nation of Israel. As the psalm continues, David begins dreaming of the perfect King, prophesying what would be true of the reign of Jesus. Over 950 years before the birth of Jesus, David saw the endless rule of the King of Kings. This King would be known for His compassion and His rescue of the needy and distraught. He would defeat oppression and violence, and it would be obvious that His people were precious to Him. For these reasons, David declared that all kings would bow down to Him and all nations would serve Him. David recognized that deep compassion and care for God's people, as well as warring against and forever defeating oppression, were the signs of a perfect King—one whose moral judgment and selflessness would never be compromised. In addition to being the moment the Savior came into the world, Christmas marked the beginning of the legacy of eternity's greatest King. Jesus will continue to reign long after the kings and kingdoms of this world pass away, and we will get to live under the covering of His perfect love forever. *Prayer: Jesus, I honor You as the King of my life here on earth and throughout eternity! I can't wait to experience the purity of Your leadership as the brokenness of this world falls away. Thank You for coming to earth and beginning Your journey to the throne among us. I'm so grateful You care for me deeply and will always advocate for me as my King. I love You and submit myself to Your perfect ways.*

**Tuesday, December 10. Read Isaiah 9:6.** Through the prophet Isaiah, God revealed that a child would be born who would be called the Prince of Peace. In Hebrew, the word for "Prince" ("sar") indicates a leader or captain, and the word for "peace" ("shalom") means "completeness." When Jesus came to earth, He came to lead a broken world to a place where we could be made whole again. He came to reconcile us with God, bridging the gap created by our sin. Jesus came to soothe our anxieties and give us a sound mind. The peace He brought into the world at Christmas allows us to be content and rest in Him no matter what chaos surrounds us. Whatever you might be facing in this season—sickness, a broken relationship, depression, or loneliness—allow Jesus' peace to comfort you right where you are. You don't have to get to the end of your struggle to experience wholeness. Jesus wants to quiet your spirit with His love and perfect your trust in Him. You can weather this storm complete in Him. *Prayer: Jesus, thank You for coming to bring me peace. I recognize today that I can rest in You, no matter what I'm going through. Whenever fear or heaviness threaten my peace, help me run to safety in You. Lead my spirit into the wholeness that is available in You.*

**Wednesday, December 11. Read 53:3-5.** Jesus came to earth to give us the gifts of acceptance, peace, healing, and forgiveness, but those gifts were not cheap. We could never afford what Jesus came to provide, and gratefully, we don't have to. God now accepts us, not because of our own good behavior, but because Jesus paid the price by experiencing the greatest rejection on our behalf. Jesus chose to die to cover our sin, conquer death, and bring us life. The prophet Isaiah called our sins "transgressions" and "iniquities" - essentially our crimes and our wickedness. Those sins created a debt we could never repay, but Jesus, in His perfection, could. As Jesus chose to be born into a world where He would be bruised and crushed, He brought us peace and healing. The prophecy in Isaiah 53 portrays God's great exchange: Jesus' life for all of ours. Jesus knew the cost of Christmas, and He embraced it so we could embrace Him and the eternal life He made available for us. As you celebrate this season, don't forget: We can only be forgiven, healed, and set free because Jesus chose Christmas. *Prayer: Jesus, I can never thank You enough for paying the price that covered my debt. I would truly be lost without You. I worship You as my Peace, my Healer, and my Savior! Thank You for choosing Christmas. Help me to receive all You came to give me, and help me then share those gifts with the world around me.*

**Thursday, December 12. Read Genesis 3:15, Luke 1:26-33, Jeremiah 1:5 & Luke 12:7.** It was finally time for the first promise of God to be fulfilled. Sin would soon be forever defeated, but first, the Savior had to be placed in His mother's womb. Can you imagine how excited God must have been as He sent an angel from heaven to reveal His plan to Mary? This was a moment thousands of years in the making! Think about Mary: young and humble but favored by God. When He sent the angel to her side, He sent him with words of love. He let her know she was chosen and had no reason to fear. Before she had time to doubt or let insecurity creep in, God gave Mary the confidence she needed to walk out His purpose for her life. As Christmas approaches, put yourself in Mary's shoes and reflect on this moment. Think about how incredible, maybe even overwhelming, it was for her to discover the extent of her God-given purpose. It's important to realize that just as He had divine purpose for Mary, God has divine purpose for you. Just as He chose her and entrusted her with great plans, He has also chosen you and entrusted something miraculous to you! Ask God to reveal what He created you to do, and be confident that He'll equip you to do it. *Prayer: Father, thank You for the gift of Jesus. Thank You for choosing a woman like Mary to bring Him into the world. You used her as a vessel for Your greatest miracle. Thank You for also giving me a divine purpose. Help me to be still, to seek You, and to know You more during this season. Use this time to reveal more about Your purpose for me as I focus on the purpose of Christmas.*

**Friday, December 13. Read Luke 1:34-37.** In Luke 1:34, after the angel told Mary she would conceive Jesus, she asked him, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" Mary did what we often do when we can't see how things are going to work out. She questioned how something that seemed impossible could be possible. But the angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God." Even in a beautiful season like Christmas, it can be difficult to see how God is working in our impossible situations. Today, let both of these miraculous conceptions remind you of God's power. Think about Jesus and Elizabeth's son, John the Baptist, and how their births changed the course of history. God can do immeasurably more than you can imagine in the midst of your impossible circumstance. Give your situation to Him, and trust that He will be faithful. Be encouraged today: God never fails! *Prayer: Father, You are good! I praise You for Your power—nothing can stand against You! Thank You for having a plan for my life, for sending your Son on my behalf and for giving me the strength to face situations that seem impossible. As I trust in Your strength and not mine, help me see Christmas as a powerful example that nothing is impossible for You!*

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