**Rejoice Advent Study**

**Week 3**

**Scripture**

**Genesis 1:1-2:7**

**Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath**

**1**[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A1-2%3A7&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-1a)]In the beginning God created[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A1-2%3A7&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-1b)] the heavens and the earth. **2**The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A1-2%3A7&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-2c)] of God was moving over the face of the waters.

**3**And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. **4**And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. **5**God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

**6**And God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” **7**And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And it was so. **8**And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

**9**And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10**God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. **11**And God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth.” And it was so. **12**The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **13**And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

**14**And God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, **15**and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. **16**And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. **17**And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, **18**to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19**And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

**20**And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens.” **21**So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **22**And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” **23**And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

**24**And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. **25**And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

**26**Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” **27**So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **28**And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” **29**And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. **30**And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. **31**And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

**2**Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **2**And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. **3**So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

**4**These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

**Another Account of the Creation**

[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A1-2%3A7&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-35d)]In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, **5**when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LordGod had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; **6**but a mist[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A1-2%3A7&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-37e)] went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground— **7**then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

**Sirach 6:5-17**

### Friendship, False and True

**5**A pleasant voice multiplies friends,  
    and a gracious tongue multiplies courtesies.  
**6**Let those that are at peace with you be many,  
    but let your advisers be one in a thousand.  
**7**When you gain a friend, gain him through testing,  
    and do not trust him hastily.  
**8**For there is a friend who is such at his own convenience,  
    but will not stand by you in your day of trouble.  
**9**And there is a friend who changes into an enemy,  
    and will disclose a quarrel to your disgrace.  
**10**And there is a friend who is a table companion,  
    but will not stand by you in your day of trouble.  
**11**In your prosperity he will make himself your equal,  
    and be bold with your servants;  
**12**but if you are brought low he will turn against you,  
    and will hide himself from your presence.  
**13**Keep yourself far from your enemies,  
    and be on guard toward your friends.

**14**A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter:  
    he that has found one has found a treasure.  
**15**There is nothing so precious as a faithful friend,  
    and no scales can measure his excellence.  
**16**A faithful friend is an elixir of life;  
    and those who fear the Lord will find him.  
**17**Whoever fears the Lord directs his friendship aright,  
    for as he is, so is his neighbor also.

**Isaiah 43:1-7**

### Restoration and Protection Promised

**43**But now thus says the Lord,  
he who created you, O Jacob,  
    he who formed you, O Israel:  
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;  
    I have called you by name, you are mine.  
**2**When you pass through the waters I will be with you;  
    and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
    and the flame shall not consume you.  
**3**For I am the Lord your God,  
    the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.  
I give Egypt as your ransom,  
    Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.  
**4**Because you are precious in my eyes,  
    and honored, and I love you,  
I give men in return for you,  
    peoples in exchange for your life.  
**5**Fear not, for I am with you;  
    I will bring your offspring from the east,  
    and from the west I will gather you;  
**6**I will say to the north, Give up,  
    and to the south, Do not withhold;  
bring my sons from afar  
    and my daughters from the end of the earth,  
**7**every one who is called by my name,  
    whom I created for my glory,  
    whom I formed and made.”

**Psalm 147**

### Praise for God’s Care for Jerusalem

**147**Praise the Lord!  
For it is good to sing praises to our God;  
    for he is gracious, and a song of praise is seemly.  
**2**The Lord builds up Jerusalem;  
    he gathers the outcasts of Israel.  
**3**He heals the brokenhearted,  
    and binds up their wounds.  
**4**He determines the number of the stars,  
    he gives to all of them their names.  
**5**Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;  
    his understanding is beyond measure.  
**6**The Lord lifts up the downtrodden,  
    he casts the wicked to the ground.

**7**Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;  
    make melody to our God upon the lyre!  
**8**He covers the heavens with clouds,  
    he prepares rain for the earth,  
    he makes grass grow upon the hills.  
**9**He gives to the beasts their food,  
    and to the young ravens which cry.  
**10**His delight is not in the strength of the horse,  
    nor his pleasure in the legs of a man;  
**11**but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him,  
    in those who hope in his steadfast love.

**12**Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem!  
    Praise your God, O Zion!  
**13**For he strengthens the bars of your gates;  
    he blesses your sons within you.  
**14**He makes peace in your borders;  
    he fills you with the finest of the wheat.  
**15**He sends forth his command to the earth;  
    his word runs swiftly.  
**16**He gives snow like wool;  
    he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.  
**17**He casts forth his ice like morsels;  
    who can stand before his cold?  
**18**He sends forth his word, and melts them;  
    he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.  
**19**He declares his word to Jacob,  
    his statutes and ordinances to Israel.  
**20**He has not dealt thus with any other nation;  
    they do not know his ordinances.  
Praise the Lord!

**Psalm 91**

### Assurance of God’s Protection

**91**He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,  
    who abides in the shadow of the Almighty,  
**2**will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress;  
    my God, in whom I trust.”  
**3**For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler  
    and from the deadly pestilence;  
**4**he will cover you with his pinions,  
    and under his wings you will find refuge;  
    his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.  
**5**You will not fear the terror of the night,  
    nor the arrow that flies by day,  
**6**nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,  
    nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

**7**A thousand may fall at your side,  
    ten thousand at your right hand;  
    but it will not come near you.  
**8**You will only look with your eyes  
    and see the recompense of the wicked.

**9**Because you have made the Lord your refuge,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91&version=RSVCE" \l "fen-RSVCE-15993a" \o "See footnote a)]  
    the Most High your habitation,  
**10**no evil shall befall you,  
    no scourge come near your tent.

**11**For he will give his angels charge of you  
    to guard you in all your ways.  
**12**On their hands they will bear you up,  
    lest you dash your foot against a stone.  
**13**You will tread on the lion and the adder,  
    the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

**14**Because he cleaves to me in love, I will deliver him;  
    I will protect him, because he knows my name.  
**15**When he calls to me, I will answer him;  
    I will be with him in trouble,  
    I will rescue him and honor him.  
**16**With long life I will satisfy him,  
    and show him my salvation.

**Psalm 51**

### Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon

#### To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

**51**[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-15281a)]Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy steadfast love;  
    according to thy abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.  
**2**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
    and cleanse me from my sin!

**3**For I know my transgressions,  
    and my sin is ever before me.  
**4**Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,  
    and done that which is evil in thy sight,  
so that thou art justified in thy sentence  
    and blameless in thy judgment.  
**5**Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
    and in sin did my mother conceive me.

**6**Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward being;  
    therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.  
**7**Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
    wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
**8**Fill[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-15288b)] me with joy and gladness;  
    let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice.  
**9**Hide thy face from my sins,  
    and blot out all my iniquities.

**10**Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
    and put a new and right[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-15290c)] spirit within me.  
**11**Cast me not away from thy presence,  
    and take not thy holy Spirit from me.  
**12**Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,  
    and uphold me with a willing spirit.

**13**Then I will teach transgressors thy ways,  
    and sinners will return to thee.  
**14**Deliver me from bloodguiltiness,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51&version=RSVCE" \l "fen-RSVCE-15294d" \o "See footnote d)] O God,  
    thou God of my salvation,  
    and my tongue will sing aloud of thy deliverance.

**15**O Lord, open thou my lips,  
    and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.  
**16**For thou hast no delight in sacrifice;  
    were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased.  
**17**The sacrifice acceptable to God[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51&version=RSVCE#fen-RSVCE-15297e)] is a broken spirit;  
    a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

**18**Do good to Zion in thy good pleasure;  
    rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,  
**19**then wilt thou delight in right sacrifices,  
    in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;  
    then bulls will be offered on thy altar.

**Psalm 63**

### Comfort and Assurance in God’s Presence

#### A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

**63**O God, thou art my God, I seek thee,  
    my soul thirsts for thee;  
my flesh faints for thee,  
    as in a dry and weary land where no water is.  
**2**So I have looked upon thee in the sanctuary,  
    beholding thy power and glory.  
**3**Because thy steadfast love is better than life,  
    my lips will praise thee.  
**4**So I will bless thee as long as I live;  
    I will lift up my hands and call on thy name.

**5**My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat,  
    and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips,  
**6**when I think of thee upon my bed,  
    and meditate on thee in the watches of the night;  
**7**for thou hast been my help,  
    and in the shadow of thy wings I sing for joy.  
**8**My soul clings to thee;  
    thy right hand upholds me.

**9**But those who seek to destroy my life  
    shall go down into the depths of the earth;  
**10**they shall be given over to the power of the sword,  
    they shall be prey for jackals.  
**11**But the king shall rejoice in God;  
    all who swear by him shall glory;  
    for the mouths of liars will be stopped.