

## Messianic Anticipation

---

### **Bible Study at a Glance:**

During Advent, the Church makes present the ancient expectation for a Messiah, renewing our own desire for his second coming.

Self-reflection on that desire in our hearts is helpful to our spiritual lives.

---

*CCC 524: When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: "He must increase, but I must decrease."*

*(Explain to the Group)* = You don't have to read this word for word, but this is the general idea of what to explain before moving on.

- **Q: These are questions to ask the whole group**
  - *A: Hopefully the group arrives at most of the answers on their own, but if they don't, redirect the discussion towards these answers, and be sure to tell the group the answers if no one quite got it.*

*CCC/Verses and quotes to read out loud are in boxes.*

*(Explain to the Group)* In the Old Testament, God's people eagerly anticipated and waited for the Messiah. Let's take a look at some verses from the Bible showing that anticipation in the Old Testament, and then some verses showing the anticipation of his second coming in the New Testament.

### **Old Testament:**

#### **Isaiah 9:1-6:**

*The people who walked in darkness*

*have seen a great light;*

*Upon those who lived in a land of gloom*

*a light has shone.*

<sup>2</sup> *You have brought them abundant joy*

*and great rejoicing;*

*They rejoice before you as people rejoice at harvest,*

*as they exult when dividing the spoils.*

<sup>3</sup> *For the yoke that burdened them,*

*the pole on their shoulder,*

*The rod of their taskmaster,  
you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.[a]*

<sup>4</sup> *For every boot that tramped in battle,  
every cloak rolled in blood,  
will be burned as fuel for fire.*

<sup>5</sup> *For a child[b] is born to us, a son is given to us;  
upon his shoulder dominion rests.*

*They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,  
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.*

<sup>6</sup> *His dominion is vast  
and forever peaceful,  
Upon David's throne, and over his kingdom,  
which he confirms and sustains  
By judgment and justice,  
both now and forever.*

*The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!*

**Jeremiah 23:5-6:**

*See, days are coming—oracle of the Lord—  
when I will raise up a righteous branch for David;  
As king he shall reign and govern wisely,  
he shall do what is just and right in the land.*

<sup>6</sup> *In his days Judah shall be saved,  
Israel shall dwell in security.*

*This is the name to be given him:  
"The Lord our justice."*

**Isaiah 25:9:**

*On that day it will be said: "Indeed, this is our God; we looked to him, and he saved us! This is the Lord to whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"*

**Matthew 24:29-31:**

*Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.<sup>30</sup> And then the sign of the Son of Man[q] will appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man*

coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And he will send out his angels[r] with a trumpet blast, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

**Acts 1:9-11:** When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. <sup>10</sup> While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. <sup>11</sup> They said, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven."

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17:** For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together[d] with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord.

- **Q: In the Old Testament, and even in Jesus' time, what were they anticipating in terms of a Messiah?**
  - A: They were thinking in terms of a king who would save them from foreign rule, e.g., the Romans in Jesus' time. They were thinking of someone like King David who would re-establish Israel as a nation or kingdom.
  
- **Q: Do we make the same mistake, seeking our version of what we think God's salvation should look like and what we think he should be doing on earth? How so?**
  
- **Q: What are we anticipating, looking forward to? How would you describe what you're thinking?**
  - A: We are obviously anticipating heaven, but the group can discuss more of what that means in their minds. It's not just the absence of evil or pain, but our union with God and a resurrection of our bodies similar to Christ's bodily resurrection and its characteristics.
  
- **Q: What effect would it have on our lives if we think of Christ's second coming more frequently, or more practically speaking, if we think of our death and life after death? Or life after death for our loved ones?**