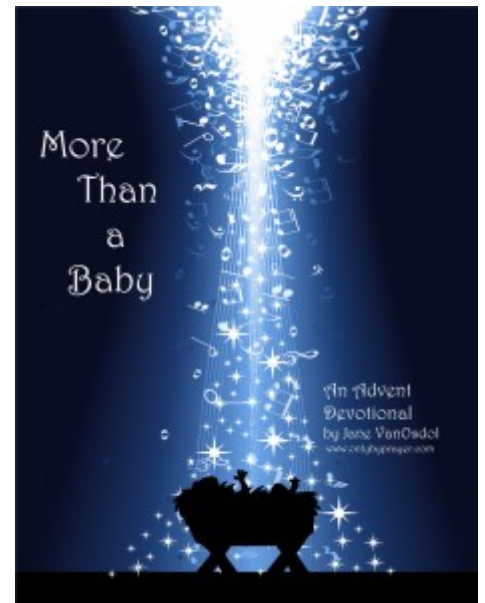


First Sunday of Advent

December 1 marks the first Sunday of **Advent** for 2013.



Advent is a time of preparation for **Christmas**. It is the start of the new calendar year for the Christian calendar. Traditionally, the season of Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and continues through December 24, while the Christmas season starts on December 25 and goes until the Epiphany on January the 8th.

It seems that we often skip the season of Advent and jump right into Christmas. I wonder if Christmas would hold more meaning for us if we took the time to prepare our hearts to receive our Savior. That is the whole purpose of Advent. And that is the purpose of this devotional. It's my prayer that by taking the time to read through these devotions during Advent that Christ will become even more special to you during the holiday season—and through the rest of the year too!

The word *advent* from the Latin *adventus* (Greek *parousia*), means "coming" or "arrival." The season of Advent is focused on the coming of Jesus as Messiah (Christ or King). Our worship, scripture readings, and prayers not only prepare us spiritually for Christmas (His first coming), but also for His

eventual Second Coming.

This is why the scripture readings during Advent include both Old Testament passages about the expected Messiah, and New Testament passages about Jesus' Second Coming. We also read passages about John the Baptist, whom God sent ahead of Jesus to prepare the hearts of the people for Him.

Enjoy this Advent season, and may God bless you and your family.

Jane

Please click on the link below to download today's devotional!

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