

# The Great O Antiphons of Advent

*A Bible Study for Advent and Christmas 2013  
by Pastor Tim Wagner  
Lamb of God Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio*

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## Lesson One: Wisdom (*Sapientia*)

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### Background of the Great O Antiphons of Advent

- What are they?
- Where did they come from?
- How are they used?

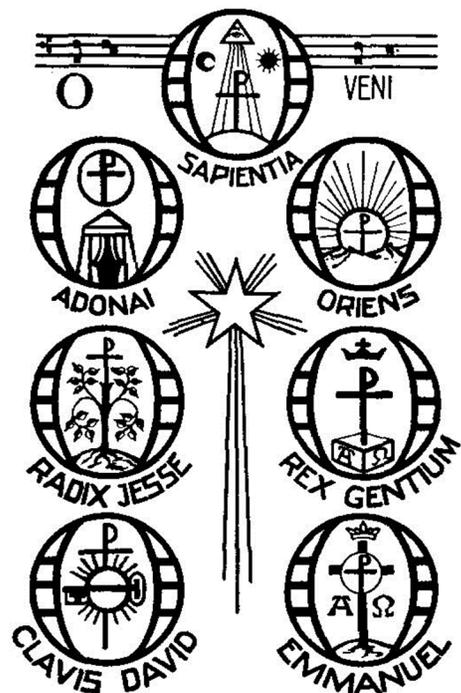
### The Antiphon

*O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, mightily order all things; come and teach us the way of prudence.*

### Studying the Scriptures

Work in groups of 4-6 people to complete the first three exercises below:

1. Name the one person whom you would consider to be the wisest person you know, and briefly explain why you consider them to be so wise.
2. List criteria that qualify something to be considered “wisdom” in our world today.
3. **Read 1 Corinthians 3:18-20 and Job 28:20-28**, and compare them with the world’s idea of the source and definition of wisdom.
4. **Read Jeremiah 51:15-19** (and recall Job 28:20-28). What is one significant way in which the Lord displays his wisdom? How is that display of God’s wisdom important in a Christian’s prayers (see the antiphon above)?
5. List things you have heard or read that label some or all of the Christian faith as foolishness.



6. **Read 1 Corinthians 1:17-31.** What makes godly wisdom foolishness in the world's eyes? Why did God choose such a "foolish" way to save the world?
7. **Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-16.** Explain how this chapter gives purpose and urgency to our life in these last days.
8. **Read Proverbs 8:12-36.** In this section, "wisdom" is personified. But many have seen here more than just giving human qualities to an abstract term. They have seen "Wisdom" here as referring to Jesus himself. Consider the following passages, and note phrases that would support that interpretation of this section of Proverbs.
- **John 1:1-5** – <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (NIV 2011)
  - **Colossians 1:15-17** – <sup>15</sup> The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (NIV 2011)
  - **1 John 4:9** – <sup>9</sup> This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. (NIV 2011)
9. Explain: The conversion of a Christian is the beginning, not the end, of their pursuit of wisdom.
- **Proverbs 9:10** – <sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (NIV 2011)
  - **Ephesians 1:15-19a** – <sup>15</sup> For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, <sup>16</sup> I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. (NIV 2011)
10. For what might we pray to "Wisdom"?

### O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high, who ordered all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go. Amen.



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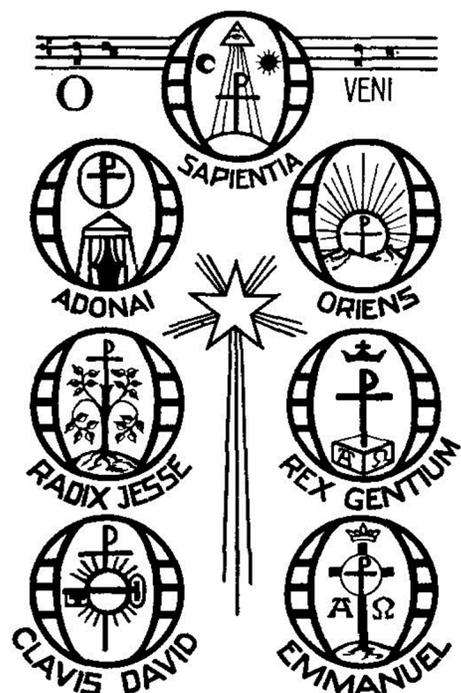
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## Lesson Two: Ruler of the House of Israel (*Adonai*)

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### Review: Great O Antiphons of Advent

- The Great O Antiphons date from: (a) the 9<sup>th</sup> century or earlier; (b) the time of the Lutheran Reformation; or (c) the second Vatican council.
- The first letters of each of the Latin names of Christ addressed in the antiphons, arranged backwards, spell “*Ero cras,*” a Latin phrase which means: (a) Behold the cross; (b) Love reigns; or (c) Tomorrow I will come
- The Great O Antiphons of Advent are the basis for the hymn: (a) Joy to the World; (b) O Come, O Come, Emmanuel; or (c) Savior of the Nations, Come.
- The Great O Antiphons of Advent were historically used: (a) on Christmas Eve; (b) December 17-23; or (c) on the first Sunday in Advent.



### The Antiphon

***O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and gave him the Law on Sinai; come with an outstretched arm and redeem us.***

### Studying the Scriptures

The word “*adonai*” in Hebrew means “master” or “lord.” It emphasizes authority and power. However, it may also have been the way that the Jews pronounced the name יהוה, the special name for God that is often translated LORD (all capital letters) or Jehovah, which emphasizes God’s faithfulness and changelessness. Both uses of the word seem to be connected to this prayer.

#### Read Exodus 3:1-15.

1. Explain Moses’ reaction, when he realized that it was God who was speaking to him from within the bush (v. 6).
2. While Moses questioned whether he was qualified to lead the people and whether the Israelites would be willing to follow him, he didn’t question God’s ability to bring his people out of Egypt. Why not?

3. What is God telling Israel (and us) about himself with the name “I AM”? (The name LORD—literally “he is”—seems to be related to the name I AM.) How does that name give us comfort, encouragement, and hope?
  
4. God told Moses, “Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD’ ” (Exodus 6:6-8, NIV 2011). How does this assurance from God bring together the power and the unchanging faithfulness of God that are alluded to in that name “Adonai”?

**Read Exodus 20:1-19.**

5. Even though God had shown love to his people by bringing them out of Egypt, what reason did they still have to tremble before him?
  
6. As Christians who are both sinners and saints, what twofold reaction will we always have to the power and authority of Adonai?

The priest Zechariah borrowed the language that the Lord used to describe his rescue of his people from Egypt, as he spoke words of praise at the birth of his son John, who would be the forerunner of the Savior. **Read Luke 1:68-75.**

7. In what ways was what Jesus accomplished by his death and resurrection similar to what God accomplished for his people in Egypt?
  
8. Jesus had not yet been born, much less completed everything that was necessary to bring salvation. How could Zechariah speak of it, as if it had already happened?
  
9. In what sense is our redemption already accomplished, and in what sense can we pray, “come with an outstretched arm to redeem us”?

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

Oh, come, oh, come, our Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai’s height  
in ancient times gave holy law, in cloud and majesty and awe. Amen.



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## Lesson Three: Root of Jesse (*Radix Jesse*)

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### The Antiphon

*O Root of Jesse, standing as a banner before the peoples, before whom all kings are mute, to whom the nations will do homage; come quickly to deliver us.*

### Studying the Scriptures

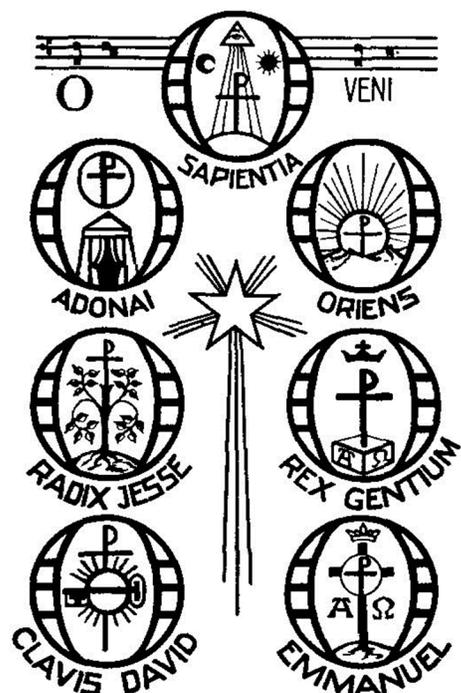
*There are actually three different pictures in this Antiphon and its related passages:*

- *Shoot from a Stump*
- *Root*
- *Banner/Ensign*

### Shoot from a Stump

**Isaiah 11:1a** – <sup>1</sup> *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;*

1. In a group of 4-6 people, read the following passages to determine (a) what is referred to with the phrase “stump of Jesse” and (b) how it became a “stump.”
  - **1 Kings 9:6-9**
  - **Isaiah 6:11-13**
  - **2 Kings 25:8-12,21b**
2. How is the image of a stump a sad and hopeless picture?
3. How did the coming of Jesus change that picture?
  - **Isaiah 53:2** – <sup>2</sup> He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. (NIV 2011)
4. What characteristic of the shoot growing out of the stump did Isaiah emphasize in 53:2?



## Root of Jesse

**Isaiah 11:1b,10a** – *from his roots a Branch will bear fruit...In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;*

5. The Bible often mixes metaphors (think of John 10, in which Jesus calls himself both the shepherd and the gate for the sheep). A shoot and a root are two very different parts of a plant. What are function(s) of the root? (cf. also Jeremiah 17:7-8; Proverbs 12:3,7,12)
6. How does the picture of a root describe God's relationship with physical Israel both before and after the ministry of Isaiah?
  - **Psalms 80:8-11** – <sup>8</sup> You transplanted a vine from Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. <sup>9</sup> You cleared the ground for it, and it took root and filled the land. <sup>10</sup> The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches. <sup>11</sup> Its branches reached as far as the Sea, its shoots as far as the River. (NIV 2011)
  - **2 Kings 19:30-31** – <sup>30</sup> "Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah will take root below and bear fruit above. <sup>31</sup> For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this." (NIV 2011)

**Read John 15:4-6.**

7. How does the picture of a root also describe Jesus' relationship with spiritual Israel (believers)?
8. What warning is there for those who are not rooted in Christ? (Cf. also Isaiah 5:22-25; Malachi 4:1)

## Banner/Ensign

**Isaiah 11:10** – <sup>10</sup> *In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.*

9. **Read Isaiah 18:3.** What is the most important feature of a banner?
10. Banners were used for several purposes, including:
  - Rallying troops for battle against an enemy army (e.g., Jeremiah 51:12,27-29)
  - Announcing to the enemy the advance of an army (e.g., Isaiah 31:8-9)
  - Gathering people in support of a nation or king (e.g., Isaiah 49:22-23)
  - Announcing the arrival of a king (e.g., Isaiah 62:10-12)

**Read Isaiah 11:10-12.** What purpose for a banner is the most prominent in these verses, in which the prophet writes that "the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples"?

11. St. Paul paraphrases Isaiah 11:10 in Romans 15:12. What purpose for the banner does he emphasize?

- **Romans 15:7-12** – <sup>7</sup> Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God’s truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed <sup>9</sup> and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written: “Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name.” <sup>10</sup> Again, it says, “Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.” <sup>11</sup> And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him.” <sup>12</sup> And again, Isaiah says, “The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope.” (NIV 2011)

12. How do the following passages explain how Jesus is a banner?

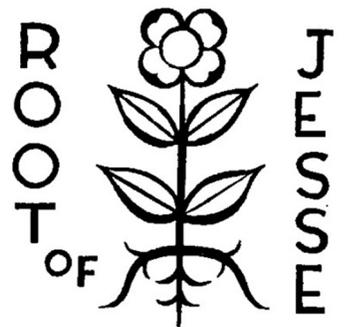
- **John 3:14-15** – <sup>14</sup> “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” (NIV 2011)
- **John 12:31-33** – <sup>31</sup> “Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup> He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. (NIV 2011)
- **Philippians 2:9-11** – <sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NIV 2011)
- **Revelation 7:9** – <sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. (NIV 2011)

13. What might be the content of our prayers addressed to Jesus as:

- The Shoot out of the Stump?
- The Root of Jesse?
- The Banner before the Peoples ?

### O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Oh, come, O Root of Jesse, free your own from Satan’s tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save, and bring them victory over the grave.  
Amen.



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## Lesson Four: Key of David (*Clavis David*)

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### The Antiphon

*O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can close, you close and no one can open; come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the shadow of death.*

### Studying the Scriptures

*There are two different but related pictures in this antiphon, the Key of David and the Scepter of the House of Israel. Our study today will focus primarily on the picture of the key.*

### Key of David

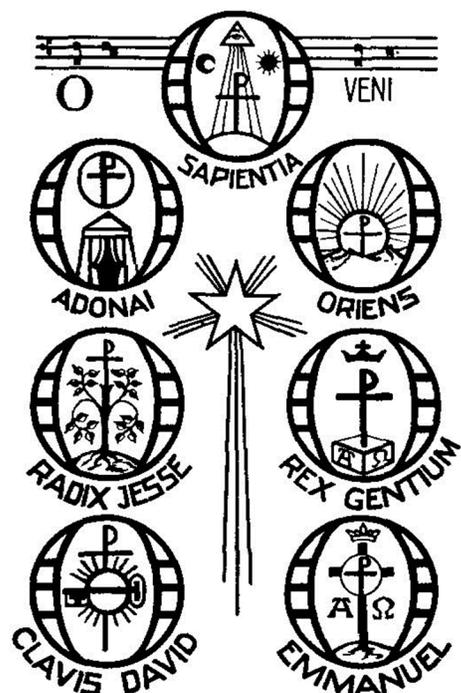
According to Martin Luther: "It was customary for this people to carry keys around the neck and on the shoulder. 'I will give him the keys' means he will be the treasurer, the overseer of provisions and money, who will receive and disburse and without whose authority no one will receive or expend anything. This is what it means to close and to open." (*Luther's Works*, vol. 16, p. 180)

1. The phrase "Key of David" first occurs in Scripture in Isaiah 22, a chapter in which God speaks words of judgment against Jerusalem. **Read Isaiah 22:15-23**. For what was the "key to the house of David" used? From whom was the key taken? To whom was the key given?

Isaiah's prophecy was about temporal authority that would be given to Eliakim. However, Jesus shows that Eliakim was a picture of Christ, when he uses the same term in his letter to the church in Philadelphia.

### Read Revelation 3:7-13.

2. This is one of only two of the seven letters to the churches recorded in Revelation, in which there is no warning or rebuke, but only praise and promises. What treasures is Jesus promising to disburse to the Philadelphians, as he tells them that he holds the key of David?
3. Jesus says that "*what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open*" (v. 7). In John 14:6, he said, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*" What are some other ways in which people (maybe even we ourselves) foolishly try to open the door to God's eternal blessings?



In Matthew 16:19, Jesus said, *“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”* Here, he may be using the same image of unlocking the treasury to disburse blessings, or it may be a slightly different image that is common in Scripture.

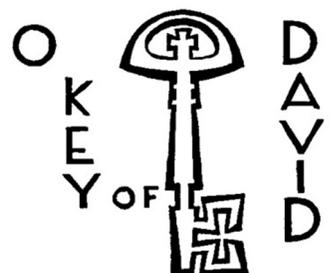
4. **Read Luke 4:14-21.** What use of keys does Jesus refer to here, as he says that he fulfills Isaiah prophecy?
  
5. **Read John 8:34-36 and Romans 3:9-12.** How do these passages, along with Jesus’ claim that *“what he opens no one can shut and what he shuts no one can open”* (Revelation 3:7) add urgency to our life and mission?

### Scepter of the House of Israel

6. The word translated “scepter” had several uses in the Hebrew language, reflected in its being translated several different ways. How is “scepter” (identified with the underlined word) used in each pair of passages below?
  - Psalm 89:32 – <sup>32</sup> I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging. (NIV 2011)
  - Isaiah 30:31 – <sup>31</sup> The voice of the LORD will shatter Assyria; with his rod he will strike them down. (NIV 2011)
  
  - Micah 7:14 - <sup>14</sup> Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, which lives by itself in a forest, in fertile pasturelands. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in days long ago. (NIV 2011)
  - Psalm 23:4 - <sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (NIV 2011)
  
  - Psalm 45:6 - <sup>6</sup> Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. (NIV 2011)
  - Amos 1:8 - <sup>8</sup> I will destroy the king of Ashdod and the one who holds the scepter in Ashkelon. I will turn my hand against Ekron, till the last of the Philistines are dead,” says the Sovereign LORD. (NIV 2011)
  
7. Jacob used the term “scepter” when he blessed his son Judah and prophesied about the Savior who would come from Judah’s ancestors. **Read Genesis 49:10.** What use of the scepter is the focus here?
  
8. What do a key and a scepter have in common?

### O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Oh, come, O Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high and close the path to misery. Amen.



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## Lesson Five: Dayspring (*Oriens*)

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### The Antiphon

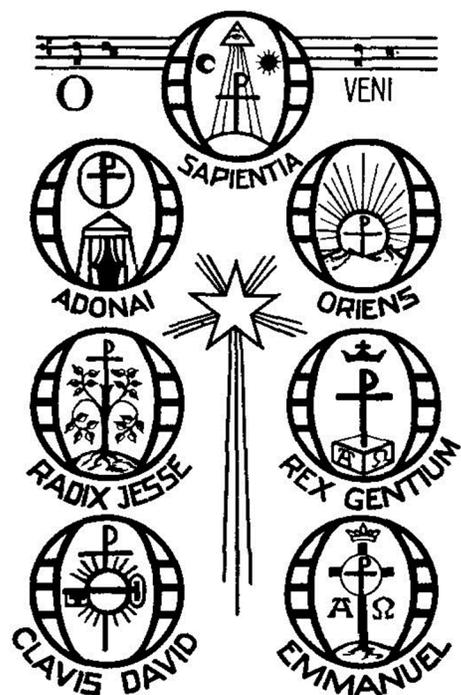
*O Dayspring, splendor of light everlasting, come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.*

### Setting the Stage

1. Describe various ways in which physical darkness affects people.

### Studying the Scriptures

2. Work in a group of 4-6 people to list as many bible passages that mention light as you can in ten minutes. (Try to find the specific reference, but if you can't, just write down a quote or paraphrase of the passage.)
3. **Read Ephesians 5:8-14 and Ephesians 2:1-3.** Explain how Paul uses the picture of darkness and to whom it applies.
4. How is darkness a good way to describe our natural spiritual condition?
5. If we are to escape spiritual darkness, we can't go to the light. It must come to us. What must happen before the Lord brings us into the light?
  - **Micah 7:8-10** – <sup>8</sup> Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. <sup>9</sup> Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD's wrath, until he pleads my case and upholds my cause. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness. <sup>10</sup> Then my enemy will see it and will be covered with shame, she who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My eyes will see her downfall; even now she will be trampled underfoot like mire in the streets. (NIV 2011)



6. Explain the beautiful connection between how God describes himself in Isaiah 42:5 and the work he sends his Son to do in Isaiah 42:6-7.
- **Isaiah 42:5-7** – <sup>5</sup>This is what God the LORD says— the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: <sup>6</sup>“I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup> to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. (NIV 2011)
7. As the Bible describes Jesus as light (cf. John 1:9, John 8:12, it also compares his coming to the rising of the sun or the dawning of the light (cf. Isaiah 9:2, Isaiah 58:8, Isaiah 60:1-2, Malachi 4:2). How does the picture of the dawning of the light (dayspring) add to the beauty of the picture of light?
8. **Read Luke 1:76-79**. Zechariah chooses Old Testament light pictures to celebrate the work that the Messiah had come to do. How is the dawning of the light a display of God’s tender mercy?
9. John wrote, “*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world*” (John 1:9, NIV 2011). How does Jesus “give light to everyone,” even to those who do not trust him as their Savior?
10. How does the light of Jesus make a difference in our lives?
- **Malachi 4:2** – <sup>2</sup> But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. (NIV 2011)
  - **Isaiah 9:1-2** – <sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. (NIV 2011)
11. How does the light of Jesus in our lives make a difference in the lives of others?
- **Isaiah 60:1-3** – <sup>1</sup> “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. <sup>2</sup> See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. <sup>3</sup> Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.” (NIV 2011)
  - **Matthew 5:14- 16** – <sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (NIV 2011)

12. How does the contrast between the first two passages and the third passage below show the main reason that hell is called *“the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”*?

- **Isaiah 60:19-21** – <sup>19</sup> “The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. <sup>20</sup> Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end. <sup>21</sup> Then all your people will be righteous and they will possess the land forever. They are the shoot I have planted, the work of my hands, for the display of my splendor.” (NIV 2011)
- **Revelation 22:5** – <sup>5</sup> There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. (NIV 2011)
- **Matthew 22:11-13** – <sup>11</sup> “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. <sup>12</sup> He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless. <sup>13</sup> “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie his hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” (NIV 2011)

13. In the book of Revelation (especially in its closing chapters), Jesus prepares his people for his return on the Last Day and for our life on earth in the end times. The final time he speaks describing himself is in Revelation 22:16. How does the final name by which he calls himself give us comfort and strength for these times?

- **Revelation 22:16** – <sup>16</sup> “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.” (NIV 2011)

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Oh, come, our Dayspring from on high and cheer us by your drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death’s dark shadows put to flight.  
Amen.



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## Lesson Six: King of the Nations (*Rex Gentium*)

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### The Antiphon

*O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, the cornerstone for uniting all people, come and save us all, whom you formed out of clay.*

### Setting the Stage

1. Describe qualities people might look for in their ideal king.
2. While nations might ally themselves with other nations, what are some obstacles that prevent all people from being united?

*We sometimes speak of a threefold kingdom of Christ:*

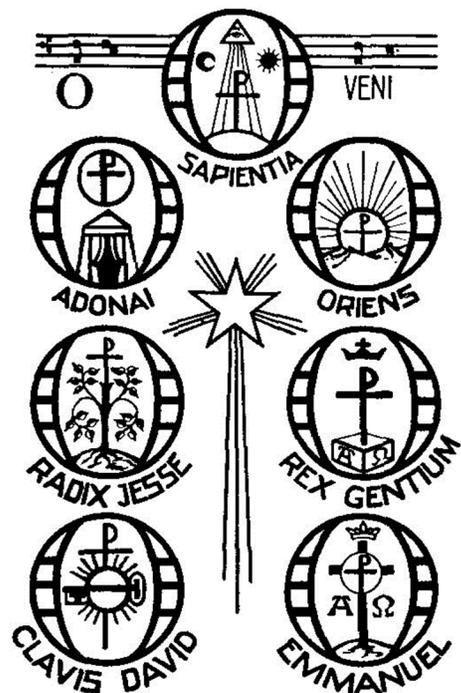
- a. *His kingdom of power – his rule over all created things*
- b. *His kingdom of grace – his rule in the hearts of believers with word and sacraments*
- c. *His kingdom of glory – his rule over the saints and angels in heaven*

*Try to discern which is meant in each of the passages we read and discuss today.*

### Studying the Scriptures

**Read Daniel 7:13-14.**

3. Before his ascension, Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18, NIV 2011). However, Jesus’ rule remains hidden from the eyes of many still today. According to Daniel’s vision, when will his authority and power be visible to all?
4. Why is this an important truth to remember as it concerns:
  - the role of the Church in the world?
  - our perspective on a world that seems out of control?



5. **Read Revelation 11:15.** In what way is Christ's coming kingdom different from all of the kingdoms that precede it?

**Read Isaiah 2:2-5.**

6. To which of Christ's kingdoms do you think this refers? How are the tools with which he rules different from those used by worldly kingdoms?
7. How does the law that goes out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem lead the subjects of his kingdom not to train for war or forge weapons any longer?

**Read Haggai 2:6-7.**

8. In what sense is Christ the king whom all nations desire?
9. If he is the one all people desire, then why do so many reject him?
10. In Ephesians 2, Paul is addressing the status of the Gentiles as foreigners and enemies of God's chosen people, the Jews. How did Christ destroy the dividing wall of hostility that separated Jews and Gentiles (and all sinners)?
- **Ephesians 2:14,16-20** – <sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,...<sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. (NIV 2011)
11. **Read Psalm 47.** Discuss what the words of this psalm mean for our lives right now, as they are applied to each of Christ's kingdoms. Make these words your prayer in the week ahead.

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

Oh, come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind;  
oh, bid our sad divisions cease and be yourself the King of Peace. Amen.



# The Great O Antiphons of Advent

*A Bible Study for Advent and Christmas 2013  
by Pastor Tim Wagner  
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## Lesson Seven: Emmanuel

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### The Antiphon

*Emmanuel, our King and our Lord, the Anointed of the nations and their Savior; come and save us, O Lord our God.*

### Setting the Stage

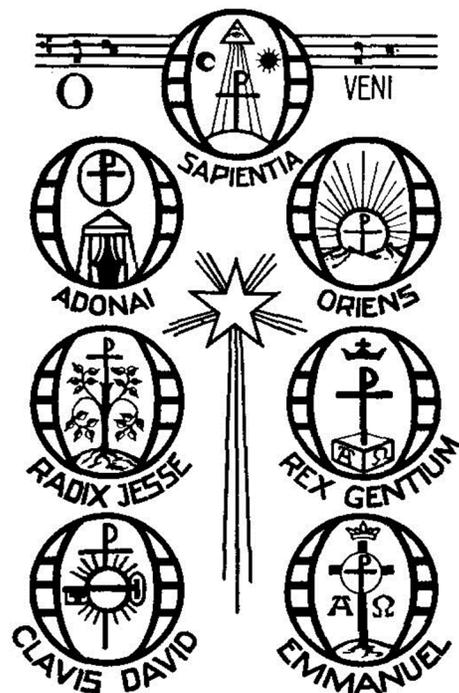
1. Describe a time when you felt all alone. Or, describe a situation in which someone you know felt all alone.
2. When you are going through a difficult time, how does knowing someone who has been through a similar situation make a difference?

*In our study this morning, we will find comfort and cause for rejoicing in every time of life, because Jesus became Emmanuel ("God with us").*

### Studying the Scriptures

3. Several times in the Scriptures, God promised people that he would be with them. Work in pairs to identify the person(s) to whom he made that promise in each of the passages below and the circumstances that caused them to need such assurance. Then choose the one with whom you can best identify, and explain why.

- **Genesis 26:3**
- **Genesis 31:3**
- **Exodus 3:12**
- **Deuteronomy 20:1**



- **Deuteronomy 31:6**
  
- **Deuteronomy 31:8,23; Joshua 1:5**
  
- **Judges 6:16**
  
- **Matthew 28:18-20**
  
- **Acts 18:9-10**
  
- With whom can you best identify? Why?

4. What blessings do God's people have because of his presence with them in the passages above?

*If we only see Emmanuel ("God with us") as the assurance of God's presence to guide and protect us through this life, we miss the greatest comfort that comes from that name.*

5. Ahaz, king of Judah, was not a God-fearing king. However, when Judah was faced with the threat of attack from the armies of Israel, the Lord sent his prophet Isaiah to promise deliverance. Seeking to lead Ahaz to repent and trust the Lord, he offered to give him a sign as proof that his promise was trustworthy. Ahaz self-righteously refused, and Isaiah spoke the words of Isaiah 7:13-17 in judgment against him. The Lord would bring enemy nations to defeat Judah, and "Immanuel" would come to bring judgment on Ahaz and all who reject the Lord. But for those who hear and heed the Lord's call to repentance, the words of this prophecy are words of comfort, hope, and salvation: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (7:14, NIV 2011). How does the context in which God gave this promise underscore the depth of God's grace?

6. **Read Matthew 1:18-25.** Why was a virgin birth necessary for Jesus to be "God with us"?

7. How do each of the following passages help us understand why Jesus had to be both “God with us” (both God and man) in order to be our Savior?
- **Galatians 4:4-5** – <sup>4</sup> But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. (NIV 2011)
  - **Hebrews 4:15** – <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. (NIV 2011)
  - **Hebrews 2:14-18** – <sup>14</sup> Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—<sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. <sup>17</sup> For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. (NIV 2011)
  - **Psalm 49:7-8** – <sup>7</sup> No one can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for them—<sup>8</sup> the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough— (NIV 2011)
  - **Hosea 13:14** – <sup>14</sup> “I will deliver this people from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?” (NIV 2011)
8. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus promised his presence with his followers “to the very end of the age.” Jesus is physically, although not visibly, with us at all times. **Read Matthew 26:26-28.** In what special additional way is Jesus “God with us,” and what blessings do we receive from his presence?
9. Share with a neighbor the name for Christ that we have studied (Wisdom, Adonai, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Dayspring, King of the Nations, Emmanuel) that brings you the most comfort and why.

### O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Amen.

