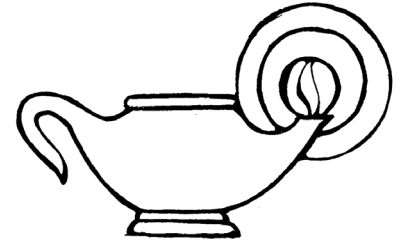
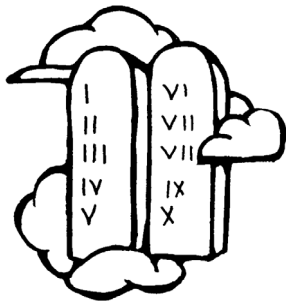


Opening Prayer: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. *Amen.* “*The Book of Common Prayer,*” Proper 28, page 236. *Alternative prayer: First Sunday of Advent, page 159 or 211.*



Review of Last Week’s Lesson: Last week we studied Scriptures that showed how the Lord acts as a shepherd to us and how he requires us to be shepherds to others. Did you do anything different during the week as a result of last week’s lesson?

**Year B, Lesson 1
First Sunday of
Advent**



Background Notes: Isaiah 64:1-9 ❖ In this passage, Isaiah acknowledged that God had turned his back on the people of Israel because of their continuing sinful way of life. Isaiah prayed to God asking him to forgive his people.

TODAY’S SCRIPTURES:
Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18
I Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Questions:

1. What supernatural feats did Isaiah ask God to perform in order to cause the people to respect him and to fear the consequences of disobeying him? (Is. 64:1-3) _____

2. What did Isaiah say in verse 4 that emphasized his claim that there is only one God? _____

3. What type of behavior is pleasing to God? What behavior angers God? (Is. 64:5) _____

4. Describe the relationship between God and his people. (Is. 64:6-7) _____

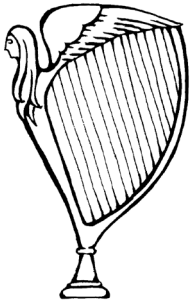
5. How does verse 8 show our dependence upon God? _____

TODAY’S THEME:
Be watchful and prepared for Christ’s return.

MEMORY VERSE:
Mark 13:32-33

6. In what way do you think God is molding you? (Is. 64:8) _____

7. What was Isaiah's prayerful request in verse 9? How do you express a similar request when you pray and confess your sins? _____



Background Notes: Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 ❖ The listing of the tribes of Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh indicates that it was the Northern Kingdom, the Kingdom of Israel, for which the psalmist asked God's help. The word "Ephraim" is used several times in the Bible to signify the Northern Kingdom. This kingdom was ruled by a succession of kings who were inclined to ignore God's laws. In 722 B.C., God allowed the Assyrians to overcome the Kingdom of Israel as punishment for its persistent religious disobedience and disrespect.

Questions:

1. Who were the parents of Ephraim and Manasseh? (Ps. 80:2 and Gen. 46:20) _____

2. Who were the parents of Benjamin and Joseph? (Ps. 80:2 and Gen. 46:19-20) _____

3. What name did God give to Jacob? (Gen. 32:22-28) _____

4. Name the 12 tribes of Israel. (Gen. 46:8-24) _____

5. After whom were the tribes of Israel named? (Gen. 46:8-24) _____

6. How did the Psalmist address God in verse 1? In verses 3, 4, and 7? _____

7. What was God's reaction to the people's sins? (Ps. 80:4-6) _____

8. What was the psalmist's request in verses 2-3, and 7? _____

9. What phrases in verses 3 and 7 would be useful to you as you pray for forgiveness? _____

10. What did the psalmist vow on behalf of his people? (Ps. 80:17-18) _____



Background Notes: I Corinthians 1:3-9 ❖ It must have been an incredible challenge for Paul to convert the Corinthians to Christianity. Corinth was a bustling, rowdy seaport with a reputation for drunkenness and immorality. It was the location of a famous temple to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love. This temple attracted many visitors because of its numerous temple prostitutes.

In I Corinthians, Paul wrote a letter in response to reports of divisiveness among the members of the new Christian church had established in Corinth.

Questions:

1. What two blessings did Paul extend to the Corinthians? (I Cor. 1:3) _____

2. For what was Paul grateful? (I Cor. 1:4) _____

3. What did God make available to the Corinthians? (I Cor. 1:5-8) _____

4. How did the Corinthians become Christians? (I Cor. 1:9) _____

5. Is there someone close to you who has recently become a Christian? Do you remember, as Paul did, (I Cor. 1:4) to thank God for that person's salvation? _____

6. What do you find reassuring or comforting in verse 8? _____

7. What effect does verse 8 have on your attitude about the day when Jesus will return? _____



Background Notes: Mark 13:24-37 ❖ The main point that Jesus made in these verses is that no one knows when the Son of man will return except God himself. We are to be prepared at all times for his return. We are to be ever watchful.

Questions:

1. Describe the appearance of the sky on the day of Christ's return. (Mk. 13:24-25, Is. 13:9- 10) _____

2. Describe Jesus' return. (Mk. 13:26-27) _____

3. What does the analogy of the fig tree mean to you? (Mk. 13:28-29) _____

4. Who knows when Christ will return again? (Mk. 13:32) _____

5. What advice did Jesus repeat in verses 33, 35 and 37? _____

6. How do you apply this advice to yourself? _____

Closing Prayer: Lord God, we thank you for being our Father and for creating us. Please forgive us when we confess our sins to you. Help us to recognize and correct our actions and attitudes that are displeasing to you. We thank you for your promise of salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to be ever watchful and prepared for your return. *Amen.*

Application for next week: Today is the first Sunday in Advent. We begin to prepare for the religious observance of Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Christ. This week's Scriptures focus on both the return of the Messiah and his judgment. As you prepare for Christmas, pray by name for the people you love who are not presently Christians. Pray each day for them and thank the Lord for offering them an opportunity for salvation. Paul's words remind us that we are called by the will of God to witness to others.

