



# Come & See What God Has Done

*Advent 2023, Week 2*

Welcome to the Advent Devotionals for 2023. This year, we use the theme "Come and see what God has done." We find the scriptural basis for this theme in Psalms 66:5, "Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man" (ESV).

In the four weeks of Advent 2023, we will take a journey through the Bible and discover instances where we can see where the Lord has done wonderful things for His people. The first three weeks will explore these instances from the Old Testament.

In week 2, our devotionals will be from the Books of Genesis, with a focus on the life of Joseph. His story is rich with examples of how God will work in the lives of His people. Not all parts of Joseph's life were pleasant. Similarly, there will be parts of our lives that will be unicorns and rainbows, along with thorns and thistles. But our Loving God has a purpose and plan for each part of our life. Yes, even in the good times and the not-so-good times. Many can relate to the times in Joseph's life when he struggled with adversity. Yet, through it all, Joseph could see what God had done in his life. For Joseph and us, we sometimes need to take a long view to see His wondrous deeds in our lives.

I pray that in this season of Advent, you will be blessed in studying God's word.

Leaning on Jesus  
Forest Holmes

Note: All scriptural references are from the English Standard Version of the Bible.



# Come & See What God Has Done

The Story of Joseph

Dec. 4

We begin looking into Joseph's life with his two dreams in Genesis 37:6-11. Joseph is the son of Israel. He is the most loved son of his FatherFather. There is a family dynamic that will play out against Joseph. This dynamic begins with two dreams he tells his brothers about. The first dream comes from Genesis 37:6-8. He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf." His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. The response from the brothers should have been a big clue to Joseph that the family dynamic was worsened by his dream of being exalted by others. But wait, there's more.

Joseph charges ahead and decides to share a second dream, as found in Genesis 37:9-10. Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." But when he told it to his FatherFather and to his brothers, his FatherFather rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?" This time, This time not only are his brothers upset, but he has brought his FatherFather into the dynamic. We must ask ourselves, what was Joseph thinking? The reaction from his brothers after being told about the first dream should have been the clue needed to be humbler. Some lessons are best learned through experience, unfortunately. The brothers choose to enact their revenge upon him in Genesis 37:14, 23-24. So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word." So, he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. So, when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.





# Come & See What God Has Done

The Story of Joseph

Dec. 4

When we consider this segment of the life of Joseph and his family, we can see ill-conceived actions on the part of Joseph, his Father, and his brothers. In the case of Joseph, humility would have been a more prudent path. On the part of the brothers, we see an opportunity missed to show forgiveness. And the Father made the big mistake in parenting of showing favoritism to one child.

We see missed opportunities when you and I look at Joseph's early life story. We also see that missed opportunities have consequences. These missed opportunities tear a family apart. Much heartache will follow for all members of the family. We can argue that if we look at what the Lord has done in this story, we struggle to see anything good coming from it. Yet, we tend to focus on the short-term, and God is in the long-term. This story will continue to play out, and we will see how the long-term strategy of the Lord is the best. But I have to wonder if the Lord meant the brothers' actions as a lesson in humility.

Leaning on Jesus  
Forest Holmes