



All is Bright

Includes bonus
family activities!

A devotional journey
to color your way
to Christmas

Written by NANCY GUTHRIE

Illustrated by LIZZIE PRESTON

All Is Bright



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All Is Bright: A Devotional Journey to Color Your Way to Christmas

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A devotional journey
to color your way to Christmas

WRITTEN BY **Nancy Guthrie**

ILLUSTRATED BY **Lizzie Preston**



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Introduction

*A*s December dawns, most families are busy putting Christmas programs and parties on the calendar, making holiday travel plans, and purchasing gifts. Those are all wonderful things, but it's important to nurture a longing in our hearts and our homes for a fresh sense of wonder that God has come to us in Jesus.

As you enter into this Christmas season, I hope this book will remind you of how God's people longed for centuries for the Messiah to come. *All Is Bright* provides a short reading for every day in the month of December, as well as a beautiful accompanying coloring page, taking you on a creative journey of identifying with the distant longings of Israel, listening for the angel's announcement, and gazing at the Baby in the manger. In the back of this book, you'll also find the Family Activities section, which includes kid-friendly coloring pages and conversation questions for your whole family that will help transform this season into a meaningful time of devotion and discussion as you focus together on what God's Word says about the promise of Christ.

The busyness of December can easily crowd out contemplation of the amazing reality of God's coming to live among us as one of us. I hope that your family will overcome the empty busyness of this season and that all will be bright with the glory of Jesus.

Nancy Guthrie



DECEMBER 1

The Promised One

*W*hen someone promises us something wonderful, we can hardly wait for that promise to be fulfilled. If the promise is something good, we want it *now!* We really don't like to wait. And yet the very best things are worth waiting for.


A long, long time ago, God made a promise to his people, Israel. In fact, he made many promises to them. But God's most important promise—the promise all his other promises depended on—was that he would send the Messiah, the Anointed One, who would save them from the difficulties of living life in this world broken by sin. The Messiah would not be an ordinary person, but God's own Son. The people he made the promise to had to wait, putting all their faith in the One who made the promise.

The season leading up to Christmas is called Advent, which means *coming*. During Advent, we remember the thousands of years God's chosen people anticipated and longed for the coming of God's salvation through the Messiah. Then, at Christmas, we celebrate the fulfillment of the promises God made. Jesus—the Savior God had promised—was born to us. No more waiting. Jesus came.

When John the Baptist was born, his father, Zechariah, recognized that the long years of waiting were finally over. God gave him a special understanding that his son, John, was going to prepare the way for the promised Messiah. Zechariah celebrated that God was about to fulfill his promise. He said, "Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited and redeemed his people. He has sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David, just as he promised through his holy prophets long ago" (Luke 1:68-70).

God promised that he would send a Savior, which he did when Jesus became a human baby. And while Jesus did everything necessary to save us when he came the first time, he also promised to come again. Then all God's promises will be completely fulfilled. So again we are waiting. Waiting patiently for God to fulfill his promises is what it means to have faith.

Putting faith in God's promises is not something a person does only one time on the day he or she becomes a Christian. The essence of being a Christian is placing all our hope in God, knowing we can trust him to fulfill all his promises—even the ones that haven't been fulfilled yet. We are willing to wait, trusting that "God's way is perfect. All the LORD's promises prove true" (Psalm 18:30).



PRAISE THE *Lord*...
HE HAS SENT US A
MIGHTY *Savior*

LUKE 1:68-69



DECEMBER 2

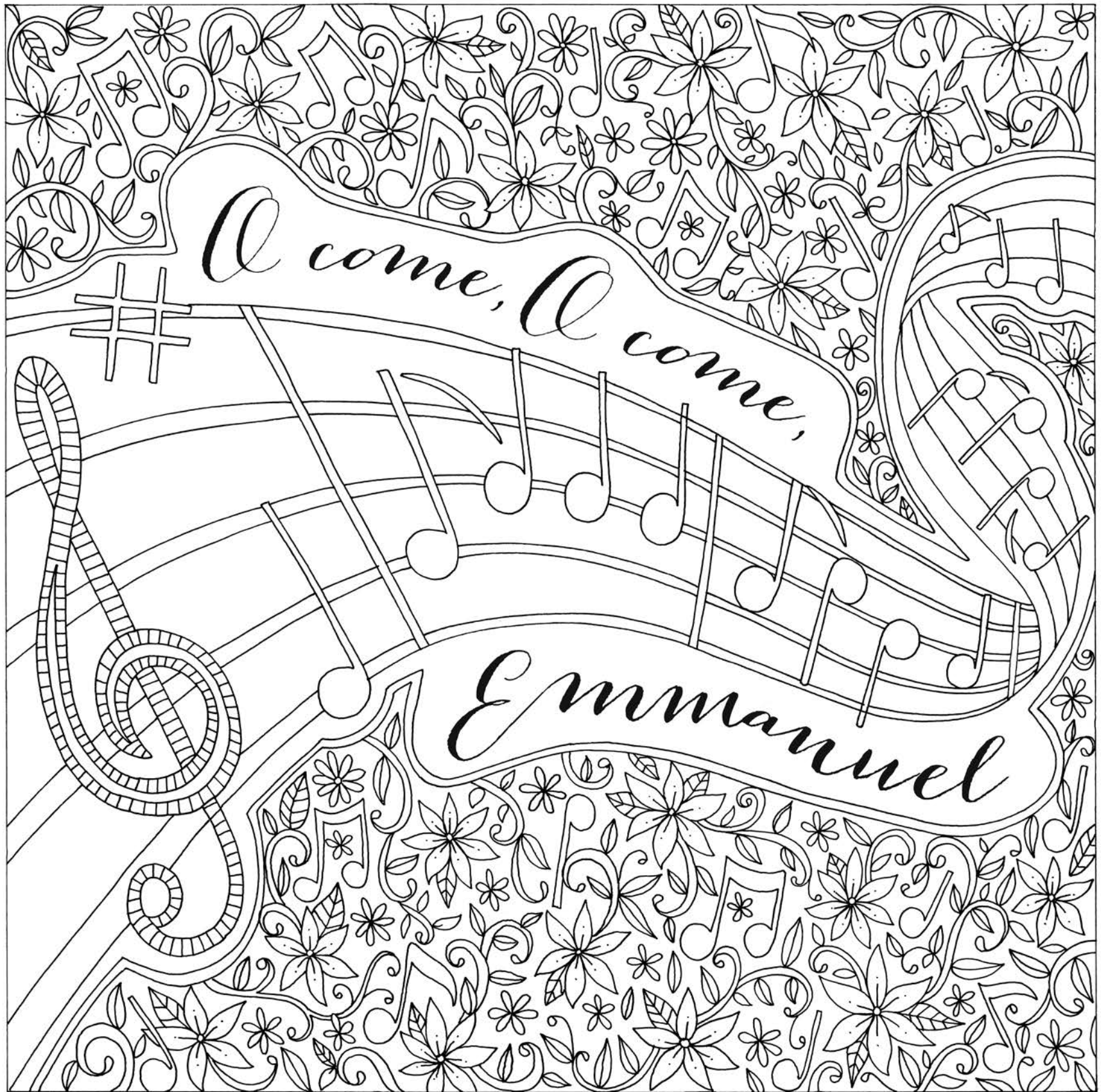
Right on Time

*M*ost days we set specific times for when we will go to school, have piano lessons, or get picked up from our friend's house. But sometimes there is not a specific time set for something, and we're left waiting, wondering when the package will be delivered, when the plumber will arrive at our house, or when our ride is going to show up. We wonder if we've been forgotten.

By the time Jesus was born, the Jewish people had been waiting for hundreds of years for God to send his promised Messiah. It had been more than four hundred years since they had even heard God speak to them through one of his prophets about the Savior he would send. It seemed like God had stopped talking to them, and some people had grown weary of keeping up their hopes that God would come through for them. While they were waiting, the Romans occupied their country and ruled over them. This made them long even more for the great Deliverer God had promised.

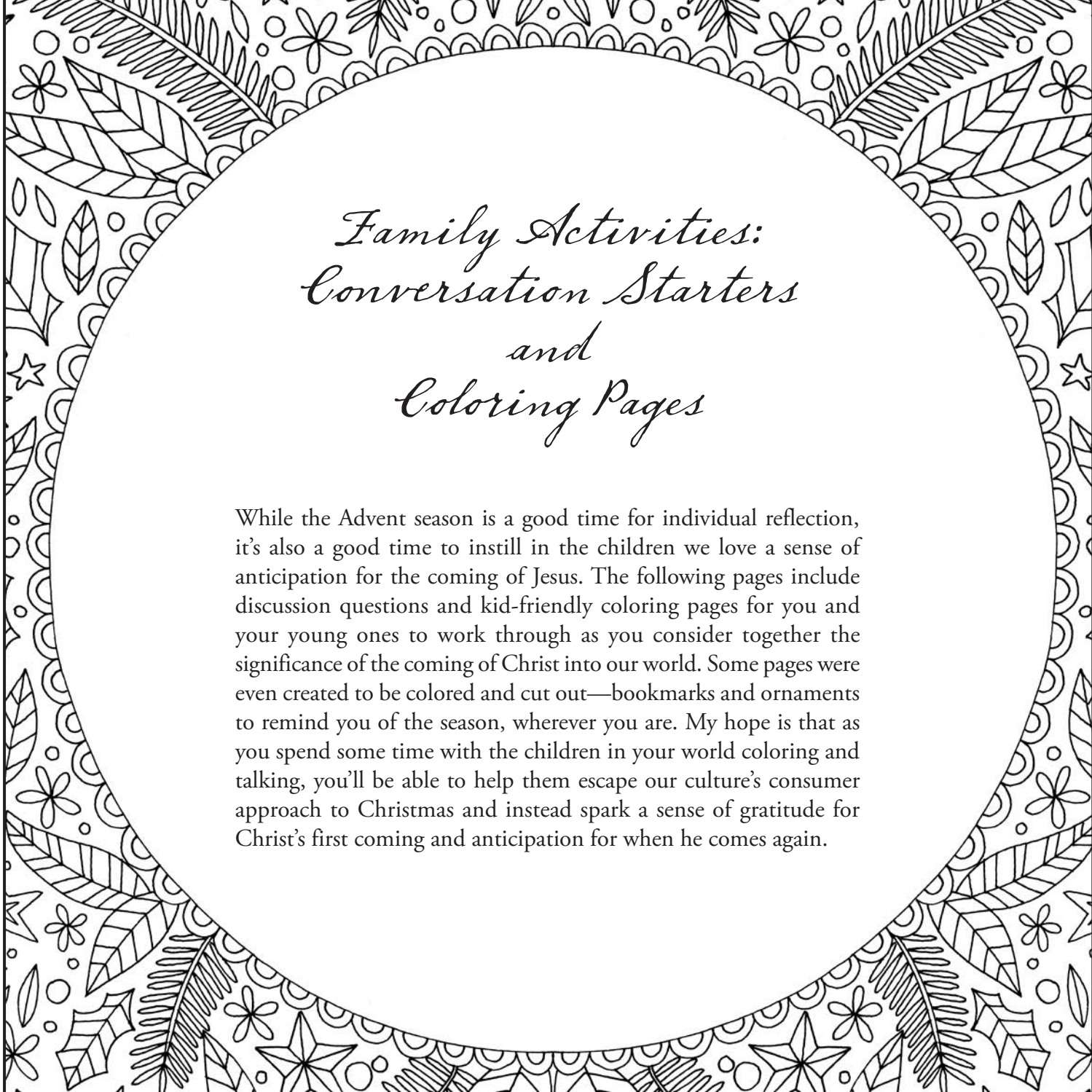
Though it is hard to wait on God, and though it sometimes seems to us that God is slow, God's timing is always perfect. He is never late. He always acts at just the right time.

God knew when the time was just right to send Jesus, the Messiah, into the world. He knew when the exact religious, cultural, and political conditions were in place. Paul wrote, "*When the right time came*, God sent his Son, born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4, emphasis added). You see, God is not making up plans as he goes. All the grand events of God's plan for our redemption have been scheduled in advance, from Creation to the enslavement and exodus of God's people from Egypt; to David's taking the throne in Israel; to the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus; to the day when Jesus will return. Paul said that God "has set a day for judging the world" (Acts 17:31). The course and timing of history is not a mystery to God. Time is in his hands, and he will bring about his plans and purposes in our world and in our lives right on time.



Ave Maria

Emmanuel



*Family Activities:
Conversation Starters
and
Coloring Pages*

While the Advent season is a good time for individual reflection, it's also a good time to instill in the children we love a sense of anticipation for the coming of Jesus. The following pages include discussion questions and kid-friendly coloring pages for you and your young ones to work through as you consider together the significance of the coming of Christ into our world. Some pages were even created to be colored and cut out—bookmarks and ornaments to remind you of the season, wherever you are. My hope is that as you spend some time with the children in your world coloring and talking, you'll be able to help them escape our culture's consumer approach to Christmas and instead spark a sense of gratitude for Christ's first coming and anticipation for when he comes again.



THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Acts 20:35

Discussion Starters

What do you find yourself dreaming of getting? What do you find yourself dreaming of giving?

When have you experienced or observed someone else enjoying the happiness that comes from outrageous giving?

This Christmas, how can our family avoid the trap of making Christmas only about getting stuff?



Prayer

Generous, giving God, we want to put your word to the test this Christmas. We want to find out for ourselves how happy it will make us to give. We want to become generous givers like you are, confident that you will take care of all our needs.

