

God with Us
Day 22 COMPLETE PEACE

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

When God gave the Law to Moses and set up the roles and duties of the priests to guide the spiritual life of the ancient Jews, He gave them the ultimate blessing to speak to the people: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace” (Numbers 6:24–26). The Hebrew word used in that blessing and throughout the Old Testament is *shalom*, and it conveys rich, powerful meaning. So much more than just the absence of fighting, *shalom* reflects safety, completeness, and wholeness.

This is the type of peace brought to us by God with Us. Jesus is the Prince of Shalom foretold by the prophet Isaiah: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever” (Isaiah 9:6–7). The Jews of Jesus’ day wanted a Messiah to establish political justice against their oppressors, but they also understood and longed for *shalom*. This completeness and wholeness with God is what Jesus brought into and left in our world, and when He returns one day, He will heal all that’s been broken and restore God’s complete kingdom of *shalom*. In this Advent season, we can remember and celebrate God’s rich blessing of *shalom*.

What does peace feel like? How can you incorporate this priestly blessing of *shalom* into your Advent celebrations? Who can you bless with these life-giving words?