

Family Advent

DEVOTIONS



JESUS IN THE MANGER

ADVENT DEVOTIONS

FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY
OF DAVID A SAVIOR, WHO
IS CHRIST THE LORD.

LUKE 2:11

AS A FAMILY, DISCOVER, WONDER, BE EXCITED AGAIN WITH
THE BIRTH OF JESUS, IMMANUEL, WHO HAS COME.

Day 1: A Manger

Read together: Luke 2:1-7

Do you remember your baby bed? What color was it? Was it soft? Comfy? Warm?

Jesus didn't have a bed when He was a baby.

After He was born, His mom and dad had to lay Him in an animal's feeding trough.

Pray together: Thank You God for sending Jesus to earth to be the Savior of the World. Today, help me be thankful for all that You have given me. Amen.

Day 2: Hay

Read Together: Luke 2:7

We don't know if there was hay in the manger. We do know Mary laid Jesus in a manger, a feeding box, which may have still had food for the animals in it.

Mary knew God was watching over her. The words of the angel Gabriel still echoed in her heart, "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).

Pray together: Dear God, thank You for my bed that is warm and cozy. Be with all those who don't have a bed to sleep in. Keep them warm and protect them. Amen.

Day 3: Light

Read Together: Isaiah 9:2-7

Before Jesus was born, the world was in complete darkness. Not night-time darkness, but inside-your-heart darkness. Sin, fear, selfishness and anger brought darkness to everyone's hearts.

Think about being in complete darkness. It's not fun, is it? It's hard to see or do anything at all.

God sent us a Light, The Light of the World, Jesus as a little baby!

Pray together: God, thank You for sending us the Light of the World, Jesus! Amen.

Day 4: Mary

Read Together: Luke 1:26-38

Mary was a young girl who wasn't married.

Do you think she might have been surprised and afraid when Gabriel told her she was going to have the Son of God?

She probably was, but she obeyed God anyway. She told Gabriel she was the Lord's servant.

How can you serve God and your family today?

Pray together: God, help me to serve You today by helping my family. Help me say kind words and have kind actions. Amen.

Day 5: Joseph

Read Together: Matthew 1:18-24

Joseph was a righteous man. That means he loved God and obeyed His Word. God chose righteous parents for Jesus so they could be a good example to Him.

How do you think Joseph felt when he found out he would be the earthly father to Jesus?

Pray together: God help my parents be Your example. Help us as a family worship together, read Your Word together, and pray together. Amen.

Day 6: Elizabeth

Read Together: Luke 1:26-45

Mary and Elizabeth were relatives and both were going to have special babies from God!

What did Elizabeth's baby do when Mary entered their house? He jumped for joy!

Why was Elizabeth so excited to see Mary? Elizabeth knew that Mary was carrying God's Son.

How exciting it must have been for them to be together and talk about what God was going to do.

Pray together: God, it is exciting to think about Christmas. Help me be patient as I wait to celebrate Jesus' birth. Amen.

Day 7: Zechariah

Read Together: Luke 1:5-25

Zechariah was visited by Gabriel, an angel that stood in God's presence!

Zechariah didn't believe what Gabriel said. Because Zechariah didn't believe, the angel Gabriel made him unable to speak until the baby was born!

Zechariah's example can help us remember to believe the things that God says, even if they sound unbelievable!

Pray together: God, help me say "I believe what You say!" even when it seems impossible. Amen.

Day 8: Angel

Read Together: Luke 1:26-38

Gabriel stands in God's presence and does what God tells him to do.

If Gabriel visited you, would you listen to him and do what he said? Would you be like Zechariah and not believe? Or like Mary and believe?

Pray together: God, help us to listen as You speak to us, even today. Amen.

Day 9: Donkey

Read Together: Zephaniah 9:9

Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem was dangerous, difficult, and exhausting. It took them many days by donkey and on foot to travel the 70 miles between Nazareth and Bethlehem.

The roads Mary and Joseph traveled on were hot and dusty, and they carried everything they needed on the donkey or on their backs.

Pray together: God, thank You for planning the path of our lives. Help us as a family to follow You. Show us each step and light our direction. Help us to trust in Your leading. Amen.

Day 10: Bethlehem

Read together: Luke 2:1-7

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Bethlehem means “house of bread.”

Did you know that Jesus also calls himself, “the bread of Life” in John 6:35?

How is Jesus like bread in our lives?

Do you think Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the “house of bread” to remind us that He is in fact our bread of life?

Sing “O Little Town of Bethlehem” together and really listen to the words!

Pray together: God, thank you for sending Jesus, the Bread of Life, to be our Savior. Amen.

Day 11: Innkeeper

Read together: Luke 2:7

The streets were packed with jostling travelers, peddlers, and soldiers – all brought to Bethlehem because of the Roman census, a formal counting of the entire Roman empire. The people of the city were bustling here and there trying to take care of the needs of the growing crowd.

Joseph was turned away by busy innkeepers before one of them noticed his wife's need. That innkeeper didn't offer much, but he offered what he had – a stable.

The innkeeper did not know it, but in his willingness to help the young couple, he provided a birthplace for the King of Kings.

Pray together: Dear Jesus, help us place You first this Advent season. Amen.

Day 12: Shepherds

Read together: Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds were outside the night Jesus was born, doing what they always did— watching sheep!

The Bible says the shepherds were terrified when the angels appeared. Do you think the sheep were scared, too?

When Jesus grew up, He described Himself as a Shepherd to us, His little lambs. Jesus' first visitors, the shepherds, were a picture of how Jesus would later take care of us!

Pray together: Jesus, thank You for being our Good Shepherd, watching us and taking care of us. Amen.

Day 13: Sheep

Read together: John 10:3

Sheep need a shepherd. Without one, they wander aimlessly through fields, falling into danger or scattering in fear. Sheep trust their shepherd completely. They listen for his voice and follow wherever he leads.

Sheep depend on the shepherd to provide for them and to keep them safe. We depend on Jesus in the same ways. He provides for our needs by placing us in the care of our family who loves us.

Pray together: Dear Jesus, thank You for providing all that we need: for loving us, for protecting us, for giving Your life for our sins and for guiding us in all ways. Amen.

Day 14: Angels

Read together: Luke 2:8-20

The Bible says the shepherds were terrified when the angels appeared. The angels must have been pretty amazing to see!

We don't know what they looked like, or what they sounded like. After the angel announced Jesus' birth all the angels started singing to God!

What do you think an angel choir sounds like?

Sing "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" or make up your own worship song to Jesus!

Pray together: Thank You Jesus for coming to earth as a baby. Thank You for loving us. Amen.

Day 15: Stable

Read Together: Luke 2:1-7

Did you hear the word “stable” as we read? No. The Bible doesn’t say that Jesus was born in a stable. But it does tell us there was no guest room for Him and that Jesus was placed in a manger.

Mangers (animal feeding troughs) are usually found in stables or barns. Jesus wasn’t born in a hospital or a comfy room. He was born somewhere with stinky animals!

If the people in Bethlehem had known that Jesus was going to be born that night, do you think they would have made room for Mary and her new baby?

Pray together: God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior at just the right time. Amen.

Day 16: Lantern

Read together: Psalm 119:105

A lantern is used to light our path when we walk outside. When Mary and Joseph searched for a place to stay, they were told there wasn't room. One innkeeper saw their distress and offered a shelter, a meager stable, a place where the animals were kept.

Perhaps the innkeeper gave Joseph a lantern to light the path and to light the stable that night.

Lanterns today are certainly different than those used in Bible times. Today's lanterns are modern marvels, the light they give off is brilliant. Lanterns can be used to light a room when the power is off, they can be used to help us find our way when we are outside and the sky is dark.

Pray together: God, help me see Your light, the Light of Light, Jesus, this Christmas. Amen.

Day 17: Family

Read together: Deuteronomy 6:6-9

During the Christmas season we look forward to being with family.

Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem because Joseph's family was from the house and line of David; they had to go to the town of his family. In the Old Testament, family was the center of life.

God tells us the importance of family in Deuteronomy 6. Families talked about faith. God tells us to talk about it often: when we sit down, when we walk along the road, when we lie down and when we get up.

Plan a family meal and eat together. Talk about Christmas traditions in your family.

Pray together: God, thank You for my family. Help us to talk about faith and to celebrate all that You've done for us through Jesus. Amen.

Day 18: Star

Read together: Matthew 1:1-12

God not only sent angels on the day Jesus was born, He also sent a star! This was a very bright star that stayed right above the place where Jesus lived.

The wise men had followed this star so they could see the newborn King of Kings. They wanted to worship him. And when they saw the star, the Bible says they were filled with joy!

Go outside and look at the stars. Be filled with JOY! Just as the Wise Men were!

Pray together: God, help us to be filled with JOY as we wait for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. Amen.

Day 19: Wise Men

Read together: Matthew 2:1-12

The Bible doesn't really tell us there were only three wise men. Just that there were three gifts.

Regardless of how many were there, we know that they had been on a long journey to find Jesus.

Imagine not knowing where you were going and following a star, just so you could find a little baby.

Pray together: God, help us to follow You always.
Amen.

Day 20 Camel

Read together: Matthew 2:9

Camels are great for traveling through deserts, which the Wise Men had to ride through.

God placed a star in the sky to point to where His Son was. The Wise Men were observers of stars from the Far East. They saw the star and studied it. They learned that God said He would set a new star in the sky to announce the birth of a new king.

They came to King Herod and said, “We have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him” (Matthew 2:2). They recognized that something miraculous was happening in the heavens and they wanted to know more.

Pray together: Dear God, help us as a family to seek to know more about You. Thank You for the example of the Wise Men who searched after the truth. Amen.

Day 21 Gifts

Read together: Matthew 2:1-12

The wise men brought Jesus precious gifts. The first gift was gold which reminds us that Jesus is king!

The second gift was frankincense, which is like a beautiful smelling and healing incense.

The third gift was myrrh, a spice used to make healing oils and lovely perfumes.

Pray together: God, thank You for sending us the best gift ever, Jesus! Amen.

Day 22 The Cross

Read together: Philippians 2:6-8

This verse says that Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient to death on the cross.

Why did He have to die on a cross? For our sins.

That's really what Christmas is about—that Jesus would love us enough to come to earth in order to die in our place. Jesus' birth is a celebration and reminder of what He would do for us on the cross.

Pray together: Thank You Jesus, for coming to earth to die for our sins and then come back to life to be with us forever! Amen.

Day 23 Blanket

Read together: Luke 2:1-7

After Jesus was born, Mary wrapped him in a blanket.

Read Mark 15:16 to see another time when Jesus was wrapped in cloths.

Why is something so insignificant like cloth mentioned twice in Jesus' life? Do you think God wanted to remind us, even when Jesus was born, that the reason He came was to die for us?

Pray together: Jesus, thank You for loving us so much that You died for us. You are the Savior of the World. Amen.

Day 24 Jesus

Read together: John 3:16

God sent Jesus to earth to save us from our sins. There is nothing we could do to earn eternal life or pay for our own sins. Only Jesus could do that for us.

Today, celebrate Jesus who died on the cross to take away all of our sins.

Today, see the cross behind the manger as you place Jesus in that tiny bed of hay.

Pray together: Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to earth "when the time had fully come." Help each of us to believe with the trust and love of a small child. We take joy in Jesus Christ – the same yesterday, and today, and forever. In Jesus' name. Amen.

