

ADVENT

# Our Dear CHRIST Enters In



WEEK 1:

**Family  
Tree**



WEEK 2:

**Home  
Hurts**



WEEK 3:

**Baby  
Names**



WEEK 4:

**Company  
Comes**



A 4-SESSION **BIBLE STUDY**  
FOR ADVENT

LEADER'S GUIDE

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# Introduction

*Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up,  
O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.*

## **PSALM 24:7**

Advent is a season when we open the doors of our homes to family, friends and loved ones, as we anticipate celebrating the birth of our Savior, and we ourselves are often the ones coming home to be with those we hold near and dear to us.

But what we need to be reminded of most of all in this special time of year is that our dear Christ enters in to our homes to be with us through his birth among us. He resides in our hearts, as well, helping us to live for him in all we say and do.

How Christ entered in to this world, born of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, is something we continue to marvel over to this day. But the miracle of that moment came about through God's promise to our first parents, Adam and Eve, through thousands of generations of God's people who trusted the promise of a Savior and through God's perfect timing.

Into home after home since that time, Christ has come to make his dwelling place in each of them. In the pages of this Bible study for Advent, we welcome him once again into our hearts and homes through the words of Scripture, prayers, hymns and questions for pondering or discussing. May you draw closer to him.

*—Mark Zimmermann, editor*

## Leader's Guide for Session 1

**BEFORE CLASS:** Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed, and become acquainted with them.

**READ:** Have a member of the group read the Introduction on page 4 aloud.

**READ:** Read or ask someone to read the Opening Prayer.

## SESSION 1

# Family Tree

*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ,  
the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

**MATTHEW 1:1**



### OPENING PRAYER

Dear Christ, you were born into a family tree that included a long line of people, well-known and not so well-known. Some were faithful, while others strayed. Yet, you entered into this family, warts and all, to save them, past, present and future. You have made us your family through your birth. Help us to be faithful. Amen.

## DISCUSSION

Have you done any research into your family's genealogy? If so, what did you discover?

## INTRODUCTION

There is a television show on PBS called, "Finding Your Roots." In each episode, host Henry Louis Gates, Jr., presents what his team of genealogists found out about the family tree of a particular celebrity or movie star. Invariably, some shocking or unusual connection to the person is revealed. The genealogy of Jesus recorded in Matthew 1 is like that, but to the hilt. Surprise after surprise is uncovered to tell a story about a God who uses people of every stripe and background to achieve an ultimate goal of saving the world he loves so dearly.

## QUITE A FAMILY

1. **Read Matthew 1:1-6a.** Why is it important to begin Jesus' genealogy with Abraham?
2. What do we know about Isaac?
3. What do we know about Jacob?
4. It was unusual for women to be included in a genealogy. So why do you think that Tamar, Rahab and Ruth were mentioned here?
5. What does the inclusion of Jesse and King David tell us about Jesus?

**DISCUSS:** Discuss what, if anything, people have discovered by researching their family genealogy.

**READ:** Read or ask someone to read the Introduction.

## Quite a Family

1. **Read Matthew 1:1-6a.** It is important that Jesus' genealogy begins with Abraham because God specifically called Abraham "the father of a multitude of nations" (Genesis 17:5), and God made a covenant with Abraham that his descendants would be blessed (Genesis 22:18).
2. We know that Isaac was the miracle child God promised to Abraham and Sarah in their old age. He was nearly sacrificed by Abraham, who was obeying a command from God, before an angel stopped Abraham. This incident foreshadows the sacrifice of God's Son, Jesus, on the cross. Isaac married Rebekah, and they had twin sons, Jacob and Esau.
3. Jacob ran away from home after taking Esau's birthright and deceiving Isaac (with Rebekah's help) to receive his blessing. Jacob was unwittingly tricked into marrying Leah after working 7 years for his uncle Laban, working 7 more years to marry Leah's sister,

Rachel, his true love. Jacob had 12 sons, who would become the 12 tribes of Israel. God wrestled with Jacob and changed his name to Israel, which means "He struggles with God."

4. Tamar was twice widowed and was treated poorly by her father-in-law, Judah, one of Israel's sons; she posed as a prostitute to him and gave birth to twins by him as a result. Rahab was a prostitute who hid two men from the Israelites who came to spy on Jericho. Ruth was a widow from Moab who decided to live with her mother-in-law in Bethlehem, where she met a man named Boaz and had a son named Obed, who was the grandfather of King David. It seems that God uses these women to show that the most unlikely and unexpected people can play a part in his Son's family.

5. The prophet Isaiah declared that the Messiah would come from “the stump of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:1). The prophet Jeremiah said that God would “raise up for David a righteous branch” to be the Messiah (Jeremiah 23:5).

#### Sins of the Father

1. **Read Matthew 1:6b-11.** Answers may vary, but it seems that Matthew deliberately did not to include Bathsheba’s name since King David had committed adultery with her.
2. Answers may vary, but it appears that God used David and Bathsheba’s son Solomon as the line through which Jesus would be born because it showed that God used flawed people and steadfastly loved them. David repented of his sins of adultery and moving Uriah to the front lines to be killed. God forgave David and still loved him dearly.
3. Solomon initially pleased the Lord by asking for wisdom, but Solomon would eventually marry many women from other countries and follow their gods instead of worshipping the Lord.
4. Solomon’s son Rehoboam proved to be unfit to be king, so during this time, the kingdom was divided into two parts, the northern kingdom called Israel (10 tribes) and the southern kingdom called Judah (2 tribes, Judah and Benjamin), where Rehoboam reigned. Several bad kings followed in Judah (with the exception of Josiah) until the Babylonian Exile.
5. The Babylonian Exile was caused by weak leadership in the southern kingdom and the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar when

#### SINS OF THE FATHER

1. **Read Matthew 1:6b-11.** Why do you think the name Bathsheba is not included here?
2. Why do you think God used Solomon as the son of David through whom Jesus was descended?
3. What do we know happened to Solomon? (See 1 Kings 3:3-13 and 1 Kings 11:4.)
4. What happened after King Solomon died? (See 1 Kings 11:43. 2, 1 Kings 12:16-21 and 2 Kings 15:9-28.)
5. What caused the Babylonian Exile? (See 1 Kings 24:8-13.) What effect did this period have on the family tree of Jesus? (See Ezra 3:1-6.)

#### AFTER THE EXILE

1. **Read Matthew 1:12-17.** What does the continuation of the family tree after the Babylonian Exile symbolize?
2. Why does the family line go to Joseph and not Mary in this instance?
3. What is significant about the three sets of 14 generations?

#### OFFSPRING

1. **Read Genesis 15:1-6.** Abraham and Sarah did not have a child at this point in the Old Testament, so Abraham thought of an alternative. Why was God not pleased?
2. What did God show to Abraham to prove to him that his promise to him would come to pass and come to pass quite dramatically?

the Israelites were taken by force to live in Babylon. Surprisingly, the Babylonian captivity strengthened the national spirit and religious identity of the Israelites, and when they were returned to their land by King Cyrus, they were devoted to God.

#### After the Exile

1. **Read Matthew 1:12-17.** It indicates the resolve of the people of God to remain steadfast in their belief in God.
2. Family ties traditionally were tracked through the fathers, and Joseph was a descendant of David, but Mary was not.

3. What did Abraham do in response to God's words to him?
4. How did God respond to Abraham's reaction?
5. How long after this conversation did Abraham and Sarah have a child? How old was Abraham at the time? How old was Sarah?
6. What can we learn from Abraham and Sarah?

#### HERITAGE OF CHRIST

1. **Read Romans 1:1-4.** Why do you think it was important for Paul to include that Jesus was descended from King David?
2. Who helped to pass down the Gospel of God generations ago, according to Paul?
3. What event confirms that Jesus is the Son of God?

#### GRAFTED IN

1. **Read Romans 11:17-24.** How are branches broken off the family tree of God?
2. Who is part of the original family tree of God?
3. Who are those who are grafted in to God's family tree?
4. How can branches who have been broken off the family tree of God be grafted in again?
5. What does this opportunity to be grafted in to the family tree of God tell us about God?
6. Why is this news about being grafted in to God's family tree good for us to know?

#### Grafted In

1. **Read Romans 11:17-24.** Branches are broken off because of unbelief.
2. The children of Abraham.
3. The Gentiles.
4. By a return to faith.
5. In his kindness, he wants everyone to be a part of his family tree.

3. The three sets of 14 generations show there was structure and order to God's plan, and 14 is a multiple of 7, a perfect number, indicating God's plan was perfect.

#### Offspring

1. **Read Genesis 15:1-6.** Abraham said a member of his household not related to him could be called his offspring. God was not pleased because God's plan was that the offspring would be Abraham and Sarah's biological son.
2. God showed Abraham the countless stars in the night sky and said that was how many descendants he would have.
3. Abraham believed what the Lord said.
4. God counted it to Abraham as righteousness.
5. Isaac was born 25 years later when Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90.
6. We can learn patience and trust in God above everything and everyone else.

#### Heritage of Christ

1. **Read Romans 1:1-4.** Paul wanted to show that Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David.
2. The prophets.
3. Jesus' resurrection

6. It is reminder to us that we, too, have been grafted into God's family tree, and it reminds us that if we have fallen from the faith, we can be regrafted into God's family through his mercy.

READ: Read responsively the verses of the psalm.

**RESPONSIVE READING ..... PSALM 145:1-7**

**L** *I will extol you, my God and King,*

**C** **and bless your name forever and ever.**

**L** *Every day I will bless you*

**C** **and praise your name forever and ever.**

**L** *Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;*

**C** **his greatness is unsearchable.**

**L** *One generation shall extol your works to another*

**C** **and shall declare your mighty acts.**

**L** *They will recount the glorious splendor of your majesty,*

**C** **and on your wondrous works I will meditate.**

**L** *They will proclaim the might of your awesome deeds,*

**C** **and I will declare your greatness.**

**L** *They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness*

**C** **and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.**



# Our Dear CHRIST Enters In

A 4-SESSION BIBLE STUDY FOR ADVENT

In this leader's guide for *Our Dear Christ Enters In* Advent Bible Study, participants focus on preparing our homes and our hearts for the coming of Jesus, who enters in to be with us. Study and discussion questions, prayers and reflections highlight aspects of home life related to the story of Christ Jesus. Included are all answers, helpful notes and session directions.



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