

ADVENT

Our Dear CHRIST Enters In



WEEK 1:

**Family
Tree**



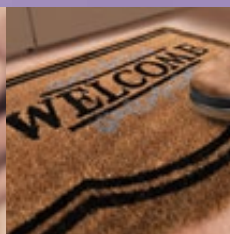
WEEK 2:

**Home
Hurts**



WEEK 3:

**Baby
Names**



WEEK 4:

**Company
Comes**



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



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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

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 s 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?

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?

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?

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 student 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.



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