

Family Advent Readings

Jesse Tree Instructions

What is the tradition of “Advent”? Advent, is a time devoted to waiting. The name *Advent* is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “arrival.” This season anticipates the arrival of Christ as a newborn baby! Advent not only looks back to the birth of Christ more than 2,000 years earlier, but it also remembers Christ’s presence here with us now, and it helps us each anticipate and prepare for His promised return in the future.

What is “Jesse Tree”? The tradition of the Jesse Tree is basically a way to trace the family tree of Jesus through the Bible, as we wait and prepare for the birth of Jesus. We get to see how “in the beginning” God created everything, and everything fits together, and everything has a purpose - even you and me. Through the daily Bible reading and ornaments you will see how God used all kind of people in that plan, from liars, to fighting families, to disobedient people. One of the great-great-great-great-great grandfathers of Jesus was Jesse. Things were so bad that the family tree was looking more like the stump of a tree, but through that root came the miraculous birth of Jesus, who would save the world! (Isaiah 11). A Jesse Tree can take on whatever form you and your family create. The main goal is that we don’t miss Jesus! How can you learn about the story of God, the birth of Jesus, the resurrection of a Savior, and your adoption into this family? Come and participate. Make this season matter. Come decorate, prepare, and celebrate the greatest Gift.

Instructions for Daily Reading/Activity

Daily Ornament	Get a small tree and place it somewhere special. It will start out empty. Each day as you do the reading, place the symbolic ornament that is listed on the tree (working your way to the top until Jesus’ birth). You can make or buy the ornaments. This tradition is called a “Jesse Tree” from the verse in Isaiah of the prophecy that Jesus would come from the root of Jesse.
Read	Each day there is a short reading to introduce the story or thought.
Scripture	Read the verses in the Bible listed each day.
Talk about	The goal is to remember this is a dialogue, not a quiz . The questions are a good start to draw out observations about the story, and the “answers” are just there to help guide you toward some key ideas. Knowing a story is good, but the purpose is always to provide a better understanding of God through His Word.
Acts of Service	Each day there is a short activity or action to do that will go along with the story. The purpose is to change the focus from the season being all about yourself, to looking at God and the needs of others.

DECEMBER 1ST

Ornament :	Earth
Reading:	<i>To get ready for Christmas, we are going to learn a true story. This story is about God, who has always existed. This story, found in the Bible, describes God as the creator of all things, the heavens and the earth and everything that is alive. God is also described as the only one who always does what is good and right and perfect—the Bible uses the word “holy” to describe Him. That is where the story of Christmas actually begins.</i>
Scripture:	Read Genesis 1 and 2 (summarize if needed).
Talk About:	<p>1. What do we learn about God in this story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is powerful and the creator of all things; God showed the humans how to live in the best possible way; God provides and takes care of humans; God enjoys his creation—he said it was good in every way! God sets aside time for rest! <p>2. How did God make humans different than the fish, birds and animals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are created in God’s image. He breathed his own breath into them; He made man from the dust and woman from man’s rib; He put them in charge of the earth and the animals <p>3. What kind of relationship did God have with humans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He spent time with Adam and Eve; He showed them the best possible way to live; He cared about them very much. <p>4. What do you think God gave them the two trees? What did God want them to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They could choose to obey God or not; God wanted them to choose to obey—to choose Life (the Tree of Life) <p><i>God showed Adam and Eve how to live in the best possible way—a life lived close to God and under his protection—a life that is full and complete. God had a plan to give what was best for them. And He has the same for us today. We will see how His plan was at work for us then and all the way to right now this very day, as we get ready for Christmas!</i></p>
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, we thank you for creating this beautiful world, and creating each of us! We thank you that you have a plan for each of us. Help us to be patient as we wait for Jesus' birthday.</i>
Acts of Service:	When we don’t focus on ourselves and stop thinking about what we want, it can help us to be patient. Think about others around you. Sometime today do something for someone else. It’s even better if they don’t notice! (Example: make a sibling’s bed, help carry something heavy, pick up trash, share your lunch with someone).

DECEMBER 2ND

Ornament :	Serpent or apple
Reading:	<i>Yesterday we read about the perfect world that God created, including perfect people. Today we read more about Adam and Eve, and how they disobeyed God, which brought separation from God. We will also learn how God loved them no matter what.</i>
Scripture:	Read Genesis 3
Talk About:	<p>1. What do we know about this snake? What did he try to do? How?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was bad—evil. He tried to make them not believe what God had said • He lied about what God had said by telling Eve that the fruit would make her like God. <p>2. Why was it a bad idea for them to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God told them not to; They would get punished for it—they would have pain and die • They wanted to be God and be able to determine what is right of wrong instead of God. <p>3. What happened to their relationship with God and each other because of their disobedience?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were now afraid of God and embarrassed with each other • They were kicked out of the garden where they would live close to God <p>4. Why do you think God punishes them for their disobedience?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because God is perfect and good and holy, so he can't allow evil to remain in his presence. • His holiness requires that sin be punished. <p>5. What do we learn about people in this story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can be deceived into believing wrong things. • People can choose God's ways or their own. • When people sin they tend to hide and blame. <p>6. What do we learn about God in this story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows all things. He knew Adam and Eve had eaten from the tree. • God punishes sin—the snake's head would be crushed by man; the man and woman would experience pain and death • God keeps his promises—he said they would die if they ate of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and eventually they would • God is gracious—he still took care of them—he made clothing for them out of animal skins • When we mess up and feel like we are far away from God, He always keeps looking for us.
Prayer:	<i>Mighty God, thank you for loving me. Help me to obey what you tell me to do because you know what is best for me. Help me to understand your love for me more. Help me to learn to love you more.</i>
Acts of Service:	What are some things God asks us to do? Love others, serve others, be forgiving, love our enemies, help others, share. Create something to show your love – cookies, ornaments, or a homemade card. Share it with someone who may need to be reminded they are loved today.

DECEMBER 3RD

Ornament:	A Gift
Reading:	<i>Yesterday we read that Adam and Eve did not follow God's ways, so now they would get sick, feel pain, and eventually die and they had to leave the perfect garden. After leaving the garden, Adam and Eve had two sons named Cain and Abel. When they grew up, Cain became a farmer, and Abel became a shepherd, looking after sheep.</i>
Scripture:	Genesis 4:3-15
Talk About:	<p>1. Why did God not accept Cain's offering?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abel brought his very best to God, but Cain just brought something from his garden. • God always knows what is in our heart, and if we are giving out of a thankful, worshipful heart. <p>3. Why did Cain have to leave?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He had dirtied the ground with his brother's blood—he had killed his brother. • God will never allow evil to stay around him. <p>4. Did Cain's sin destroy him like God said it would?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, he had to go away from God, lose the chance to be in God's presence. <p>5. How is Cain like his parents, Adam and Eve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He decided to do things his way instead of trust God. • He ended life—his brother's. His parents ended their chance at eternal life with God. <p>6. How did God show his love for Cain in the story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He told Cain to get his sin under control—gave him a warning. • He gave Cain a mark so that no one would kill him, even though he had killed his brother. He told Cain that anyone who tried to hurt him would receive seven times his punishment. <p>7. What do we learn about God in this story? <i>God is powerful.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows all things. Nothing that we do is hidden from him; God is perfect, good, and right—he is holy. • God gives us chances, but he cannot be around sin; God is loving—he protected Cain from being hurt.
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, help me to give you my very best. Help me to love others and not have anger in my heart. Thank you that no matter what I do, you love me and want to be with me.</i>
Acts of Service:	What is a gift that you can give to God? (Ex: loving Him, serving others, giving to others). Write down on a piece of paper what you will give to God this Christmas. Put it under the tree where you can see it every day so you can remember to bring Him your best this season!

DECEMBER 4TH

Ornament :	Rainbow or boat
Reading:	<i>The number of humans on the earth grew rapidly. Not only did sin spread from Adam and Eve to their sons—it spread to their son’s children and their children’s children, on and on. Even though humans were created in God’s image, everyone chose to disobey God. They constantly hurt each other, with their words, their actions, and their bodies. God saw that people’s thoughts were completely evil all of the time. This broke His heart and made Him wish he had never created humans. When people sin, or do wrong things, God is sad. Because God is perfect and holy, he can’t be around sin, and God always wants the best for you.</i>
Scripture:	Genesis 6:17-24, 7:1-12, 21-24, 8:15-21
Talk About:	<p>1. Why did God flood the earth and destroy everything? Do you think that was a good idea?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The heart of every human was completely evil. <p>3. From this story, how does God feel about humans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was heartbroken that they did not choose his way AGAIN. • Compassionate: he saved the human race and made a promise not to destroy us again. <p>4. What was God saying to Noah (and all humans) by creating a rainbow?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants to give us the best possible life—he always provides a way for us. • He always takes care of us; He gives us hope. <p>5. What did God say to Noah about the blood from the sacrifices? Why was this important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All life belongs to God and life is in the blood. It is God himself who gives life. <p>6. What does the story teach us about God?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is powerful—he controls the rain and the animals; God will never allow evil to remain in his presence. • The flood shows us that God is serious about wiping out sin; God is the source of all grace. He saved Noah and his family. • God warned Noah and his family about what would happen, just like with Cain. • He promised never to destroy the earth again, even though he knew man would continue to sin. He is merciful and gives us chances; God knows all things. He knew what was in the heart of every man.
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you for always keeping your promises.</i>
Acts of Service:	Noah took care of God’s creation and his family. Do something today to show God you are thankful for the world and animals He created. (Ex: brush the dog, place a bird feeder outside, pick up trash).

DECEMBER 5TH

Ornament:	Tent
Reading:	<i>I'm going to tell you a story that starts many years after Noah and his family made a new start... Noah's descendants forgot about God and how he had spared them in the flood. A few generations later, God established a special relationship and a promise with a man named Abram. This special promise was called a covenant—representing the deepest of all agreements between two people. God promised He would bless Abram.</i>
Scripture:	Genesis 12:1-9, 15:1-6
Talk About:	<p>1. What do we learn about Abraham from the story? About Sarah?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God chose him to carry out his blessing; He was old! • He trusted God and left his home; Even though they trusted God in the end, they found it hard to believe what God had said. <p>2. What do we call this special promise that God made with Abraham? How is it special?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covenant. God will not break it. <p>3. Where have we seen God make a promise or covenant before?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Cain and with Noah. <p>4. What did God promise to Abraham?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make him the father of a great nation, giving him many descendants. • To bless and protect him; To bless all the nations of the earth through him. <p>8. What does this promise tell us about what God is like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants to bless all people. • God has chosen a family (nation) to be his blessing and to live in his ways. • God will protect and bless his people.
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you for always keeping your promises. Please help me to obey what you tell me to do because you always know what is best for me. I want to go where you tell me to go, and do what you tell me to do.</i>
Acts of Service:	God always keeps His promises. He is God, and He is our friend. He wants to bless us. Start a list of all the ways you are blessed. Add new blessings each day until Christmas, and thank God for each of them.

DECEMBER 6TH

Ornament:	Baby or cradle
Reading:	<i>Have you ever wanted something so much that you thought you would die if you didn't get it? It's so hard to be happy when we focus on the things we don't have, instead of the things we do have. Sarah wanted a baby more than anything, and God had promises she and Abraham would have a family! How would God keep that promise?</i>
Scripture:	Genesis 18:1-14, and 21: 1-7
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where in the story was it hard for Abraham to believe the promise? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham thought he would have to give up his inheritance to one of his servants. • Abraham and Sarah laughed at God's promise and thought "How could this happen...?" 2. What do we call this special promise that God made with Abraham? How is it special? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covenant 3. What does this promise tell us about what God is like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants to bless all people. • God has chosen a family (nation) to be his blessing and to live in his ways. • God will protect and bless his people. • God has a plan to save His people. 3. If you had to wait 25 years for a promise of God to come true, would you still believe God? 4. How has God answered your prayers?
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you for hearing our prayers and answering our prayers. Help me to listen when you speak to me, and believe that you are faithful.</i>
Acts of Service:	God can use each of us to help answer someone else's prayer. Maybe someone is lonely this Christmas so they are praying for a friend. Maybe someone is hungry, and they are praying for something to eat. What does God want you to do? <u>As a family</u> , do a chore, give food, or give a gift, to someone you can think of that might need something or needs to feel special. But you have to do it anonymously! (That means no one knows you did it). God has blessed you, so you can be a blessing to others.

DECEMBER 7TH

Ornament:	Ram or sheep
Reading:	<i>Long ago people built alters out of wooden sticks and laid lambs on the alters as a sacrifice, as a love gift to God. But over time people forgot about the one real God's love. Abraham continued to trust in God and go wherever He told him to go, still believing in God's promise to him. You won't believe what happened next...some time later God tested Abraham.</i>
Scripture:	Genesis 22:1-18
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did Abraham feel about his son Isaac? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham loved his son. 2. How did God and Abraham get along? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham had a special relationship with God—chosen as the blessing. • Abraham had faith that God would keep his promise. • Abraham listened to God (and his angel). 3. What does this story show us about Isaac? About Abraham? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaac trusted his father. • Abraham trusted God. 4. Where have we seen sacrifice before in the stories? Why did people do this? What is God teaching through these sacrifices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God providing clothing from animal skins for Adam and Eve. • Cain and Abel, Noah's sacrifice to show thankfulness to God and show him as the provider. • Noah: after the flood God made it clear that life is in the blood. • Isaac: God provided an animal in place of Isaac—life for life. 5. What does this story teach us about God? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He provides for his people. • He tests people's faith. • He desires to bless us. And He keeps his promises. • He is always with us. 6. What would it look like for you to trust God with your whole heart today?
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, everything we have is from you. Help us to listen to you and do what you tell us to do. Thank you for always protecting us and having a plan for us. You are powerful and always present with us.</i>
Acts of Service:	Everything we have is from God. What is your most favorite thing in the whole world? Is it T.V.? A game? Your phone? Pick something special and see if you can go without that thing for one day. Each time you wish you had that thing, try to think about God instead and thank Him for all of the things He's given you.

DECEMBER 8TH

Ornament:	Bowl or cup
Reading:	<i>Isaac grew up and when he was 40 years old, he married Rebekah. Isaac prayed hard for his wife because she could not have a child. God answered his prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. They named them Jacob and Esau.</i>
Scripture:	Genesis 25:27-34, 27:1-45
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From this story, what do we learn about Jacob? Esau? Rebekah? 2. Why do you think Esau gave up his inheritance so easily? 3. Why do you think Jacob wanted his father's blessing? 4. What blessing is God passing on through Abraham, Isaac and now Jacob? 5. In what ways are we also like Jacob? How does this story give us hope? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are all sinners just like Jacob. • None of us do anything to deserve any of God's blessings but still he blesses us. 6. What does the story teach us about God? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is powerful. He was able again to cause Rebekah to have a child (Just like he had done with Sarah). • God knows all things. • God is the source of all grace. God blesses us even when we don't deserve it. • Jacob was a continual deceiver, but God set up his covenant with him and loved him. God can use anyone. • God keeps his promises. He passed the covenant he made with Abraham on to his son Isaac, and on to Jacob. Each time he promised to bless all the nations of the earth through them. • God is patient with our selfishness.
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you for blessing us even when we don't always deserve it. Thank you for your love and your forgiveness. Please help us to know that we can trust in your promises. Help us to love those around us.</i>
Acts of Service:	Jacob and Esau were both worried only about themselves, and what they wanted most. They did not see that God is their provider. As a family, make a list of 10 different ways God has provided for you. Put the piece of paper under the Jesse Tree as a reminder that God is your provider.

DECEMBER 9TH

Ornament:	Ladder
Reading:	<p><i>Jacob had not always been a good person. He had done some unkind things, but instead of saying he was sorry, Jacob ran away. On his journey God appeared to Jacob saying, "I am the God of your grandfather and father. I am giving you and your descendants this land. Your family will grow large and be a blessing to the entire earth! I will be with you and protect you wherever you go—giving you everything I have promised." (Genesis 28:12-16). Jacob lived away from his family for many years, but then it was time to meet with his brother Esau again. He had to face up to the things he had done wrong many years before. When Jacob ran away from his family, he may have thought he was running away from God too. The night before he was going to see his brother, God spoke to Jacob in a dream. God reminded Jacob of promises God had made to Jacob's father and grandfather, and that those promises were meant for Jacob, too. Jacob thought that he had run away from God, but God was always with him.</i></p> <p><i>And God blessed Jacob with great wealth and 12 sons! Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which means "struggler with God". The Hebrews would later be called the people of Israel, named after Jacob.</i></p>
Scripture:	Genesis 28:10-22
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From this story what do we learn about Jacob? 2. What did God tell Jacob? 3. In what ways are we like Jacob? 4. What does this story teach us about God? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows all things. • God is the source of all grace. God blesses us even when we don't deserve it. • Jacob was a continual deceiver, but God set up his covenant with him and loved him. • God keeps his promises. He passed the covenant he made with Abraham on to his son Isaac, and on to Jacob. Each time he promised to bless all the nations of the earth through them
Prayer:	<i>God, remind us each day that you are always with us. Remind us that we are a part of your story. Thank you that you are with us always, whether we are at our very best, or at our lowest. Thank you that you always forgive us, and want to help us, and that you keep your promises.</i>
Acts of Service:	God is always with us. Write a note to someone to remind that person how much God loves him or her. Send this note with a Christmas card.

DECEMBER 10TH

Ornament:	Colorful coat or piece of fabric
Reading:	<i>Israel (Jacob) and his 12 sons now lived in the Promised Land. Out of all of his sons, Israel loved Joseph the most and made him a beautiful coat. Joseph's life was not easy at all, but Joseph loved God and always trusted that He had a plan for his life.</i>
Scripture:	Read Genesis 37:1-27; and <i>The slave traders sold Joseph to a man named Potiphar, the head guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Potiphar noticed that God was with Joseph and blessed everything that he did. So he promoted him, putting him in charge of his entire household and business. . One day Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph to get him in trouble and Potiphar had him thrown into the king's prison. Joseph was again wrongly treated, even though he had done nothing wrong. Before long, Joseph was put in charge of the other prisoners and everything that happened there! God also gave Joseph the ability to explain the prisoners' dreams to them. (Genesis 40). Even in prison Joseph trusted God and did his best. We will hear more about Joseph tomorrow. ...</i>
Talk About:	<p>1. From this story, what do we learn about Joseph's brothers? Why didn't they like him?</p> <p>2. What do we learn about Joseph from the story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was a dreamer; He told on his brothers. • He was blessed by God and successful in all he did. • He trusted God in a bad situation. <p>2. What do we learn about God from the story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God always takes care of things, even when it doesn't seem like it. • God can teach us good things from hard situations. • God is always with us..
Prayer:	<i>God, thank you that you are with me when things are good and when things are bad. Please help me to always praise you no matter what. Please help me to trust that you are always in control and you have the very best plan for me.</i>
Acts of Service:	God helped Joseph explain people's dreams. God used him as a messenger. Think of a kind message you can give someone today. Write it down and secretly leave them the message.

DECEMBER 11TH

Ornament:	A ring
Reading:	<i>Joseph was still in prison when a few years later Pharaoh had some dreams that troubled him. None of Pharaoh’s wisest men could explain to him what this meant. One of the servants who had been in prison with Joseph told Pharaoh about his ability to interpret dreams. With God’s help, Joseph was able to interpret Pharaoh’s dream and explain that there would be 7 years of great harvest, and then 7 years of great famine in Egypt. God gave Joseph wisdom and a plan to save food for the Egyptian people. Pharaoh was so amazed by Joseph’s wisdom that he promoted Joseph as second in command.</i>
Scripture:	Read Genesis 41:37-45; <i>During the next seven years Joseph traveled throughout Egypt making sure that plenty of food was being stored up in each city. Seven years passed and the famine came, spreading throughout the world. People from all over the land came to Egypt to buy food from Joseph. Even Joseph’s brothers arrived to buy food, but they didn’t recognize Joseph and bowed down before him. At first, Joseph was harsh with his brothers, even accusing them of being spies and putting them in prison. But later, after many meetings and two journeys by his brothers, Joseph finally revealed who he was, saying, “I am Joseph, your brother whom you sold as a slave!” The brothers stood there speechless—shocked and afraid! They would never have thought that Joseph could still be alive. But Joseph spoke to them kindly and said, “Don’t be afraid. God turned your evil into something good. He put me in this high position so I could save the lives of many people. Now I will take care of you and your families.” When Pharaoh heard that Joseph’s brothers had come, he invited Israel and his entire family to live in Egypt. He gave them a plot of his best land, plenty of food, and all new clothing! So the family of Israel came to live in Egypt, escaping the drought and enjoying the blessings that God had given to Joseph. (Genesis 50:19-20).</i>
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did Joseph respond in the difficult situations he faced? What do you think about how he responded—did it help? 2. How does God continue his promise to the Hebrews in the story? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He did not let the descendants of Abraham—Israel and his family—die in the famine. 3. What does the story teach us about God? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows all things. He can work things out for his plan. • He shows them what will happen in the future. • He promoted Joseph and blessed him in order to save many people. • God keeps his promises. The things revealed in the dreams came true just as God said they would. • God is powerful. He can control the elements by bringing a famine. • God chooses to work through people who are not perfect. 3. Where have we seen God take a situation that seemed bad and turn it into good? 4. How can this story help you celebrate God’s love for you today?
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you that you are powerful and you always have a plan that is best for me. Please help me to trust you no matter what is going on in my life. Help me to share your love with others so they can trust you, too.</i>
Acts of Service:	Parents, get a ball of yarn and weave the entire ball of yarn throughout the house in one long string (under chairs, around a corner, under the table, etc). Place a candy cane at the end of the yarn – out of sight. Kids, hold onto the yarn and follow all of the twists and turns. Don’t let go until you get to the end! When you find the end, enjoy your treat. <i>God is like the yarn and He takes us through all the twists and turns of life. If we don’t let go, He will lead us all the way to Him! The ornaments on the Jesse tree are pointing the way God made toward the birth of Jesus.</i>

DECEMBER 12TH

Ornament:	Basket
Reading:	<i>The family of Israel (remember that was Isaac and all of his sons), had moved to Egypt and were enjoying the blessings that God had given to Joseph. Years passed, and Israel's family multiplied so quickly that they began to fill Egypt! Soon, a new king ruled Egypt who didn't remember how God has used Joseph to save them from the great famine. This Pharaoh told his people, "The Israelites are becoming a threat to us. There are too many of them! If we don't stop them now, they could join our enemies and fight against us." So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves and treated them horribly. Pharaoh even gave an order to have every newborn son of the Israelites killed by drowning them in the Nile River. Most of the Israelites stopped believing in God, and thought that He didn't see their suffering as slaves.</i>
Scripture:	Exodus 2; 3:1-12
Talk About:	<p>1. What did God call himself in the story? What do you think this means?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will always be—before you and after you. • God cannot be contained in a name—too amazing for words. <p>2. What do we learn about Moses from this story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moses was a sinner and a murderer, but God still chose to use him. • He felt weak but God used him anyway. • He talked to God and listened to him. <p>3. How does Moses get along with God? How do the people of Israel get along with God?</p> <p>4. What does this story teach us about God?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is powerful.; He keeps his promises. • He cares for people. • He is able to deliver and protect all who cry out to him. • He wants to use people to represent him; He allows suffering for a time but always keeps His promises.
Prayer:	<i>God, thank you for always caring for us. Thank you for forgiving us when we sin. Help me to serve you. Help me to listen and hear your voice.</i>
Acts of Service:	Moses' mother protected him with God's help. Your parents love you and care for you too. Write down one thing about your mom or dad that you are thankful for. Give them this special note of thanks today!

DECEMBER 13TH

Ornament:	Flat bread or cracker (for the Passover)
Reading:	<i>Our last story told us a little about Moses and his life. Now he goes on to talk with Pharaoh, Egypt's leader. You'll never guess what happened next...Moses and his brother Aaron met with Pharaoh and pleaded with him, "Let the Israelites leave Egypt for just three days to worship God. If you choose not to do this, God would punish the Egyptians severely." After their meeting with Pharaoh things got worse for the Israelites. Pharaoh forced them to work faster and longer hours. Cruel slave masters pushed them to work harder and harder as they made bricks from mud and straw and worked in the fields. So God sent a series of horrible plagues on the Egyptians and their land. But these plagues did not have any effect on the Israelites. The first plague turned the Nile River into blood. All of the fish died and the water smelled terrible and was undrinkable. Second, a mob of frogs; (3) gnats; (4) flies; (5) disease to livestock; (6) sores; (7) hail; (8) locusts; (9) darkness. Despite all of these horrific events, Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites leave! So God would send one final plague...</i>
Scripture:	Exodus 12:1-13, 29-36.
Talk About:	<p>1. Why is this story called "The Passover"?</p> <p>2. Can you remember God's promise to Abraham? What parts of God's promise to Abraham do we see beginning to be fulfilled?</p> <p>3. Why do you think God required blood to be put on the Israelites door posts in order to be saved? What does blood represent, what does it mean?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood represents life; it was from a pure lamb • One the door it represented that they were one of God's people <p>4. What does this story teach us about God?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He keeps his promises (covenant, warnings to Pharaoh). • He is able to deliver and protect all who cry out to him; He is powerful. • He cares for people; He is the source of grace • He wants to use people to represent him; He allows suffering. • His ways are sometimes hard for us to understand at first (he warned Pharaoh.). • He punishes injustice and wrong. <p>5. How does this story relate to Jesus, who will be our Savior in the future? (John 1:29-34)</p>
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, you are holy and have no sin. Thank you for showing us through the Israelites that you hear our prayers, and you have a plan to save us. Thank you for giving us Jesus to remove our sins and be saved, just like you gave the Israelites a way to be saved. Please help me to trust in you.</i>
Acts of Service:	God answered the prayer of the Israelites. God can use each of us to help answer someone else's prayer. Maybe someone is lonely this Christmas so they are praying for a friend. Maybe someone is hungry, and they are praying for something to eat. What does God want you to do? <u>As a family</u> , do a chore, or give a gift, or food to someone you can think of that might need something or need to feel special. But you have to do it anonymously! (That means no one knows you did it).

DECEMBER 14TH

Ornament:	10 Commandments
Reading:	<i>It wasn't long after the Israelites left Egypt that they began complaining again to Moses. They complained about not having enough to eat and not having water to drink. They kept complaining, "Why did you make us leave Egypt? We had plenty to eat and drink there. Did you lead us into the wilderness to die?" Moses cried out to God, "What am I going to do with these people? They're about to kill me!" So each time the Israelites ran out of food or water God provided for them through a miracle; he sent birds to their camp for them to eat, he covered the ground with a flaky bread-like food, and he even made water pour out of a rock for them to drink! Two months after leaving Egypt, the Israelites set up camp at the bottom of Mount Sinai. Moses climbed up the mountain so he could meet with God. There, God spoke to him saying, "Tell my people this, 'You saw how I carried you on eagles' wings and rescued you from Egypt. Now if you obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my treasured people—a kingdom of priests—set apart to represent me.'" So God gave Moses as list of 10 Commandments for them to follow. When Moses came down the mountain he told the people what God said. They all agreed, "We will do everything that God asks us to do. Really, everything."</i>
Scripture:	Deuteronomy 5:1-22
Talk About:	<p>1. What is a covenant? Who was it given to first?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A promise • The covenant God made with Abraham. <p>3. Do you think the Israelites could keep their side of the covenant? How?</p> <p>4. Would God remove his covenant if they did not obey him?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially—he may not bless them and protect them, but ultimately he chooses to save them to show how great he is, not always basing this on how sinless they are. <p>5. Which of these commandments do you think is the hardest to keep?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may want to ask some specific questions about each of the commandments <p>6. What do God's Commandments and Laws show us about him? How do they show us His love?</p> <p>7. What happens when we follow in God's ways? Where have you seen this in the stories so far? Look at the ornaments on your Jesse Tree to help you remember.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's people must live a certain way to reflect the character of the holy God. • God wants us to be close to Him so He gives us guidelines to follow. He wants the best for our lives.
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you for loving us. Thank you for giving us the Bible, so we can follow your instructions to protect us and show us your love. Thank you for wanting to know each of us individually, and giving us a way to know more about who you are.</i>
Acts of Service:	God gives us His Word so we can know Him better, and because He loves us. Think of one "rule" that is hard for you to follow. Ask God to help you be obedient to Him and follow whatever He is asking. Find a Bible verse and memorize that today to help you do what God says. (Examples: John 13:34; Matthew 22:37; James 1:27; Philippians 4:8)

DECEMBER 15

Ornament:	Cow or candle (to symbolize sacrifices)
Reading:	<p><i>God had just given the people of Israel specific instructions about how to live in his ways and remain close to him in a covenant relationship. During one of Moses' trips up the mountain, God also gave Moses specific instructions about how to build a holy tent called the Tabernacle. God said, "Build a special place for me to live among the people I love." So Moses gathered the very best craftsmen and workers and they began building the Tabernacle in the center of their camp. The tent was divided into two rooms. The large outer room was called the Holy Place. Inside of this room was a stand that held seven oil lamps called a Menorah. These lamps burned day and night and symbolized God's constant protection and watch over his people. Next to this was a table with 12 loaves of bread on it, reminding them that God would always provide for their needs. Also in the Holy Place was a gold altar where incense burned. Incense reminded them of God's nearness and was also a symbol of their prayers rising to God.</i></p> <p><i>The second inner room was called the Holy of Holies. The people could not go into the Holy of Holies. A thick curtain hung from the ceiling of the tent all the way down to the floor, separating it from the Holy Place. This room contained a special wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant. Inside the Ark were the stone tablets that God wrote on and gave to Moses. On top of the Ark was a gold cover called the Mercy Seat where the presence of God would come. When the Israelites finished building the Tabernacle, God showed his presence was there by covering the top of it with a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. Whenever the cloud or fire would move, they would pack up camp and follow it.</i></p> <p><i>God told the people of Israel, "When you realize you have sinned, you must confess it and bring an offering to me. Then I will remove your sins and forgive you." Because of his love for the Israelites, God was providing a way for them to substitute the life of an animal that was pure and without defects, in place of their own—a life for a life. So everyday people would bring sacrifices to God in the courtyard of the Tabernacle. This system of sacrifice continued for hundreds of years, but these sacrifices were only a symbol of what was to come. God was preparing a final sacrifice that would pay for the world's sins... once and for all.</i></p>
Scripture:	The story above is a summary of: Exodus 25-40; Leviticus 1–5, 12–23; Numbers 3, 9–14, 27–33. You can read all verses or pick a few to read.
Talk About:	<p>1. What was the purpose of the sacrifices that people brought to God?</p> <p>2. What was the purpose of the Tabernacle?</p> <p>3. What does this story teach us about God?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Holy and will not allow sin to remain in his presence. Not just anyone could enter the Holy of Holies—only the high priest and then only once a year, and then only if he had first paid for his sin! • God is the source of grace. He makes a way for man to come to him and for his sin to be paid for. • God wants us to listen to him and live in his ways—not our own. • God wants us to come to him with great respect and awe. • God loves his people and desires to be near them. <p>4. How do you think this story points toward the birth of Jesus and why God will send him to earth?</p>
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, I praise you because you are holy and perfect. Thank you for loving me and making a way for me to be close to you through giving us your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you that we don't have to give sacrifices anymore, but we just have to believe in Jesus and we are forgiven.</i>
Acts of Service:	At Christmas time we often start thinking about our long Christmas lists, and what we really want for ourselves. What is something that you could give up for God? Think of something you really want. Think of a way to give that to someone else instead. Ask God to bless your "sacrifice" and use it to show His love to someone who needs it.

DECEMBER 16TH

Ornament: Red rope or cord

Reading: *After 40 years of wandering in the desert, the Israelites were ready to enter the land that God had promised them. Moses had died, and God had appointed Joshua to lead the people. They sent two men as spies into the land to find out more about it. It was very dangerous to go into the land; if the people who ruled the land had found the two Israelites they would have been killed, but listen to what happened to these spies....*

Scripture: Joshua 2:1-21, 6:1-5 and 6:15-22

Talk About:

- 1. From all the stories we've read, what common themes run through all of the stories?**
 - God wants us to live closely with him—listening and obeying.
 - He provides the best possible way of life for us to live.
 - God wants to rescue his creation and bring them back to himself. He will go to amazing lengths to accomplish this.
 - Our sins require sacrifice—a life for a life.
- 2. What have we learned about what humans are like? Where have we seen that?**
- 3. What have we learned about what God is like? Where have we seen that?**
 - He does what is good, right, and perfect—he is holy.
 - He is powerful, creative, knows all things, has control over the elements, punishes rebellion, keeps his promises, does not allow evil to remain with him, provides a way of forgiveness, loves his creation, provides us with the best way to live, wants to protect us and bless us, wants us to continue his blessings, and much more!

Prayer: *Dear God, help us understand that you are more powerful than anything we can think of. Give us courage to do what you tell us to do. Give us courage to help others.*

Acts of Service: Brave Rahab was courageous and honored God because she believed in God's power. In return, the Israelites protected Rahab and her family, and so did God. **Pick one thing that takes courage to do for someone else today, and do it. Ask God to help you do it! Share your courageous act with each other.**

DECEMBER 17TH

Ornament:	Oil or tree stump/branch
Reading:	<p><i>As the Israelites entered the land, God told them to drive out all of the people who lived there because they were full of evil. But the Israelites didn't listen and eventually started worshipping the false gods of the people who remained in Canaan. This led into many other sins. Because of their disobedience, God removed his protection and allowed other nations to come into Canaan and overpower them. As they were defeated, the people of Israel began to suffer, so they begged God for help and forgiveness. God once again forgave them and sent leaders, called judges, to lead them in defeating their enemies. (These are not like judges we have today, but more like generals). Battle after battle, Israel conquered their enemies at every border. In victory the people would worship God, but soon after that the people would turn away from God again and live their own way. Unfortunately, this became a pattern from generation to generation... the people of Israel would come to God and worship him when they needed help, but when things were going well, they returned to worshipping other things. This was a time where everyone did what was right in their own eyes. Later on there were kings that were appointed by God to rule over the Israelites. God also gave people prophets who reminded the people of what God wanted them to do. God wanted them to be good and kind to others. The prophets told the people to worship only the one true God. The prophets also reminded people that God had promised a savior. The prophets also gave the people hope that no matter how bad things might be here on earth, God had not forgotten them. God was going to send a child who would grow to be the world's savior.</i></p> <p><i>God has a plan for you. Even when we are young, God sees into our hearts and knows what kind of people we are and what kind of people we will be. A man named Jesse had seven sons; the youngest was named David. When David grew up, he became a great king of Israel. God had a plan for Jesse and for his son David, even before they were born. Jesus was also part of Jesse and David's family tree, born many, many years after David. People waited a long time for the birth of the savior. The season of Advent is a season of waiting for us, too. We wait for Christmas, the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is hard to be patient, especially when we are waiting for something wonderful like Christmas! But it is important to learn to be patient, and to trust that God has a plan for us, too. Most of the grown-ups who saw David thought he was just a kid who tended the sheep, but while David was still a child God chose him to be a king. God's servant Samuel poured oil on David's head and anointed him as the future king of Israel. God has a plan for each of us. God told the prophet Samuel that from the line of David, he would send a savior to save the people, a Messiah. The Israelites remembered that prophesy and would pass it on from generation to generation.</i></p>
Scripture:	Read Isaiah 11:1-3; (The summary above is from 1 Samuel 16:1-13; 2 Samuel, 2 Kings, Prophecies from Isaiah 7, 9, 40, 53, 61, Psalm 22, Micah 5)
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the pattern that the Israelites got into? 2. What was the role of the prophets? What did the prophets foretell about the Messiah? 3. What common themes run through all of the stories? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants us to live closely with him—listening and obeying. • He provides the best possible way of life for us to live. • God wants to rescue his creation and bring them back to himself. He will go to amazing lengths to accomplish this. • Our sins require sacrifice—a life for a life. 4. What have we learned about what humans are like? Look at the ornaments on your Jesse Tree to remind you. 5. What have we learned about what God is like? Where have we seen that? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He does what is good, right, and perfect—he is holy. • He is powerful, creative, knows all things, has control over the elements, punishes rebellion, keeps his promises, does not allow evil to remain with him, provides a way of forgiveness, loves his creation, provides us with the best way to live, wants to protect us and bless us, wants us to continue his blessings, and much more!
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, thank you that you always have a plan. Thank you that you made each of us special, and we can live our lives every day to honor you. Teach us your ways. Help us to trust in You.</i>
Acts of Service:	Not many of us will be rulers like King David, but each of us can serve God in important ways. It's important to listen for God's call and to find ways to honor Him in our lives. Listen to the people in your family today and see if you can hear them talk about a need they have (Ex: do dishes, clean a closet, help with homework). Meet that need. Tomorrow when you hang your next ornament, tell each other how you served God and met a need.

DECEMBER 18

Ornament:	Crown or scepter
Reading:	God is at work in everything. Sometimes things don't seem to make any sense to us at all, but later we understand why God put us in a certain place at a certain time. Esther was a beautiful woman, and because she was beautiful she became queen. But because she was brave, she saved the Jewish people from death. Esther's uncle told her of the danger to her and to her people, and he helped her to plan how to save the people. At first she didn't think she could help, but her uncle reminded her that everyone is important. God had put Esther in the palace for a special job. Her bravery saved many lives.
Scripture:	Read Esther 4.
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think Ester was brave? Why or why not? 2. What will you remember most about this story? 3. Do you think you need to be brave to share the greatest Gift with other people? Why or why not? 4. Look at the Jesse Tree ornaments. What patterns do you notice about God in these stories?
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, you know everything. Please open our eyes to the plans that you have for each of us. Thank you for the plan and promise you have for each one of us.</i>
Acts of Service:	God used Esther to do a special job and save the Jewish people. What is a special job God has for you to do? Who is someone God put in your life that needs to know about Him? Make a Christmas card with your favorite Bible verse and give it to that person.

DECEMBER 19TH

Ornament:	Lion
Reading:	<i>At the time of this story, it was against the law for Daniel to worship God, but Daniel knew that God is the only true God, and he would not stop worshiping God. Daniel was punished for breaking the law, but God protected Daniel. People learned of God's power because of Daniel, and many others worshiped God because Daniel had trusted and honored God.</i>
Scripture:	Daniel 6:1-23
Talk About:	<p>1. What questions do you have about the story? What do you wonder about?</p> <p>2. What will you remember most about this story?</p> <p>3. What does this story tell your about people? About God?</p> <p>4. What patterns do you notice about God in these stories?</p> <p>God wants to be the most important thing in our lives: more important than our family, more important than our things, more important than even our own lives. Daniel understood that; he worshiped God even though it might cost him everything, even his own life</p>
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, it is not always easy to love you more than anything else. Help us to trust and honor you each day.</i>
Acts of Service:	God was with Daniel even in the dark lion's den. Turn off all the lights in the room except the Christmas lights. Notice how the darkness makes the light seem even brighter. Thank God for being your light, even in dark times. (Read Isaiah 9:2. This is a prophecy that someday Jesus would be the great light for all people.)

DECEMBER 20TH

Ornament:	Town of Bethlehem; or a light
Reading:	The family tree of Jesus grew wider and bigger. Some were shepherds, some were princesses, some were kings, and some were prophets. The people continued to sin, and often forgot about God. But God did not forget about them, or the promise He had made to Abraham all of those years ago. Often God does things that surprise us. God chose the small town of Bethlehem for the birthplace of Jesus. In Bible times, most rulers in important families were born in bigger cities, but Jesus was born into an ordinary family in a small village. God chose Bethlehem many years before Jesus was born. The prophet Micah wrote that Bethlehem would be the place where the Savior would be born. No one thought Bethlehem was a very special or important town. Even though the prophet had said Jesus would be born there, the town of Bethlehem wasn't ready for the birth of Jesus. They didn't listen to God's special words. There was no place prepared for God's Son to be born. The prophet Isaiah also told about Jesus' birth hundreds of years before it happened.
Scripture:	Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; Micah 5:2-5
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you think you would have responded to these words? 2. What do these verses tell us about God? 3. What do you think the people of Bethlehem thought about these words? 4. What does it mean to you that Jesus is our light? 5. How do these words fit with the other stories we have read? Look at the ornaments on the Jesse Tree to help you remember.
Prayer:	Holy God, you are a perfect God and you have a plan for us. Even thousands of years ago, you told us what would happen. Help us to always be ready to listen to you and serve you. Thank you for sending Jesus to be our light, that is brighter than any darkness.
Acts of Service:	No one in Bethlehem got ready for Jesus' birth. How are you getting ready for the celebration of Jesus' birth? How can you tell others about what God has done for you? Give a gift to someone that tells about the real meaning of Christmas. (EX: It can be a plate of cookies and you write down the Bible verses, or a book about Jesus, or something with Jesus' name).

DECEMBER 21ST

Ornament:	Baby (or locust or honey for John the Baptist)
Reading:	<i>God spoke to prophets like Habakkuk, Malachi, and Isaiah, but then He was quiet for a very long time. For four hundred years the people did not hear from God or see angels. Then suddenly it was finally time for God's great plan and gift to be heard. After all the years an angel appeared and the promise of God began to unfold. Listen to this story....</i>
Scripture:	Luke 1:5-25, 57-80
Talk About:	1. What questions do you have about the story? What do you wonder about? 2. The angel told Zechariah that John would get the people's hearts ready for the greatest Gift ever! How do you get your heart ready for Jesus? 3. Why do you think this was part of the story of Jesus' birth? What does it tell us about God?
Prayer:	<i>God, thank you for giving us yourself as the greatest Gift. Help us to believe that you did not ever withhold any good thing. Let us believe that Jesus is our great gift. Please prepare our hearts to be ready for the gift of Jesus.</i>
Acts of Service:	How do you get your heart ready for Jesus? You come just as you are. Talk about why you think the miracle of Jesus is one of the greatest miracles of all. As a family, sing a Christmas song that reminds you of the miracle of Christmas.

DECEMBER 22ND

Ornament:	heart
Reading:	<i>Now 400 years had passed since God had spoken to his people. The Israelites, called Jews, had been under the control of other nations for hundreds of years. They were now ruled by the Romans, the most powerful empire that had ever existed. The Jews were still waiting and hoping for a king who would come to save them and lead them into victory to create their own nation. Finally, God sent the angel to tell of John the Baptist' birth. Then, He sent an angel to a young woman named Mary in the town of Nazareth. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph who was a descendant of King David. God would use her to bring His heart to the world....His son, Jesus.</i>
Scripture:	Luke 1:26-38
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we learn about Mary? 2. What do we learn about God? 3. Who was Jesus a descendant of? How might this be important? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David—he's the promised king • Abraham—he's the promised one through whom all the nations would be blessed
Prayer:	<i>Dear God, nothing is impossible with you. Thank you for having a plan to send Jesus to earth for us. Thank you for using all types of people to make your plan happen. Please use me to tell others about you, and about the gift of Jesus this Christmas.</i>
Acts of Service:	Mary said yes to God, and she became part of His amazing plan to save the world. What is something God is asking you to do that you could say "yes" to? Decide as a family what you will do to help share God's love - buy a gift, share a meal, put up lights for someone? When we listen to God, we make space in our heart for the amazing gift of Jesus in us.

DECEMBER 23

Ornament:	Hammer or nails (for Joseph)
Reading:	Yesterday we talked about Jesus' mother, Mary. Jesus also had an earthly father named Joseph, who was a carpenter. After a long day of work, Joseph laid down his hammer and nails and drifted into a deep sleep, where suddenly an angel flashed into his dream and told the many-many-great-grandson of King David, that Mary was expecting a baby – and that baby was God's own son!
Scripture:	Matthew 1: 18-25
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do we learn about Joseph?2. What do we learn about God?3. What would Jesus' name mean?4. Who was Jesus a descendant of? How might this be important?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• David—he's the promised king• Abraham—he's the promised one through whom all the nations would be blessed5. When is it hard for you to remember that God is with you?
Prayer:	Dear God, you are powerful and have a plan. When you call us, help us to hear your voice and obey.
Acts of Service:	Christmas isn't about getting something new and shiny. It is about God doing whatever it takes to be with us – and our doing whatever it takes to be with Him. One way we can hear God and know what he wants us to do is to read the Bible. Memorize the Bible verse: <i>"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."</i> Matthew 1:21

DECEMBER 24TH

Ornament:	Angel or shepherd
Reading:	After years of waiting, the promised Messiah was going to come, and hardly anyone realized what was happening. All of heaven, all the angels, all the span of history had been waiting for this moment. Listen to this part of the story....
Scripture:	Luke 2:1-20
Talk About:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What can we learn from the shepherds and how they responded to the angel?2. What else did you hear in this story that reminds you of what the prophets said about the promised Messiah?4. What do you imagine people thought when they had been told the Messiah had been born? Would you have expected his entrance to the world to be different?
Prayer:	<i>Thank you God, for sending us the most wonderful gift, your son Jesus Christ.</i>
Acts of Service:	Spend some time today thinking about what it means to have Jesus here with you. How does He make a difference in your life? We want to prepare our hearts for Jesus, not just at Christmas, but every day. Is there something you need to take a break from for awhile to make more space for Jesus? Is there something God is asking of you? Write down the gift that you want to give Jesus for this coming year. Wrap it in a box or put it in an envelope, and place it under the Jesse Tree. Give it to God this year, and next year at Christmas open it up and remember.

DECEMBER 25TH

Ornament:	Star or light at the top of tree
Scripture:	Luke 2:11-19
Talk About:	1. What do you think it means that Jesus is the greatest Gift? If God sent Jesus to give the world a great gift, why do you think we focus so much on what we get at Christmas? 2. What can you do to unwrap more of Jesus in the coming year?
Prayer:	<i>Thank you God, for sending us the most wonderful gift, your son Jesus Christ.</i>
Acts of Service:	As you place the final ornament on your Jesse Tree, look at each one and remember all that God did to bring His plan for Jesus' birth to come. See if you can tell the story for each ornament. Thank Jesus for being your greatest Gift – and pray that He will help you light this world on fire with His love.