

The Jesus Journey Devotional:

Day 1: Read Genesis 3:14-15 - Man's offspring will be in conflict against Satan and his forces

Read Aloud: Similar to every good story, we start this one at the beginning, the very beginning. When everything was going well in life. However, sin entered into the world through man's disobedience to God and ruined what was once perfect. Because of Satan's role in this disobedience, God curses him in this passage and states that the offspring from Eve will be in conflict with Satan and those who follow him.

Ask the following questions:

1. Has any descendant of Eve ever been successful in defeating the forces of Satan(evil)?
2. Who do you think this passage is referring to? The one who will bruise the head of Satan? How will they accomplish this?

Day 2: Read Genesis 22:15-18 – all nations will be blessed

Read Aloud: Abraham. The father of nations. Bound by a covenant with God Himself is destined to bless all the nations of the earth.

Ask the following questions:

1. How do you think this blessing will be accomplished?
2. Can we trust promises that the Lord gives us? Why or why not?

Day 3: Read Isaiah 7:14 - virgin birth

Read Aloud: The virgin birth of Jesus. Predicted years before His birth. Shows the unmistakable hand of God moving in the lives of man.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think the virgin birth is important?
2. Do you think the name Immanuel has any important significance?
3. Immanuel means "God with us." Why was this the name given to Jesus?

Day 4: Read Micah 5:2* - Bethlehem location of birth

Read Aloud: The location of Jesus' birth predicted! Who would have guessed it?

Ask the following questions:

1. Do you think Bethlehem was a small or large town?
2. How important was a person's place of origin back then? Do you think being from Bethlehem was a good thing?

*Read Micah 5:3-5 for additional statements about Jesus

Day 5: Read Jeremiah 23:5-6 - "Behold, *the* days are coming," declares the Lord, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice

and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will live securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The Lord Our Righteousness.'

Read Aloud: Similar to Abraham, David is promised by God that one of his descendants will reign as king righteously and will remain on the throne forever (see also 1 Chronicles 17:11-14). This promise is ultimately fulfilled by Jesus!

Ask the following questions:

1. Most do not live under a king's rule anymore, but how would you feel about having a king rule who was just, righteous, and wise?
2. Do you think Jesus lived up to His name of, "The Lord Our Righteousness?"

Day 6: Read Isaiah 9:6-7 - For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace. On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of armies will accomplish this.

Read Aloud: What an incredible child that will be given!

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think so many names are given to Jesus in this passage? Are these names that you would want said of you?
2. Take some time and review each name and what it says about who Jesus is.

Day 7: Read Isaiah 35:5-6 - Then the eyes of those who are blind will be opened, And the ears of those who are deaf will be unstopped. Then those who limp will leap like a deer, And the tongue of those who cannot speak will shout for joy. For waters will burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

Read Aloud: What an amazing prophecy about the ministry of Jesus! These miracles that Jesus performed helped show that He was who He said He was.

Ask the following questions:

1. Do you believe that Jesus performed miracles in His ministry? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever seen a miracle take place? If yes, discuss the situation, if no, look at the miracles described in the Gospels and how they relate to this prophecy.

Day 8: Read Isaiah 53:3 - He was despised and abandoned by men, A man of great pain and familiar with sickness; And like one from whom *people* hide their faces, He was despised, and we had no regard for Him.

Read Aloud: With such an incredible man (as described in the past prophecies) what a huge turnaround in description!

Ask the following questions:

1. Considering how Jesus is described in the previous prophecies, why do you think He will be treated this way?
2. Do you think you would care for people who treated you the way it is described here?

Day 9: Read Isaiah 53:5-6 - But He was pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our well-being *was laid* upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed. 6 All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the wrongdoing of us all to fall on Him.

Read Aloud: Although Jesus was God incarnate who came to this earth, righteous, just, loving, He was sent to suffer and die for us.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think it necessary for Jesus to suffer and die for us?
2. How should Jesus dying for our sins affect us? Should it change us?

Day 10: Read Isaiah 6:9-10 - 'Keep on listening, but do not understand; And keep on looking, but do not gain knowledge.' 10 Make the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes blind, So that they will not see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed."

Read Aloud: Although Jesus came and ministered to this world, much of His teaching was ignored and rejected.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think His teaching was so rejected? Who would reject it?
2. Do you think God had a purpose in the rejection of Jesus' teaching?

Day 11: Read Isaiah 11:10 - Then on that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal flag for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious.

Read Aloud: For a more complete description of Jesus - read Isaiah 11:1-10, Jesus will ultimately bring all nations to himself!

Ask the following questions:

1. Are you thankful that Jesus made a way for all people to come to Him? Why or why not?
2. Do you look forward to the day that Jesus will rule all things? Why or why not?

Day 12: Read Isaiah 61:1 - The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord anointed me To bring good news to the humble; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim release to captives And freedom to prisoners;

Read Aloud: Jesus came to help those who suffering and to release those who were bound in the power of sin!

Ask the following questions:

1. Do you think this type of purpose is an admirable purpose? Why or why not?
2. Do you think Jesus came to free physical prisoners? Why or why not?

Day 13: Read Daniel 7:13-14 - "I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a son of man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.¹⁴ And to Him was given dominion, honor, and a kingdom, so that all the peoples, nations, and *populations of all* languages might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.

Read Aloud: Jesus will have a dominion that will never pass away. A rule that will encompass all people for all of time!

Ask the following questions:

1. Do you look forward to the day when Jesus will reign over all people?
2. Who do you think will give Jesus the "dominion, honor, and a kingdom"? Why do you think it is given to Him?

Day 14: Read Matthew 1:1-2, 6, 16 - The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham: 2 Abraham fathered Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers 6 Jesse fathered David the king. David fathered Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.¹⁶ Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

Read Aloud: The genealogy of Christ clearly shows that He fulfilled the prophecies regarding his birth!

Ask the following questions:

1. Genealogies are very important! Especially for Jesus since it helped show that He is the Son of God! Do you think it is important to learn about the fulfilled prophecies surrounding Jesus' birth?
2. Why do you think genealogies were so important back then?

Story of Birth of Christ

Day 15: Read Luke 1:26-38 - Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you."²⁹ But she was very perplexed at *this* statement, and was pondering what kind of greeting this was.³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no

end.”³⁴ But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also the holy Child will be called the Son of God.³⁶ And behold, even your relative Elizabeth herself has conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called infertile is now in her sixth month.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, the Lord’s bond-servant; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Read Aloud: What an incredible interaction! Mary learns that she will bear the Son of God! The awaited Messiah!

Ask the following questions:

1. How do you think you would have reacted to seeing an angel?
2. In verse 37 we see that nothing is impossible with God. How should this impact the way we live? The way we pray?

Day 16: Matthew 1:18-21 - Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, since he was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.²⁰ But when he had thought this over, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.²¹ She will give birth to a Son; and you shall name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

Read Aloud: God intervenes all throughout the birth of Christ. God's hand clearly guided circumstances before, during and after the birth of Christ!

Ask the following questions:

1. How would you have reacted if you were Joseph?
2. The book of Matthew places special emphasis on the prophecies that come true through the life of Jesus. Why do you think that is?

Day 17: Matthew 1:22-25 - 22 Now all this took place so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled:²³ “Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and they shall name Him Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”²⁴ And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife,²⁵ but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he named Him Jesus.

Read Aloud: Obedience to the Lord's guidance is easy in theory, but difficult in practice. However, our obedience allows God to do incredible things through our lives! Thankfully Joseph obeyed God!

Ask the following questions:

1. Matthew places special emphasis on the prophecies that are fulfilled through the life of Jesus. Why do you think that is?

2. Talk about the meaning of the name Immanuel (God with us). What significance does that name have?

Day 18: Luke 2:1-7 - Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.² This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ And all *the people* were on their way to register for the census, each to his own city.⁴ Now Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,⁵ in order to register along with Mary, who was betrothed to him, and was pregnant.⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to give birth.⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Read Aloud: Notice how perfectly events came together for Jesus to be born in the exact town that was prophesied? Again, we clearly see the hand of God directing events!

Ask the following questions:

1. Traveling isn't easy. Especially when pregnant! How difficult do you think this journey was for them?
2. Giving birth isn't easy. How difficult must it have been to give birth in a stable?

Day 19: Luke 2:8-14 - In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock at night.⁹ And an angel of the Lord *suddenly* stood near them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.¹⁰ And *so* the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;¹¹ for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.¹² And this *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."¹³ And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army *of angels* praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased."

Read Aloud: The glorious announcement of the birth of Jesus Christ!

Ask the following questions:

1. Think about what it must have been like to witness angels praising and worshiping the Lord.
2. Why do you think God chose to announce Jesus' birth to shepherds?

Day 20: Luke 2:15-20 - When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem, then, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."¹⁶ And they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.¹⁷ When they had seen *Him*, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child.¹⁸ And all who heard it were amazed about the things which were told them by the shepherds.¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.²⁰ And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Read Aloud: The King of Kings enters into the world, and He is welcomed by shepherds!

Ask the following questions:

1. If you were one of the shepherds, would you have shared what you saw that night with others?
2. How do you think Mary and Joseph were feeling at this point?

Following Christ's Birth

Day 21: Matthew 2:1-6 - After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Read Aloud: Again we see the echoes of the prophecies surrounding Jesus' birth. Yet now we see King Herod, disturbed by the news of the birth of Jesus.

Ask the following questions:

1. How did the wise men learn about the birth of Jesus? Do the wise men have ties with any other biblical character?
2. Note the difference in response between Herod and the shepherds from earlier. Why is there such a difference?

Day 22: Matthew 2:7-12 - Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Read Aloud: Notice the hand of God again as it directs the wise men.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think the wise men were warned?
2. The wise men must have been certain of the child's identity if they were worshiping him. What do you think made them so certain?

Day 23: Matthew 2:13-15 - When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and

his mother during the night and left for Egypt, 15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

Read Aloud: God shows up again to fulfill prophecy and to protect His son.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think Herod was going to try and kill Jesus?
2. Do you consider obedience to the Lord important? In this story, the obedience of Joseph meant the difference between life and death! How should this realization impact us?

Day 24: Matthew 2:16-18 - When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Read Aloud: How horrifying! This segment may seem out of place for this story but these types of things are exactly what Jesus came to stop. Evil came into the world, but Jesus came to redeem and to heal those affected by it.

Ask the following questions:

1. Why did Jesus Come?

Day 25: Read 1 John 3:8 - The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. **The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.**

Read Isaiah 61:1 - The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

Read John 10:10-11, 17-18 - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

THE TRUTH:

John 3:16-17 - For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Read Aloud: God sent His son for a reason! That is why we celebrate Christmas! God sent his son Jesus as the perfect gift and now we can bless others!

Ask the following questions:

1. Have you accepted Jesus as your savior? If not, talk with someone today!
2. Who will you share this good news with this season?