

# God With Us

## A Family Advent Celebration

Written by Katie Pawlak

for Annie Grace and Karis Joy

God With Us: A Family Advent Celebration © 2014

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

[www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)

The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™







## December 1: *The Jesse Tree*

Isaiah 11:1-2

Long, long ago, there was a big problem. God's people had stopped trusting and obeying Him and their hearts were far from His. Like Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, God's people thought they could find wisdom and happiness on their own, apart from God. They were forced to leave their homeland, and what used to be a great kingdom became a small group of wanderers. God, however, loved His people deeply and He made them a promise. He sent His messenger Isaiah to tell the people that God had a plan to send Someone who would save them from destruction. A man in Jesse's family would come with wisdom, power, and strength to lead God's people back to Him.

God's people waited a long time for their true King, Jesus, to be born. Advent is a season of waiting and remembering for us, too. The word "advent" means "coming." We get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth during Advent, when God came to earth in the form of a baby. We also remember that Jesus promises to come back again in glory to establish a kingdom of justice and peace; this is the second Advent. As we look forward to Christmas, we learn to be patient and to trust the plan God has for us. God shows His love and faithfulness to us over and over again as we remember what He has done and what He is still doing for His people.

Father in Heaven, thank You that You have a plan for Your people and for each one of us. Thank You for sending Jesus as a baby to become the Savior for each one of us. Help us to be patient and thankful as we look forward to celebrating Christmas.

### Branching Out

1. What is your favorite part of the Christmas season?
2. How do we try to find happiness apart from God? Where do you think God wants us to find true happiness and wisdom?
3. Isaiah prophesied that a "branch" from Jesse's family tree would grow and bear fruit. If you have a copy of your family tree, ask someone in your family to show it to you. Ask them to tell you about your relatives. In what ways are you similar to or different from them?







## December 2: *Creation*

Genesis 1:1, 27, 31

In the beginning, before the earth or people or plants or animals existed, there was only God. The Bible tells us that Jesus was God. He was with God when the world was created: “the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning” (John 1:1-2). The “Word” was another name for Jesus, God’s Son. Togetherness was important to God from the very start.

God created the entire world – He spoke, and day and night, sky and ground, plants, animals, water, air, and people were created. The world was perfect when He created it, because God Himself is perfect. He loved everything He made with His whole heart. God created man and woman to be His close friends- to walk and talk and enjoy His creation together with Him. Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, loved talking with God. Their hearts were so full with His love and peace that there was no room for fear or sadness. They spent their days caring for the plants and animals God had placed in their garden home. God saw everything that He created and said that it was very good.

Creator God, thank You for making our world and everything in it. Fill our hearts with peace as we remember that You created us with Your perfect love.

### Branching Out

1. Make a paper “earth”: Color a coffee filter or paper towel with blue and green washable marker. Lightly spray with water, and watch the colors mix. Let it dry and display it somewhere special.
2. God created the world, and said that it was good. Talk about something you have made with your hands. It can be a drawing, art project, craft, food, or something entirely different. Would you call it good?
3. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?







## December 3: *Adam and Eve*

Genesis 3:12-13    Isaiah 53:6

Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, lived closely with God. They spent their time talking with God and enjoying the world He created until one day when they disobeyed the instructions He gave them. God gave Adam and Eve permission to eat from any tree in the garden of Eden, except for the fruit from a specific tree in the middle of the garden. Instead of listening to God, they chose to listen to the evil serpent Satan and ate the fruit anyway. Eating the fruit and leaving the boundaries God created to keep them safe brought sin into God's perfect world.

Adam and Eve felt ashamed and hid from God. Their sin angered God, but God kept loving them. Still, God had to discipline Adam and Eve for disobeying. God sent Adam and Eve out of His beautiful garden as a consequence for their disobedience and to protect them from living forever in a world that was now stained by sin. Since the beginning of time, God's love for His people has been so strong that He can't stop loving us, even when we sin and wander away from Him like lost sheep. God made a plan for our sin to be forgiven and for our hearts to be fixed forever. He would send a Savior to His people to bring forgiveness for their sin and to redeem them back to a right relationship with Him.

Loving Father, we all sin by choosing our own way. Thank You for sending the Good Shepherd, Jesus, to lead us back to You.

### Branching Out

1. Create an art project using an apple- cut an apple in half. Dip the cut side in a thin layer of paint and stamp onto a blank card or piece of paper. Talk about what happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate fruit from the tree in the garden of Eden.
2. Do you think you would have eaten the apple? Why or why not?
3. How do boundaries and instructions keep us safe? Talk about the guidelines your family has in place and how obeying them can protect you.