



ADVENT

Reading

This year, Advent begins on Sunday, November 27, and ends on Saturday, December 24. To help you celebrate each day of Advent, we've written a Nativity story and divided it into 25 days. Each night, read the previous night's portion of the story, and then add a new line for that day. As you get further in the month, you might choose to leave out key parts and allow your children to fill in the blanks.

Print or copy these story sections, cut them out and create a fun way to display them in your home. You could put them in envelopes, small bags or boxes. Or glue them to large tags and use clothespins to hang them on twine. Be sure to number each one to help build the anticipation for Christmas Day.

If you have a gathering of friends or family at your home, you could also use this to tell the whole story together. Cut apart all of the readings and pass them out or have people draw the readings from a container. Then take turns sharing the nativity story as each person reads their portion of the story.

CAPTURING THE SEASON

1. A promise had been given. A deal had been made. God wanted to live among His people again. A Redeemer would be sent!

4. The timing was perfect. God had been silent, not speaking through a prophet, priest, or king, for 400 years. God's people were waiting.

7. God had chosen to use Mary in His plan. He saw her beauty both inside and out.

10. So Mary put her faith in God. She said, "I am God's servant. I will do whatever He asks me to do."

13. Mary and Joseph searched high and low looking for a place to stay, but there wasn't a room for them.

16. They named Him "Immanuel—God has come to live with us." And that was exactly the truth!

19. The angel told them, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide."

22. The shepherds talked amongst themselves. They said, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what God has revealed to us!" They hurried off, leaving everything behind, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

25. Nothing would ever be the same. Jesus entered the world that night as a baby, but He grew into a man who gave His life for us all. All we have to do is believe!

2. How would you have sent the Savior of the world? Would you send a mighty warrior King? Would everyone bow when they saw Him? Would they stand at attention and listen to His every word? Would there be celebration and fanfare?

5. God searched the earth for just the right people to carry out His plan. He chose a young girl named Mary, who was engaged to a man named Joseph. Joseph was the great-great-great-great-great grandson of King David.

8. Gabriel told Mary that God had a surprise for her: "You will have a baby, and His name will be Jesus! He will be God's own Son; He is The Promise!"

11. Just about the time that Mary was ready to have her baby, Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. Everyone had to travel to the town of their ancestors to be counted.

14. One of the innkeepers showed them the way to a place where animals were kept. There, in the silence of night, God delivered His wonderful gift and fulfilled the promise He had made to His people. Jesus had arrived!

17. Above the stable that night there was a large star in the sky, one that shined brighter than all the others. God placed it there so everyone would know that His Son had been born.

20. The angel continued, "A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah. This is what you're to look for—a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

23. The shepherds knelt on the dirt floor next to the baby. Seeing was believing—it was exactly as the angels had said.

3. God's ways aren't our ways. He had a plan—a good and perfect plan. His entrance into the world would cause us to have to use great faith to believe it. It was a miracle—and what else would we expect from Him?

6. One day, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that God was very pleased with her. Mary was afraid at first, but the angel reassured her and told her that she had found favor with God.

9. Mary felt that all of this was just too amazing to believe, but Gabriel reminded her that nothing is impossible for God.

12. Mary and Joseph had to go to the town of Bethlehem, the town from where King David came. While they were there, the time came for Mary to give birth.

15. Mary and Joseph wrapped Him up and laid Him in a manger—a feeding trough for the animals. Mary and Joseph smiled and thanked God for giving them front-row seats to watch His plan come to life.

18. That night there were shepherds in the fields nearby. They were watching over their sheep when, suddenly, an angel appeared to them. At first, they were frightened.

21. All at once, a huge group of angels filled the sky and said, "Glory to God, and peace to all men and women on earth!" Then, as quickly as they appeared, all the angels left.

24. God's Promise—the One that they had heard about their entire lifetime—was finally here. Jesus had come to earth to save us. God had sent His one and only Son!