

PUT *CHRIST* BACK INTO YOUR *CHRISTMAS* PREPARATIONS...

**This Advent, decorate a *Jesse Tree*
and
take your family on a journey through the Old Testament!**

WHAT IS THE JESSE TREE?

The Jesse Tree is a study of Bible stories that trace the ancestors of Jesus from the creation of the world to His birth on Christmas Day. The Jesse Tree idea was inspired by God's promise that 'there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse' (Is 11:1). Jesse was King David's father and, thus, an ancestor on Jesus' family tree.

Each story you read from the Bible, one for each day of Advent, reveals to you and your children God's promises and how His faithful people waited and prepared a long time for the coming of the Messiah. Each ornament, or symbol, that you place on the Jesse Tree tells the story of Jesus' heritage.

This Jesse Tree uses a felt banner and tree that is decorated with bright and colorful felt symbols, one for each day of Advent. Each day during Advent, you read a Bible story with your family about the ancestors of Jesus. Each story is represented by a felt symbol that you put on the tree. It's a beautiful way to share the Scriptures with children during Advent. Since they love to 'touch-and-feel-to-make-things-real', the symbols are a tangible interpretation of each day's reading.

We recommend that the reading be done as a family at the same time each day, such as during a family meal or at bedtime. Create your own tradition of reading, placing the symbols on the tree, reviewing previous symbols, etc.

Feel free to modify this Jesse Tree to fit your family! Over time you can incorporate other favorite Old Testament characters or change symbols to have more meaning.

Preparing for the Christmas season is so hectic these days. We spend so much time preparing our homes (shopping, baking, decorating, and cleaning) that we forget to prepare our hearts for the coming of our Lord. Advent celebrates the waiting and gives us time to prepare for the Messiah. Decorating the Jesse Tree is one way to learn how God prepared the hearts of His people for the coming of Jesus and to prepare our hearts—as a family—for the coming of Jesus on Christmas Day!