

God gives to the Hebrews a wonderful counselor? Mighty God? Everlasting Father? Prince of Peace?

Tuesday, January 3: Read Proverbs 30:4. How does this prophecy point toward Jesus? Read Isaiah 35:5-6 and it's fulfillment by Jesus in Matthew 11:5. Why is this cited as a prophecy Jesus fulfilled? An Internet search of "Prophecies fulfilled by Jesus" will bring up hundreds of these kinds of prophecies, written in the Old Testament and fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament. Why are these prophecies so important? How are they useful in determining who Jesus is who He said He is? How is it useful in believing the Bible is the word of God?

Wednesday, January 4: Take some time to day to pray one on one with each member of your family. Start by asking what is weighing heavy on their souls, what they are seeking God for help in and what they are thankful for. Then each person pray aloud for the other one in those things. For things of special concern, make a commitment to pray about them each day.

Thursday, January 5: Many people are convinced that the end of the world will come in 2012. Whether or not it will come this year, we as Christians need not fear the end of the world since it will be the beginning of our eternity with Jesus. Since this will likely be a topic that will come up over and over again this year, take some time to research what the Bible says about the end of the world. What did Jesus say about what we need to do to be ready? How can you use those conversations about the end of the world to help bring people to Christ?

Friday, January 6: Read Matthew 2:1-12. Today is called Epiphany, and it is the day traditionally set aside for celebrating the wise men visiting Jesus. First, look up the word "Magi" in the dictionary and see if it is similar or different to your traditional view of the wise men. Then look at verse 6. The wise men came looking for Jesus because of this prophecy. Look up the original prophesy in Micah 5:2,4. How does this original prophecy relate to Jesus?

Saturday, January 7: Take some time and reflect on the past three weeks of family devotions and on the Christmas season. What things did you learn? In what ways did you grow closer to Jesus? In what ways did you grow closer as a family? Pray that God uses those things to continue to grow you toward who He wants you to be. Then, take some time to look over the passages we've already covered on King David in "The Story" and prepare for tomorrow morning by reading the passages on King David that we'll be covering this week.

The Lineage of Jesus Family Devotions for Christmas

Sunday, December 18: The four weeks leading up to Christmas is a time the church traditionally calls "Advent". The word Advent also refers to the second coming of Christ. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, what things do you do to prepare for Christmas day? Are any of these things similar to what you would do to prepare for the coming of a king? Are there any things you should do before Christmas day to prepare yourself better for the coming of Jesus, the King of Kings?

Monday, December 19: Read Luke 2:8-12. Spend some time thinking about Jesus, the infant king. What usually goes on when a child of royalty is born? How is this different from the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth? Why do you think God chose such a humble beginning for King Jesus?

Tuesday, December 20: When we grow up hearing songs over and over again, like we do Christmas songs, we often listen to and sing the words without giving much thought to their meaning. Have each member of your family pick a Christ centered Christmas carol (Silent Night, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, etc.). Today and tomorrow look at the lyrics as if they were a poem. Look up any words that you don't know the meaning of in a dictionary. What is each line of the song saying?

Wednesday, December 21: Take the song you picked yesterday and try to find biblical passages that lyrics may have come from (biblegateway.com has an excellent search engine for this). Share with each other what you found out about your songs, then have a family sing along of all the songs you picked.

Thursday, December 22: Read John 1:1-5. Today is the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year. Many pagans celebrate this day and it is speculated that because of this pagan holiday, December 25 was chosen as the day to celebrate Jesus' birth. From the passage above, why is it appropriate that we celebrate Jesus' birth close to the darkest day of the year? As a family, sit in a completely dark room and light a single candle. Think about how Jesus is our light in a dark world. Have a time of prayer together and share with each other how Jesus has been your light.

Friday, December 23: Think about the holiday traditions in your family. What if one year, you didn't do them? What would Christmas be like if no one exchanged presents? If you didn't plan big parties and get

together? If you didn't have a Christmas tree or put up decorations? How would your celebration change? Do you see any things that distract you from the true meaning of the season? Were there any things that if you stopped doing them you would feel relieved? Are there any things that would ruin the season for you if you didn't do? Talk as a family about your Christmas traditions and your feelings about each one.

Consider adding or removing traditions next year if you see fit.

Saturday, December 24: Read Luke 2:8-14 and John 19:1-22.

When we look upon the tiny infant king born in a manger, we often forget that this same king will be beaten and murdered by the very people to whom He was originally given. Sometimes amid all the celebration of Christmas, we forget that we often reject the infant king just the same as the Jews did in John 19. Take some time as a family to talk and pray about just how incredible the gift of Jesus really is and how desperately each one of us needs it. Think about the true love that is shown at Christmas, that though we don't deserve the infant we are celebrating that night, God gave Him to us anyway, out of His deep love and longing for us.

Sunday, December 25: Read Luke 2:1-21 at some point during your day today. If you can, read it when around family or friends who are not believers and pray that God uses that as a conversation starter about Jesus. Then, make some time to not only sing Christmas carols together, but to truly worship the Lord. And show the love of Christ to one another.

Monday, December 26: Many people see Christmas day as the end of the holiday season, but traditionally, it is just the beginning. In fact, "the 12 days of Christmas" starts on Christmas day and goes until January 6th, the day that celebrates the three kings visiting Jesus. Make an effort to do something today to continue the Christmas celebration. It could be visiting someone who you didn't see Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. It could be a family movie night where you all watch a Christmas movie together. Not only will this continue to spread the warmth of the holiday, but it can also stave off Christmas "letdown", a sad and depressed feeling that many experience right after the holiday.

Friday, December 30: Think back to the people we have encountered in The Story so far. Who has foreshadowed the saving power of Jesus? We obviously can't save people from their sins like Jesus has, but we can follow the example of many of these Old Testament Hebrews and help be a savior for someone in need. Commit to helping one person, either individually or as a family and act as Jesus the Savior would in whatever

problem they may be facing, whether it be loneliness, hunger, needing a place to live, etc. or even in bringing the Good News of Jesus to them. Read Matthew 25:31-46 for inspiration.

Saturday, December 31: Either attend a New Year's Eve party or have your own celebration. It need not be big, but just a time to celebrate what God has done in your life the past year and the exciting things God has in store for you in the coming year. While you should take some time to celebrate, also make sure you set aside time to thank God for what He has provided you and to ask His favor and blessing on the coming year.

Tuesday, December 27: Many people say that the reason for exchanging gifts on Christmas is because God gave us the ultimate gift of Jesus. They seldom, though, sit down and think about what all the gift of Jesus really included. Take some time as a family to worship Jesus together (either by listening to or singing along with praise music, or just thanking God for everything He has blessed us with) and then make a list of what all God gave us when He gave us Jesus. Most people can say Jesus was the gift of love and salvation, but what else is in that gift?

Wednesday, December 28: Look at the lyrics to the song, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel". First, look up any unfamiliar words in the dictionary.

Who is singing this song? What situations are they describing in the song? Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 (Immanuel and Emmanuel are the same). Why is an "Emmanuel", or God with us, so important?

Thursday, December 29: Read Acts 4:12. The name they are talking about here is the name of Jesus. Why is it that we cannot be saved by anyone else's name? Often times people turn to Jesus as a last resort after they have tried everything else to save themselves. What kinds of things do people turn to as their "savior"? Is there anything in your heart that you put as your savior about Jesus?

Sunday, January 1: Many people make New Year's resolutions, confident to knuckle under and accomplish it, only to give up on the pursuit weeks, days or sometimes even hours later. Two reasons for this is that the person may not have consulted God on what their resolutions should be and they are not relying on God's power to accomplish them. Spend some time in prayer today about what God wants you to make a resolution about in the next year. As you pray, ask Him to teach you to rely on Him for the power to accomplish not only your resolution, but in all things. Then tell one other person about your resolution and ask them to hold you accountable.

Monday, January 2: Read Isaiah 9:6-7. Who is this prophecy about? How is this a promise fulfilled by God to the Hebrews? How is the person