

The Jesse Tree

A tree for reflection during Advent

Then a shoot will spring from the
stem of Jesse.
And a branch from his roots will
bear fruit.
Isaiah 11:1

Day 1

Creation; The World

Read Genesis 1:26-31

The symbol is the world. God made the world and everything in it. He had a plan from the very beginning. He knew He would send His Son.

Thank you, God, for making the world. Everything you made shows how wonderful you are.

Day 2

Adam and Eve; Sin

Read Genesis 3:1-19

The apple and snake symbolize the first sin. In Adam, all men sin. But in Christ, all men can be saved.

Thank you, God, that you knew I was going to sin and you made a way to save me.

Day 3

Noah; God's Promise

Read Genesis 6-9

The boat and rainbow symbolize God's judgment on mankind for their sin and His promise to never flood the entire earth again.

Dear God, thank you for the beautiful rainbows. They remind me that You still remember the promise you made long, long ago.

Day 4

Abraham; Promised Descendents

Read Genesis 12:1-7 & 15:1-6

God told Abraham to look up at the sky. God promised that Abraham's descendents would be as numerous as the stars.

God, help me to be faithful to you, just like Abraham was faithful to you.

Day 5

Sarah; The Promised Son

Read Genesis 18:1-15 & 21:1-7

The baby represents Isaac, the son promised to Sarah and Abraham, whom they had in their old age.

God, you can do anything. I know I can trust in what you say.

Day 6

Isaac; The Lamb Sacrifice

Read Genesis 21:1-7

God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham was willing, but then God provided a ram to sacrifice instead.

God, I don't want to love anything more than I love you. Please help me to remember nothing is more important than pleasing you.

Day 7

Jacob; The Promise of Blessing

Read Genesis 28:10-17

The ladder symbolizes Jacob's dream a ladder went from earth to heaven and had angels going up and down on it. God promised to bless Jacob's family and give them land.

Dear God, thank you for speaking to me through the Bible. Please help me to count on your promises.

Day 8

Joseph; Need Met

Read Genesis 41:47-49

God put Joseph in just the right place to save many people from famine. The symbol for today is grain, which he stored up so he could feed people, even his own family, during the famine.

Thank you, God, that you meet all of my needs.

Day 9

Passover; The Lamb

Read Exodus 12:1-13

The Israelites had been in slavery in Egypt and pharaoh wouldn't let them go. God killed all the first born sons in Egypt, except for the son's of people who sacrificed a perfect lamb and put its blood on their doorposts.

Thank you for sacrificing your Son as the perfect Passover Lamb for me.

Day 10

Moses; The Law

Read Exodus 19:18-20:1-17, 24:12, 32:16

God gave Moses the 10 Commandments on stone tablets and taught him how the people of Israel should live.

God, I'm sorry I cannot keep all of the commandments all of the time. Thank you for making a way to take away my sin.

Day 11

Joshua; Walls of Jericho

Read Joshua 6:1-21

The ram's horn represents the horns the priests blew after the people of Israel marched around Jericho. The priests blew and the people shouted, and the walls of Jericho tumbled down.

God, when you promise something, no one and nothing can stop you!

Day 12

Gideon; Unlikely Leader

Read Judges 7

Gideon and his men went into a battle that seemed impossible to win. God had them slam their pots to show their hidden torches, and He led them to victory.

God, I know sometimes you will ask me to do things that seem impossible. Thank you that you will help me, and nothing is impossible with you.

Day 13

Boaz; A Redeemer

Read Ruth 3, 4:13

Boaz promised to redeem Ruth and extended his cover over her. Redemption is often symbolized as a coat to cover or wings to shelter.

God, thank you that Boaz's redemption of Ruth is a reminder of your redemption of me.

Day 14

Samuel; A King Anointed

Read Samuel 16

Samuel was the prophet of God who anointed David as Israel's king. Kings were anointed with oil, so the symbol is a horn with oil.

God, thank you for having a plan for my life, just like you had a plan for Samuel and for David.

Day 15

David; Shepherd King

Read Samuel 5:1-5

David was a shepherd who was chosen by God to be King of Israel and to shepherd His people. Jesus is our Shepherd and King.

Thank you, God, for caring for us like a shepherd cares for His sheep.

Day 16

Elijah; The Lord is God

Read 1 Kings 17:1-16, 18:17-46

Elijah made an alter to God. When he prayed, God sent fire and it burned up the alter, proving to everyone that He is the one true God.

God, you are the one true God. You the same powerful God today that you always have been.

Day 17

Isaiah; Remnant Preserved

Read Isaiah 11:1, 10

The tree stump symbolizes that although the people of Israel were killed or taken into captivity, God saved some so that His people could become strong again one day.

God, thank you for providing a way to redeem your people, even when they turned away from you.

Day 18

Jeremiah; The Ruined People

Read Jeremiah 9:1-11, 13:1-11

God used a ruined linen sash to represent to Jeremiah those who did not cling to Him. God was sad His people did not cling to Him.

God, please help me to be faithful to you. I want to please you every day of my life.

Day 19

Daniel; God Our Protector

Read Daniel 6

Daniel was thrown into the lions' den when he prayed faithfully to God, even when it wasn't allowed. God kept Daniel safe in the lions' den.

God, I want to be faithful to you, even when it isn't easy. Please help me to be brave and to serve you no matter what may happen.

Day 20

Habakkuk; Be On Watch

Read Habakkuk 2:1

Habakkuk was a prophet of God. The watchtower symbolizes how Habakkuk said he would stand on watch and listen for God's voice.

God, I want to listen for your voice. Please help me to stay on watch for you.

Day 21

Nehemiah; Rebuilding

Read Nehemiah 2:17-20, 6:15-16

The wall reminds us that Nehemiah led the people of Israel to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. God was restoring His people.

Thank you, God, for giving us more chances to follow you even when we have turned away for a long time.

Day 22

Zacharias and Elizabeth; A Son Promised

Read Luke 1:5-24, 57-66

The angel Gabriel told Zacharias the and Elizabeth would have a son. He didn't believe, and so he was not able to speak until the baby was born. When the baby was born, Zacharias wrote the baby's name on a tablet.

God, help me to believe you and to trust in your Word.

Day 23

John the Baptist; Baptism with Water

Read Luke 1:57-80, 3:15-18

The shell is a symbol of baptism. John the Baptist baptized people with water and told of One who was coming who would baptize in spirit.

Dear God, thank you for preparing the way for Jesus, just like you said you would.

Day 24

Mary; The Miraculous Conception

Read Luke 1:26-38

God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Mary that she was going to have a baby even though Mary was not married yet. The baby was going to be God's son, Jesus.

God, thank you for Jesus's special birth. He was not born in Adam's sin like all other men. He was the perfect lamb.

Day 25

Joseph; Obedient Faith

Read Matthew 1:18-24

An angel of the Lord told Joseph to marry Mary, and that her baby was from God. He believed the angel and obeyed. The tools symbolize Joseph, the carpenter.

Dear God, please help me to be obedient to you, even when it is hard, like Joseph was obedient.

Day 26

Simeon and Anna; Anticipating His Coming

Read Luke 2:25-26, 36-38

Simeon and Anna both believed that the Messiah was coming. The symbol is a church, because they spent time at the temple.

God, I know Jesus will come again. Please help me to watch for Him, expecting Him to come.

Day 27

Mary and Joseph; Journey to Bethlehem

Read Luke 2:1-5

Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to pay a tax. This fulfilled the prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. The symbol is a donkey which might have helped them on their trip.

Thank you, God, that you are in control over everything.

Day 28

Jesus; Christ is Born!

Read Luke 2:6-7

At just the right time, Jesus was born! Mary laid baby Jesus in a food trough, or manger. God came to earth as a man!

Glory to God, our Savior is born! Thank you, God, that this was your plan from the beginning, and you made it happen at just the right time.