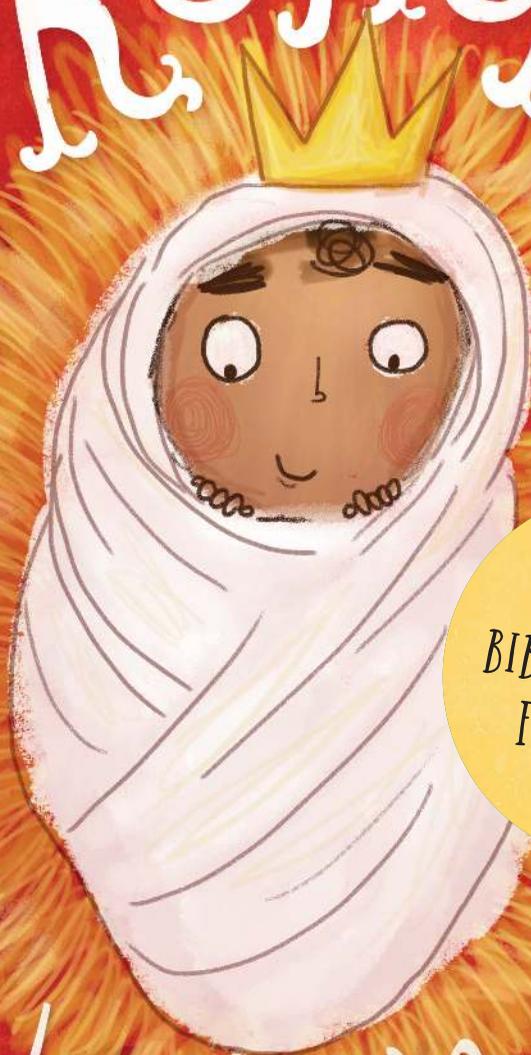


The CHRISTMAS PROMISES



FAMILY
BIBLE DISCOVERY
FOR ADVENT

Advent Calendar



Can You Discover The Secret Message?

When you open each window you will find a hidden letter behind it. Copy each letter here to discover a secret message about the coming of King Jesus.

Copy the letter from Dec 1st here.



20 8 3 18 23 4 21 13 11 7 24 1 16

12 5 19 9 14 2 25 10 17 22 6 15

The Christmas Promise Advent Calendar © The Good Book Company 2019.

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ISBN: 9781784984502 | Printed in Turkey



This devotional booklet is designed to be used alongside *The Christmas Promise Advent Calendar*, to help children and adults explore the Bible together during Advent. Each day provides a short family Bible time suitable for ages 4 to 12. It will take about five minutes, maybe at breakfast or after an evening meal. Choose whatever time and place suits you best as a family.

The Advent Calendar

- Open each day's window before reading the relevant page in the booklet. (The Bible verse hidden behind the window is printed in the booklet as well—and you don't want to spoil the surprise.)
- Read the verse printed behind the window.
- There is also a code letter hidden behind each window. Copy this letter into the puzzle opposite to find a secret message!

The Booklet

- Each page starts with a simple discussion or an optional activity. These sometimes need pencil and paper.
- Then read the day's verses. (The verses printed in the calendar are taken from the International Children's Bible. However, any modern translation will be fine.)
- There are then a few questions based on the passage, followed by a suggestion for prayer.

Check It Out! (some useful facts)

Who Was Elizabeth?

Elizabeth was a relative of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Elizabeth and her husband were old and had never been able to have children. But God had answered their prayers and promised to give them a son. *(This is in Luke 1 v 5-25.)*

God kept his promise. By the time Gabriel visited Mary, Elizabeth was six months pregnant. That's why in most Bibles Luke 1 v 26 starts with the words "In the sixth month". Elizabeth's son grew up to be John the Baptist. John told people to get ready for God's promised King—Jesus.

Where Did The Christmas Story Happen?



Who Was David?

King David lived 1,000 years before Jesus was born.

He came from the town of Bethlehem. That's why we sing, "Once in royal David's city".

David loved and trusted God. He was the best king the Israelites had ever had. God made an amazing promise to David. He promised that someone from David's family would be King for ever. *(That promise is in 2 Samuel 7 v 12-13.)*

The angel came to Mary and said, "Greetings! The Lord has blessed you and is with you."

Luke 1 v 28

Dec 1st: An Unexpected Messenger

Talk

What are you looking forward to most this Christmas? (Each choose at least one thing.)

Read

We're going to read about the very first Christmas in God's book, the Bible. The Bible story starts with an unexpected messenger...

Read Luke 1 v 26-28.

Talk

Who did God send as his messenger? (v26) (An angel called Gabriel) When did God send Gabriel? (v26) (In the sixth month) This means the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. Find out more by reading **Who was Elizabeth?** in the **Check It Out** page opposite.

Where did Gabriel go? (v26) (Nazareth, in Galilee) Find **Nazareth** on the map opposite.

Who did Gabriel go to see? (v27) (Mary) What was Gabriel's message to Mary? (See verse 28.) Gabriel told Mary that **God** (the Lord) was with her. Tomorrow, we'll read God's exciting news for Mary.

Pray

In Bible times, God sometimes sent angels as his messengers. Today, God speaks to us through his word, the Bible. Ask God to help you to understand the Bible as you read it together this Christmas.



You will give
birth to a son,
and you will
name him Jesus.

Luke 1 v 31

Dec 2nd: A Surprising Message

Talk

I'm terrified of spiders! What are you scared of? (*Spiders? Snakes? Thunder and lightning? The dark?*) Do you think you'd be scared if you met an angel? Why/why not?

Read

Cartoon pictures of angels often make them look cute. But when we read about angels in the Bible, we find that they are scary! So they often begin by saying, "Don't be afraid!"

Read Luke 1 v 29-31.

Talk

Find three things Gabriel told Mary. (v30-31) (*1—She has found favour with God/God is pleased with her. 2—She will become pregnant and have a son. 3—She is to call her son Jesus.*)

Think

How do you think Mary felt when she heard Gabriel's message? (*e.g. surprised, puzzled, scared, excited...*) What would help her to believe that this message was good news? (v30) (*The message was from God, who was pleased with her. Mary could trust God to do what was right and good.*)

Pray

As we'll see in the next few days, Mary's son wasn't like any other baby. There is no one like Jesus! But every baby is a gift from God. Do you know anyone who is pregnant, or who has a new baby? Pray for them, and ask God to help that baby grow up to know and love him.

He will be great,
and people will call
him the Son of the
Most High.

Luke 1 v 32

Dec 3rd: Whose Son?

Do

Either: Draw a quick family tree, just going back as far as your child's grandparents...

Or: Ask a few questions about your family, like "Who is Mum's dad?", "Who is Gran's sister?"

Read

Gabriel has told Mary that she will have a son—but who will the father be?

Read Luke 1 v 32-33.

Talk

Gabriel told Mary that her son would be great (v32). What title would her son be given? (v32) Copy it here:

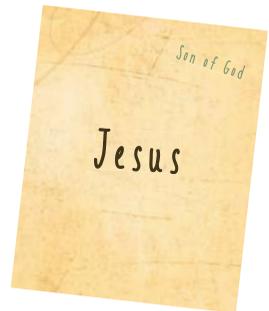
The S _____ of the

"The Most High" is a title for God. Mary's baby was going to be the Son of God. No wonder he was going to be great!

Do (optional)

Use a large piece of paper to start a poster that you will add to as you read about Jesus this Christmas.

Write "**Jesus**" in the middle of the poster and then add "**Son of God**".



Pray

Jesus was Mary's son, but he was also God's Son. Thank God for sending his own Son as his Christmas gift to us.

He will rule over the people of Jacob for ever. His Kingdom will never end.

Luke 1 v 33

Dec 4th: King For Ever

Talk

Recap: What was Mary's son to be called? (*Jesus*) Who chose that name? (*God did, and then sent his angel, Gabriel, to tell Mary.*) What did we learn yesterday about Mary's son? (*He is the Son of God.*)

Read

Read yesterday's verses again to discover what else Mary was told about her son.

Read Luke 1 v 32-33.

Talk

Which famous Bible character does Gabriel talk about in verse 32? (*David*) Ask your child what they know about David. (*They may know that he was a shepherd who then became king of Israel. David also won a famous fight against a giant called Goliath.*)

Find out more about **David** in the **Check It Out** section opposite December 1st.

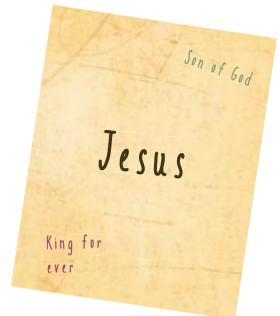
Gabriel told Mary that her son, Jesus, was going to be the promised King from David's family line. Jesus would be King for ever!

Do (optional)

If you started a poster about Jesus yesterday, add "**King for ever**" to it.

Pray

Jesus is still alive today, ruling as our King. Thank Jesus that he is King over everything, and will be for ever.



The baby will
be holy. He will
be called the
Son of God.

Luke 1 v 35

Dec 5th: A Gift From God

Do (optional)

(You will need paper and pencil.)

Hide six pieces of paper round the room with these names on: Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth, Isaac, Samuel, John the Baptist. Ask your child to find the names, and then match each mother and son. *(Sarah with Isaac; Hannah with Samuel; Elizabeth with John)*

Read

The Bible tells us about Sarah, Hannah and Elizabeth. All three of these women had been unable to have children. But God gave them each a son. Mary has just been told that God will give her a son too...

Read Luke 1 v 34-35.

Talk

Mary was very surprised to be told she would have a son. Why? (v34) *(Mary wasn't married. Verse*

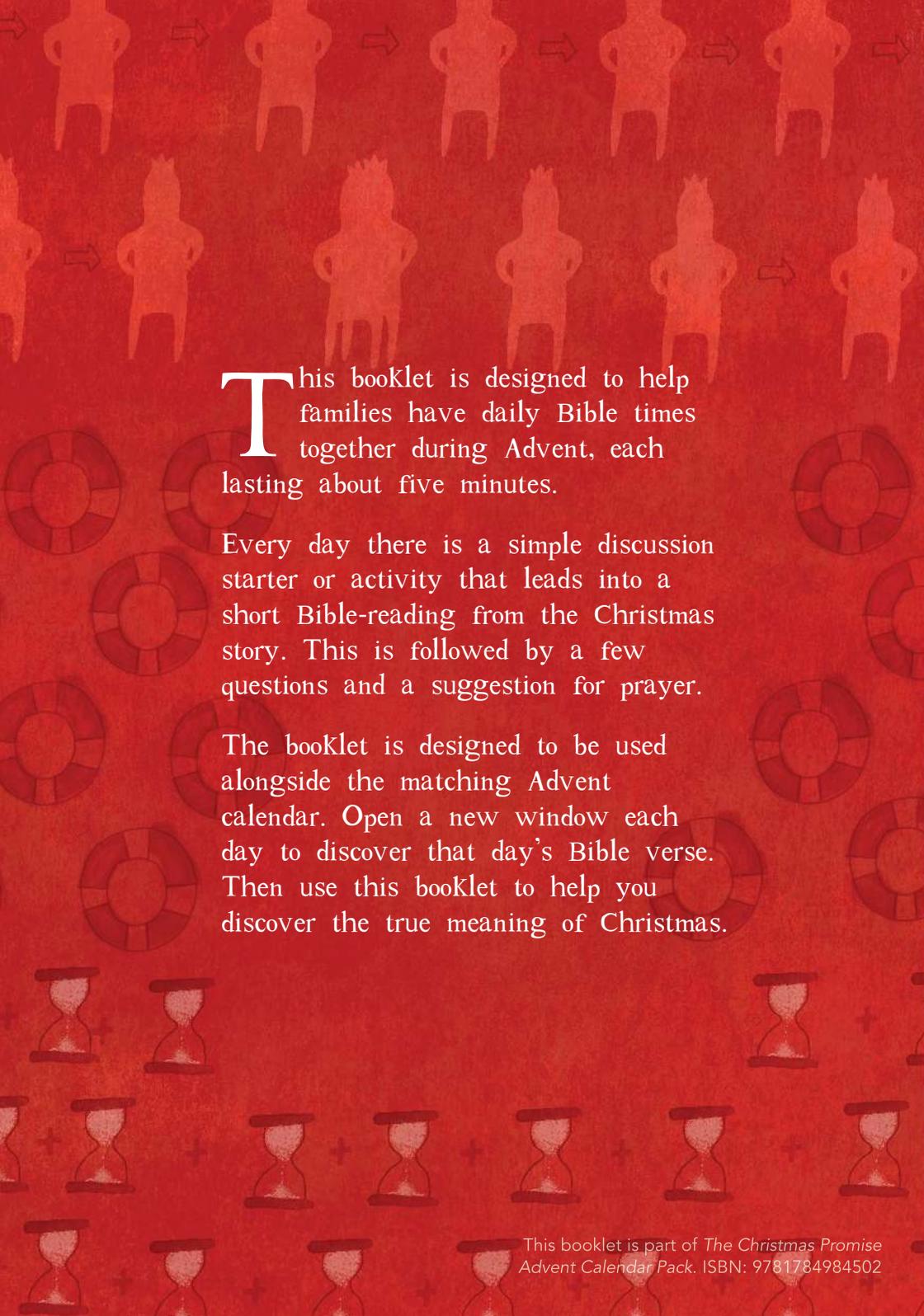
34 says that she was a virgin, which means it was impossible for her to be pregnant.) Who was going to make Mary pregnant? (v35) *(The Holy Spirit)*

The Holy Spirit is **God's** Spirit. God was going to do a miracle, so that his own Son would begin to grow inside Mary. What was Mary's son going to be called? (v35) *(The Son of God)*

Pray

Most children aren't born because of miracles—but they are still gifts from God. Tell your child/children how much you love them, and then thank God for giving them to you.

PS: If you want to read about Sarah, Hannah and Elizabeth, their stories can be found in Genesis 18 v 10-15 & 21 v 1-7; 1 Samuel 1 v 1-20; Luke 1 v 5-25.

The background is a solid red color with a repeating pattern of stylized, light-red figures and circular motifs. The figures are arranged in rows, with some having their arms outstretched. The circular motifs are also arranged in rows, with some having a central circle and others having a ring of smaller circles around it. The overall design is simple and modern.

This booklet is designed to help families have daily Bible times together during Advent, each lasting about five minutes.

Every day there is a simple discussion starter or activity that leads into a short Bible-reading from the Christmas story. This is followed by a few questions and a suggestion for prayer.

The booklet is designed to be used alongside the matching Advent calendar. Open a new window each day to discover that day's Bible verse. Then use this booklet to help you discover the true meaning of Christmas.