

Introduction: The Advent Season

When we think of the family of Christ, we usually think of all those believers who have been saved by Him. We are the family of God. However, there is another family story of Jesus in the Bible. It is the story of His natural descent from the beginning of the human family to the birth of the promised One – Jesus Christ. This is a story of divine purpose and divine providence. It is also a story of God's grace and mercy.

Lesson 1 of this Advent Season presents the big picture of Jesus and his birth. The story begins with the first promise of the birth of the Messiah, the Christ, the Seed of the woman. The story continues with the promise being renewed by covenant promises throughout the Old Testament. It includes five key men – Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

Lesson 2 focuses on five key women in the line of Christ. Matthew 1:1-17 is the genealogy of Joseph the husband of Mary. It begins with Abraham because the gospel of Matthew emphasizes the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises to the nation of Israel. This lesson reveals the grace of God – and His goodness by including some Gentile women among others in the line of Christ – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, “Bathsheba”, and Mary.

Lesson 3 reveals the birth that was promised some 4000 years earlier. It was the birth of the long awaited Messiah. The time finally came for Jesus Christ to be born through the miracle of the virgin birth. He is the promised One of Genesis 3:15. His line of descent was promised, provided, preserved, and protected from the first woman Eve to the final woman Mary. It is the wonderful narrative account of the Christmas story that we celebrate today.

Memory Work: Matthew 1:23

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

December 6 ■ Lesson 1**The Advent Season****QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 1: “Five Key Men in the Covenants of Promise”**

The word “seed” refers to the physical line of descent from fathers and mothers to their sons and daughters. It is the passage of the seed from one generation to the next. The word “seed” in the Bible can refer to “one” (the Messiah) or to “many” (the descendants). But even when “seed” is interpreted as “many” descendants, the “One” Messiah is always present in these promises. The seed promise is included in the biblical covenants (Edenic, Noahic, Abrahamic, and Davidic) to prove that the promise of salvation and kingdom is only fulfilled by the power of God. Christmas is the story of the seed promise being fulfilled by the birth of Jesus.

Memory Work: Matthew 1:23

Read the seven references and examine the context of these important “seed” verses.

1. Genesis 3:15 “the seed of the woman” Edenic Promise
2. Genesis 9:9 Noah Noahic Covenant
3. Genesis 12:7 Abraham Abrahamic Covenant
4. Genesis 17:19 Isaac Abrahamic Covenant
5. Genesis 28:13-14 Jacob Abrahamic Covenant
6. 2 Samuel 7:12-13 David Davidic Covenant
7. Matthew 1:1-17 the genealogy of Joseph – Mary’s husband

1. What is learned by this repeated promise of the seed?

2. What additional details does each promise reveal about the coming seed?

3. Why is it necessary for the Messiah to be a man – perfect man “yet without sin”?

December 13 ■ Lesson 2**The Advent Season****QUESTIONS FOR LESSONS 2: “Five Key Women in the Line of Christ”**

The seed promise is the passage of the seed through the men in the line of Christ from the first Eve to Mary. However, Matthew includes five women in the list. Some have critiqued the first four in the list for being sinners, but the women have no greater guilt of sin than do the men. It is fascinating that these women – some noted in Scripture for sinful behavior – were included in the “seed” genealogy of Matthew 1. It reveals the grace of God toward sinners as well as the goodness of God by including Gentiles in the line of Christ.

Memory Work: Matthew 1:23 (review)

Read the stories of these woman – too many verses to read in the Bible studies – and answer the following questions.

Tamar	???	Genesis 38:1-30; Ruth 4:12
Rahab	Gentile	Joshua 2:1-24; 6:15-25; Heb. 11:31; James 2:25
Ruth	Gentile	Ruth 1-4
“Bathsheba”	Israelite	2 Samuel 11:1-27; 12:24-25
Mary	Israelite	Matthew 1:1-17

1. What is learned by listing this individual woman in the line of Christ?

2. What are the liabilities (–) and the qualities (+) of this woman?

3. What do these women indicate about the line of Christ?

December 20 ■ Lesson 3**The Advent Season****QUESTIONS FOR LESSONS 3: “One Miraculous Birth in the Presentation of the Messiah”**

The seed promise is traced from the beginning to the ending of the Old Testament. Matthew’s genealogy reveals the covenant promises from Abraham (fourteen generations) to David (fourteen generations) to the Babylonian captivity (fourteen generations) to Jesus. This is God’s perfect way of presenting the promised seed / Messiah / Jesus Christ.

Memory Work: Matthew 1:23 (review)

Read Matthew 1:18-25. Answer the following questions from this narrative account of the birth of Jesus.

1. Why does Matthew’s gospel begin with a genealogy?
2. What is it about the miraculous birth of Mary’s child that points to the promise of God?
3. In what ways are the grace and the power of God seen the birth of Jesus?
4. What truths would the child of Mary fulfill?
5. How does God’s faithfulness in presenting the promised Messiah relate to the way God fulfills His promises for you?

"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:36).