



*A
King is
Born*

A 7-DAY CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONAL

ARMANDO YZAGUIRRE JR.

Merry Christmas

FROM THE CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST NETWORK

Dear Friends:

As 2021 nears its conclusion, our hearts are full as we reflect on the Lord's faithfulness in more ways than we have opportunity to share. What a joy it has been to minister with you this year through the Conservative Baptist Network as we stand together for truth and seek to preserve and perpetuate the great work of the people of God in the Southern Baptist Convention. While this year was one filled with challenges never imagined, we continue to hold to Scripture for indeed "the grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of our God endures forever" (Isaiah 40:8). We trust that you also have seen his sustaining hand in your lives, in your churches, in your ministries, and among your families.

Once the clamor of the holidays begins to subside and you retreat into a time of joy and celebration with your closest loved ones, it is often in those moments of silence, solitude, and reflection that the Lord speaks. We hope you will enjoy this Advent devotional together with your family in the days immediately leading up to Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Prepared by the ministry team from one of our local churches—yes, the headquarters of our Southern Baptist Convention—this guide has been a blessing to my family already, and I trust it will be to yours as well.

As we remember what God has done for us in the incarnation, we also look forward with eager anticipation and strengthened resolve toward all that is ahead. 2022 will provide opportunities afresh to serve the unique people of God known as Southern Baptists, to encourage local congregations and leaders across this nation, and to "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3). May we walk humbly and closely with the Lord with a quickness in our step, for indeed the hour is short and the need is great.

Thank you for the opportunity to partner with you. Please enjoy this brief devotional as you celebrate this season, and may God bless you today in a very special way.

Yours in Christ,

Z. Scott Colter, PhD
Executive Director
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Heir to the Nations

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

Matthew 1:1

The Gospel of Matthew opens with a unique genealogy. Most of us like to skim over those passages when reading the Bible. Yet, if we believe God has inspired all Scripture, we should dig deep to find why God had the author include each verse in the Bible. While Luke described Jesus as the son of Adam, Matthew's account described Jesus as the son of Abraham and David.

When we think about the birth of Jesus this Christmas, we would be wise to remember Jesus as the son of Abraham. In Genesis 17, God promised that He would give Abraham descendants that would produce a multitude of nations. Abraham was promised that kings and nations would be from his offspring. God also promised that He would establish His covenant with Abraham's children. This promise would be temporarily realized in the people and nation of Israel. Yet, this is fully realized in the church today. All who believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior are true sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7). Thus, the fulfillment of this promise is realized in the Jews and Gentiles being one in Christ.

Why does it matter that Jesus is the son of Abraham? If Jesus was a descendant of Abraham, then the promise given to Abraham in Genesis 17 is fulfilled in Jesus. In Daniel 7, Daniel had a vision of the Ancient of Days giving the Son of Man a kingdom so “that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him” (Dan. 7:14). With this, the Great Commission takes on new meaning. We see in this passage that God remembers the covenant that He made with Abraham and that Abraham's descendants will truly be a multitude of nations. We also see in Galatians 3:7 that all who have believed by faith in Jesus are the true sons of Abraham. Matthew included this in his gospel account so that skeptical Jews would understand that Jesus was the fulfillment of this Old Testament promise.

As we prepare our hearts to meditate on the birth of Christ and all of its significance, we would be wise to consider that Jesus was the son of Abraham. Because of the promise God made to Abraham and because Jesus is the son of Abraham, by faith, we have been able to become children of Abraham.

Family Devotional Questions

Why is it significant that Jesus is the Son of Abraham?
In what way was Jesus the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham?

Heir to the Throne

"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."
Matthew 1:1

The gospel, according to Matthew, was Jewish in nature. Instead of focusing on Jesus' lineage from Adam, Matthew focused on how Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish prophecies. In yesterday's devotional, we learned that Jesus is the son of Abraham and the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. Today we will discuss how Jesus is the son of David.

In 2 Samuel 7, God promised David that He would bless the kingdom of Israel. He promised that He would never cast them out as He did Saul:

"When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever."

2 Samuel 7:12-13

David's children could not have fulfilled this promise. And though Solomon was wise and successful, the kingdom eventually split, and the people of Israel went into captivity. By the time the birth of Christ occurred, the people of Israel were under Roman rule and there was no king on David's throne. God promised David that the kingdom would endure forever through his offspring.

In Daniel 7, referenced in yesterday's devotional, Daniel had a vision when the people of Israel were in exile. In short, the temple was destroyed and no one sat on David's throne. The vision was of the Ancient of Days giving the Son of Man, Jesus' favorite title for Himself in the Gospels, a kingdom and a dominion that would never be destroyed. This seems to be a similar concept to what God promised David. This Son of Man would then fulfill God's promise to David. Viewing Jesus as the Son of David gives us a few insights. First, Jesus is the heir to the throne. This kingdom and dominion did not have the borders of Israel. In Matthew 28, Jesus told His disciples that all authority, literally the right or power to rule, was given to Him in heaven and on earth. This authority was given to Jesus by the Father, the Ancient of Days.

We see that Jesus is the Promised King from the Davidic line, thus the heir to the throne. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and will be filled with all of the nations.

Family Devotional Questions

Why is it significant that Jesus is the Son of David?

What does it mean to the church to know Jesus is the King who was promised?

Son of God

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’”

Matthew 1:18–21

Legally, Jesus is the son of Abraham and the Son of David, but there have been many descendants of those two men. What makes Jesus unique? Jesus is not only the son of Abraham and David, He is the Son of God. His mother, Mary, was betrothed to Joseph, a descendant of David, but she was pregnant. Joseph assumed she was unfaithful and resolved to divorce her quietly. Joseph knew there would be much shame for Mary because of this situation. However, instead of making a public ordeal, he resolved to divorce privately. Yet, the source of Mary's conception was not scandalous infidelity. The angel of the Lord revealed to Joseph that Mary conceived from the Holy Spirit.

What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of God? Matthew 3 reveals to us that God the Father is pleased with Jesus. Not only did Jesus come from the Father, but the Father also sent Him. Jesus not only came to fulfill the Old Testament Law and prophecies but to do the will of His Father. This is why the Father was pleased with His Son.

“You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.”

1 John 3:5,9

There is no sin in God, so there was no sin in His Son. Because Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit, there was no sin in Him, and He never sinned. We see this in the passage mentioned above. 1 John also tells us why Jesus had to be the Son of God. He came to "take away our sins" by His death (justification) and to teach us to walk in righteousness (sanctification). Jesus came as a man to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). He did it by nailing our record of debt to the cross. Jesus was uniquely qualified to do this because He was fully God, as the Son of God, and fully man, as the Son of Abraham and David. Jesus has no sin in Him and has never sinned. He lived the perfect life that none of us could live. He came so that we could be born again and abide in Him. As we meditate on Jesus' coming, we must meditate on the reality that Jesus is the Son of God and came so that we could become God's children and one day be like Him (1 John 3:2).

Family Devotional Questions

Why is it significant that Jesus is the Son of God?

How should we live if we have placed our faith in Jesus and have been born again (1 John 3)?

God With Us

“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.”

Matthew 1:22–25

If you haven't noticed, the Gospel of Matthew was written in a way to show God's promises are true. There is never a promise that God gives that is untrue. In Isaiah 7:14, God promised that a virgin would conceive and bear a son. That son would be called Immanuel, which means God with us. This prophecy was truly realized in Jesus. Jesus is God with us. In the Gospel of John, we read of the eternal Word that has always been with God and is God (John 1:1). We also learn that the Word became flesh. The concept of the word "became" means to tabernacle. God literally tabernacled among His people in the flesh. God once came and met with His people in the tent of meeting, then in the temple. At the birth of Jesus, God tabernacled in the flesh. The Creator of Life that upholds all things by the word of His power came as a baby.

Jesus would later promise that the temple would be destroyed, and three days later, He would rebuild it. When He was on the cross, the crowds mocked Him saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matt. 27:40). They did not realize that Jesus was talking about His body. He is the Son of God, and His coming as a man with a physical body meant no more need for the temple.

The temple was where sacrifices were performed to appease God's wrath for people's sins. All of God was pleased to dwell bodily in the person of Jesus (Col. 1). When Jesus promised to rebuild the temple after three days, it promised that His body would be broken and blood poured out for our sins. It was a promise that He would not stay dead. He promised to always be with His people. Not only did Jesus come as a baby, but He would also grow into a man that would die on the cross for our sins. He also promised to send the Holy Spirit to us when He ascended (John 14-16). Jesus also promised to return in glory, and when He does return, we will be made like Him. For now, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit because God's Spirit now dwells in all who believe by faith (1 Cor. 6:19).

Family Devotional Questions

What does it mean that Jesus is God with us?

How should we live knowing we are the temple of God's Spirit?

Born to be King

“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: “And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.””

Matthew 2:1–6

Wise men from the east saw a star rise and realized it was a fulfillment of a prophecy in Numbers 24:17. These men realized that the One who would rule with a scepter was born. Though Jesus was born in the “lowly” town of Bethlehem, He was promised to be King and rule. Jesus is not just the earthly heir to the throne of David, He is the owner of all creation.

John 1 tells us that Jesus, the Word, created everything in existence. Colossians 1 tells us that all things in heaven and earth, all rulers and dominions, visible and invisible, were created by Jesus. He also upholds all things. Because Jesus is the creator of all things, He gets to govern everything as He pleases. Think for a moment what this means. The God that transcends all of His creation chose to enter the world as a baby, born of a virgin. The One that upholds all of creation was held by His mother the day He was born.

Jesus came to reconcile all things to Himself (Col. 1:20). As the rightful ruler of creation, He wanted His creation to be in right standing with her King. Moreover, because Jesus came, He sympathized with our weakness (Heb. 4:13). The God of all creation was hungry, tired, and even tempted. Yet, He was without sin. He lived the perfect life and died the death that we deserve so that we might be reconciled to Him.

This was the promise that God made to Joseph. Jesus would save His people from their sins. Imagine the great love of this King. He had every right to send every sinner into judgment for their sins against Him. If all of us were in Hell this very moment, God would be perfectly just. Yet, because of God’s great love, He sent His Son to die so that the nations would be reconciled to Him.

Jesus is not a King that sits idly on the throne. Jesus is a caring shepherd that leads His people on paths of righteousness for his namesake (Ps. 23). What kind of King would He be if His people could not follow His decrees? Jesus is a Good Shepherd that provides all we need to follow Him. He has given us His Word so that we may know what He requires of us. He has given us His Spirit so that we have His presence and teach the Word to us. This Good Shepherd that is the rightful King came as a baby born in a manger, and His name is Jesus.

Family Devotional Questions

Why is Jesus the rightful king?

How is Jesus different from earthly kings?

Born to be Worshiped

"After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way."

Matthew 2:9–12

Jesus is the heir to the nations, heir to the throne, Son of God, rightful King of all creation, and Good Shepherd. The wise men may not have known this at the time, but they knew that the baby that was born would be a King. Jesus is worthy of worship.

These men waited for the sign that the promised King had been born and traveled many days to get to Herod to find Jesus. All of this was to find the future King and worship Him. Worshiping Jesus requires this type of intentional effort. Yet, for all the effort it may take for us to worship King Jesus, it does not compare to the joy we receive. The passage reads, "they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" (Matt. 2:10). That phrase tells us all we need to know about what the wise men experienced when they found where Jesus was. They "rejoiced exceedingly," tells us of their posture, and the phrase "with great joy," tells us about their possession of joy. They worshipped and had great joy because they had found their King.

Immediately, they offered Jesus gifts. The men offered the best they had and sacrificially gave to the King, not caring that He had come as a baby. They knew He was worthy of far more than they could offer because He was promised by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They trusted God and were willing to give everything, no matter the cost.

Not only did they bring good gifts to Jesus, but they were willing to defy the powerful King Herod. This was a dangerous proposition. To defy the King was to invite punishment, if not death. However, the men knew they needed to follow whatever the will of God was concerning this King. We would be wise to follow this example. At times, following King Jesus will require sacrifice, always incite worship that leads to joy, and may cost us our safety. We can bring nothing to Jesus as a gift that He is unworthy of because He has created all things, including our very lives. King Jesus is worthy of our best and all.

Family Devotional Questions

Why does worshipping Jesus bring us joy?

What cost should we be willing to pay for Jesus?

Born to Die

"Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

Matthew 2:13–18

Matthew 1:21 tells us that Jesus came to save His people from their sins. This is why He came, to reconcile the world to Himself. None of us are good enough to get to heaven, let alone to receive gifts on Christmas. We deserve God's punishment. We have all sinned against God and were His enemies. Therefore, we all need Jesus to come to save us from our sins.

Feeling threatened by the baby and having his throne and power hanging in the balance, Herod was determined to kill the baby. Herod plotted to trick the wise men into finding Jesus and disclosing His location. Although Jesus was born to die, God was sovereign over the timing of His death (Rom. 5:6). Because of this, God spoke to the wise men in a dream, and they decided to trick Herod. Herod decided to kill all baby boys, two years and younger, in his anger, fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah 31:15.

King Herod could not thwart God's plan. Instead, Jesus had to fulfill all righteousness (Matt. 3:15). Jesus was meant to grow into a man that would perfectly obey God's Law on our behalf. There was never sin in Him, and though Satan tempted Him, Jesus never sinned. Jesus needed to live the perfect life that we could never live so that He could die the death that we deserve. We are saved when we believe that Jesus did this for us and confess Him as our Lord.

No scheme of Satan or this earth can thwart God's plan to reconcile the world to Himself. As you meditate on the coming of Jesus as a baby, remember why He came to die for your sins. Look back at how the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus were promised throughout the Old Testament Law and prophets. Since God was faithful to keep those promises, He will be faithful to keep all of His promises to His church. Namely, we will see Him face to face in a New Heavens and New Earth one day. We will look like Jesus because we will have glorified bodies, and the nations will be there. He will be our God, and we will be His people for eternity.

Family Devotional Questions

Why did Jesus have to die?

Why should we share this good news with others?

How does remembering this truth encourage the believer?



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