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This book is dedicated to our Lord and Savior,
Jesus Christ, who came to earth as a babe so that He
could one day save His people for eternity.



Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you: he is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign to you:
You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

(Luke 2:11-12)





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UNIT STUDIES — THE EASY WAY!

Welcome to Amanda Bennett's easy-to-use unit studies written in a cross-curricular approach about many interesting and important topics. Using simplicity and readily-available resources to enhance the learning process, your children can learn about these topics in ways never before possible. Unit studies allow students to use a natural learning process—one that is so familiar to us as we become adults, and yet is far removed from textbooks, full of concentrated and condensed facts and figures.

Using these studies, your children will learn about a particular topic, covering the science, history, geography, art and any other areas of study that apply to the topic. For example, while working on the **Christmas Unit Study**, they will discover the prophecies of Christ's birth and the fulfillment of those prophecies. They will gain an understanding of the key people and places that were involved in this—the MOST important event in the history of the world. After all, this is His-story!

These books make learning a fascinating and thought-provoking adventure, which is the way that learning SHOULD be—life-long learners are successful, inquisitive and engaging, contributing so much to our world. Let's face it—many people would love to give up their dry and fact-filled textbooks to try unit studies, but don't have the time to do the research and /or preparation, or the confidence to try a new method of learning.

I understand these problems and hesitations all too well. As we considered educating our own children using unit studies, we had the same questions. Where do we begin, how do I structure the study, what do I cover, how do I record the work? This series of books is a product of this adventure—designed to make your path simpler and your load lighter, while guiding your students along a successful road of learning.

Written with you and your family in mind, you will know what to do each day. The research and preparation have been done for you. The daily plan and assignments are here, ready for immediate use. You will find that this guide uses the Internet as a primary resource. This has been done for many reasons, among which include the wealth of information now available online for in-depth studies, the ease of accessing this information for most parents and teachers, as well as the fact that it is affordable and much simpler to use than numerous trips to the library or bookstore.

Please note that the Internet sites used have been carefully screened for appropriate content for the study. From virtual tours of places in the Holy Land to fun projects that are EASY to make, the wealth of information is amazing. We will visit Bethlehem as it might have been on that special night so very long ago. We will read about Herod and learn more about his tyranny. You will get a better feel for how people lived in those days—see the fields of Bethlehem where angels announced His birth to the shepherds. (Parents & teachers—

remember that Internet site content can change overnight—please check the sites that you plan to use, **BEFORE** using them in the study, to be on the safe side.)

This book is divided into four weeks of study. Designed for all ages, from early elementary through adult, each day has a basic structured learning plan for Elementary Grades (Lower Level) and one for Jr./Sr. High Grades (Upper Level). Depending on the ages and needs of your children, you can choose to use all or just a few of the daily assignments. For example, a six-year-old student might be assigned only one or two spelling words and perhaps just one of the Read and Discover questions, while a ten-year-old student might do most of the Lower Level assignments for each day. The same holds true for Jr./Sr. High school students. While most high school juniors or seniors should be able to complete all the daily assignments on the Upper Level, a fourteen-year-old might not be ready to handle that much work in a day. Use these lessons as a tool, and customize them to fit your family and your children's needs. What doesn't get completed this year can be left for further study next year.

The Daily Learning Plan is comprised of the following basic components:

- Today's Passage—to be read, copied, and perhaps even memorized.
- Words of Wisdom (WOW)—spelling/vocabulary words and their definitions to be written, studied, and learned.
- People and Places to Know—Important and interesting people and places will be investigated during the study, which will be included in the student's timeline (included in the Appendix).
- **Read and Discover**—questions that must be researched and answered as each topic is explored.

GETTING STARTED

Ready to Begin the Easy Way of Using Unit Studies? Here We Go!

- 1. Take a few minutes to look through the study and the list of **Favorite Resources** included in the <u>Parent Stuff</u> section of this book. Do you already have some of the titles in your family library? Note other books from the list that you think might be interesting, and request them from the library for this study.
- 2. With the growth of available online information, we have made extensive use of many of the Internet sites that work well with this study. These sites have been carefully chosen for their content, but site content can change in a moment, so parents/teachers should visit the sites first as you begin the day's study.
- 3. Pick up an inexpensive spiral notebook, three-ring binder, or composition notebook for each student to be used as his or her personal **Christmas Journal**. They can decorate the notebook or folder with shepherds, stars, nativity scenes, wise men, and other Christmas designs, stickers, and decorations.
- 4. To help study Christmas, try to find a world globe or a large wall map of the world. We have found that globes can be purchased very inexpensively at garage sales and in thrift stores, as well as world maps. They provide a hands-on and visual way to "see" what the students are studying.
- 5. Collect some materials for a **Family Christmas Memories Album**. This album is going to include a collection of your family memories of this study—photos of the projects and papers, as well as any souvenirs that your family collects along the way. You can use a three-ring binder and notebook paper, or a scrapbook or regular photo album.
- 6. Look over the **FAMILY PROJECTS** page and select a few that might work well for your family. Keep some of these in mind for each week of the study, using them as they fit into your family's studies and schedule.
- 7. How can you use this study with several different ages of students? Allow flexibility in your study. Choose the topics that you know are right for your child—those that match with his/her abilities and interests. For example, a 1st grader doesn't need to work on all of the Lower Level spelling & vocabulary words—perhaps just a few will be sufficient to let them learn and expand their confidence. For older students, I have included additional websites at the end of each week for further reading, just for those who are looking for greater challenge in this study.

And now, take off and enjoy the adventure—there is much to be learned, and it should be fun for everyone. Before I forget—realize that your students may take off on new tangents that pertain to the topic, but you will be able to maintain the basic flow of learning using this unit study guide. Remember, life-long learners have plenty of ground to cover!

May you and your family have a blessed Christmas.

Blessings, Amanda B.



INTRODUCTION

Christmas, a time of praise and rejoicing, is quickly approaching. It is time to ready our hearts, homes, and minds for this special Christian holiday. It is a time of beautiful sights and sounds, family worship, and traditions. With the smell of the cinnamon and cloves, the sight of twinkling lights and beautiful nativity scenes, and the radiant faces of the children, Christmas opens the door to our faith as well as our hearts.

As we celebrate His birth, let us take time to learn and share the love that God packaged so carefully in His tiny infant Son and sent to us on that cold night so long ago in a small town called Bethlehem. Like the shepherds and the wise men, we, too, still seek Him.

Just as the stars lit the sky on that night so long ago, we can use this study to light our way back to that time, to walk the streets of Bethlehem and to stand in its shepherd fields. With this study and the Internet, we can visit some of these places and see the actual sights. We can study the history of the Roman government and the tyranny of Herod, who was put in his position with the help of none other than Cleopatra and Mark Antony.

What was the world like when Christ was born? What were the Jews and the Romans dealing with in those days? Hundreds of years of prophecy and anticipation were fulfilled with our Lord's birth, following centuries and generations of waiting and sharing the prophecies—waiting and waiting for this one event that changed history **FOREVER**. It began the chain of events that would change the world's history and our future. With His coming, we were given the chance to be saved—for eternity. God always keeps His promises!

It is my prayer that you learn from this as we are learning. Close your eyes and imagine the brightness of that star in the heavens almost 2,000 years ago—can't you see the anticipation and eagerness of the faces of the Wise Men? Like those weary travelers, we, too, seek the King as we approach the celebration of His birth. Each year, when our family works on this study, we understand more and are blessed in many ways.

We tend to share our new knowledge with those around us, who also tend to share, and so it goes on and on, like a pebble dropped in the ocean. So, it is with the birth of a tiny baby so long ago in Bethlehem. Who knows how far the ripples will travel? No other birth or event in the history of mankind has even come close to making such an impact on all people of all countries! Use this study of Christmas as a wonderful opportunity to learn more about Jesus and as a time to reach out and share with others. May you experience His love and peace!

Christmas Blessings, Amanda

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FAMILY PROJECT IDEAS

- 1. This is a time of year when families can work together to help others in need, sharing our time as well as our faith. You can all brainstorm together about possible opportunities that might be considered, including those with your church, community, or neighborhood. As an individual family, consider helping organizations like the local children's home, homeless shelters, or the Salvation Army. They welcome homemade blankets (try making small lap blankets from flannel or fleece) and many other things that you could all make together. These organizations would be happy to send a list of things that they need or give you an idea of help that is welcome.
- 2. This special season when we celebrate His birth can open wide the door to our hearts and our homes. Many times, over the holidays we have unexpected and expected guests, and it is fun for the family to prepare for these guests ahead of time. Make a list together of all kinds of ideas for a nice "Welcome" basket. On your list, include things like guest soaps, embroidered hand towels, a small Bible, travel-size toothpaste and shampoo, and perhaps some homemade goodies. Begin collecting these items and making the ones that can be made at home. Find some inexpensive baskets and line them with tissue paper, filling them as you have time. What a treat for the weary traveler!
- 3. Salt dough ornaments can be fun for the whole family to make during the evenings of this season. The ornaments make wonderful gifts and decorations. The dough is simple to make, and recipes for it abound on the Internet. Here are a few link ideas: <u>Salt Dough Ornaments</u> and <u>Dough Ornaments</u>
- 4. Using modeling clay, work together to build a nativity scene—including the manger, the people, and the animals. As the whole family becomes immersed in the construction details, what a scene you all will create! Take plenty of pictures as the project progresses. You can construct the family nativity scene on a piece of poster paper, a cookie sheet, or perhaps a sheet of wax paper. It makes quite a table centerpiece for Christmas Day!
- 5. Christmas is a time when many families gather together to work on craft projects, planning and making things together. Whether it is making an afghan or a quilt, building a footstool or tool box—these are some of the best times that you can all spend together, teaching important skills, making gifts as well as memories.
- 6. In this season of so much community activity, try to locate a church production of a Living Nativity—a performance of the Nativity using live animals and real people. I'll never forget the time that our children participated in this type of production, and our youngest was the infant child at the ripe old age of nine weeks! We will never forget how touching and meaningful the evening's ceremony was for the participants as well as those in the audience.

7. Work together to plan your holidays—coordinating the "have-to" events along with those that you might like to try this year. Make a plan for Christmas day, too. How would everyone really like to celebrate this special day? Who would we like to invite to share this celebration? What types of preparation do we need to include in our plan? Set a budget, select a menu, and do the shopping and preparations—with the whole family working together! That way, the burden of preparation is not all on one person's shoulders, and the work truly can be joyful!





Learning Objectives:

- Recognizing the celebration of Christmas and what it means to the student.
- Learning more about the story of Christ's birth—specifically Mary and the events that occurred prior to Jesus' birth.
- Becoming familiar with the geography of the Middle East at the time of Jesus' birth.
- Developing an understanding of the observation of the Advent celebration.



Christmas: Week One — Day One LOWER LEVEL

Today we are going to begin our study of Christmas by looking at the student's thoughts about Christmas.

Take Me There

Video: "That's What Christmas is All About, Charlie Brown"

Video: Kids Sing Christmas Songs

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

"In him was life; and that life was the light of all mankind."
(John 1:4)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Word Central and Webster's 1828 Dictionary

Christ Lord find wait

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible, or the Internet site shown below, look up **Jesus**. Who was He, and who were His earthly parents? Write or narrate the answers for your journal. **Website suggestion**: <u>Jesus' Story</u>

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet sites shown below, read the following questions and find the answers. Write or narrate your answers for your journal.

- 1. When we celebrate Thanksgiving, we are giving thanks for God's blessings. What do we celebrate at Christmas? When your family celebrates Christmas, what are they celebrating?
- 2. What does your family do to celebrate this holiday? Write or narrate a story about Christmas at your house, including your favorite parts of the celebration!

Internet Resources
Keeping Christ in Christmas for Children
The Real Story



Christmas: Week One — Day One UPPER LEVEL

Take Me There

Video: Kids Sing "Mary Did You Know?"

Video: Apollo 8's Christmas Eve Message

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—"

(John 1:10-12)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Webster's 1828 Dictionary and Dictionary.com

prophecy foretold advent carpenter

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible or the Internet sites shown below, look up **Jesus**. Who was he? Summarize your answer in your journal. **Website suggestions**: Jesus and The Ministry of Jesus

www.UnitStudy.com

Using your Bible, books, or Internet site shown below, find the answer to these questions and record your answers in your journal along with the source of your information (book, website, etc.).

- 1. How does your family celebrate Christmas? Write at least two paragraphs that describe your favorite Christmas holiday memory in your journal.
- 2. What does "messiah" mean, as it is used in the Bible? Here is a **website suggestion**: Easton's Bible Dictionary
- 3. What does Christmas mean to you—what does it represent? Write a paragraph that explains your idea of what Christmas is about to you personally in your journal.



Christmas: Week One — Day Two LOWER LEVEL

The focus today will be on Mary, the mother of Jesus, learning about her feelings, reactions, and other details that the Bible provides.

Take Me There

Video: The Gift Christmas Scriptures

Video: Happy Happy Birthday Day, Jesus

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

(Luke 1:28)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Word Central and Webster's 1828 Dictionary

baby

day

far

wise

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible or the Internet site shown below, look up **Mary, the mother of Jesus**. Who was she? Why do you think that she is important in our study of Christmas? Write or narrate your answer for your journal. **Website suggestion**: Mary, Mother of Jesus

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet sites shown below, read the following questions and find the answers. Write your answers in your journal.

- 1. Where did Mary live when the angel spoke to her? **Scripture suggestion**: <u>Luke 1:26</u>
- 2. How do you think that Mary felt when the angel spoke to her? How would you feel if you were Mary? **Scripture suggestion**: <u>Luke 1:29</u>
- 3. How did Mary answer the angel—what did she say? **Scripture suggestion**: Luke 1:38

Internet Resource



Christmas: Week One — Day Two UPPER LEVEL

Take Me There

Video: Mother & Child Christmas Story

Video: Charles Spurgeon—God with Us

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus."

(Luke 1:30-31)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Webster's 1828 Dictionary and Dictionary.com

angel afraid appear mother

Interesting People and Places

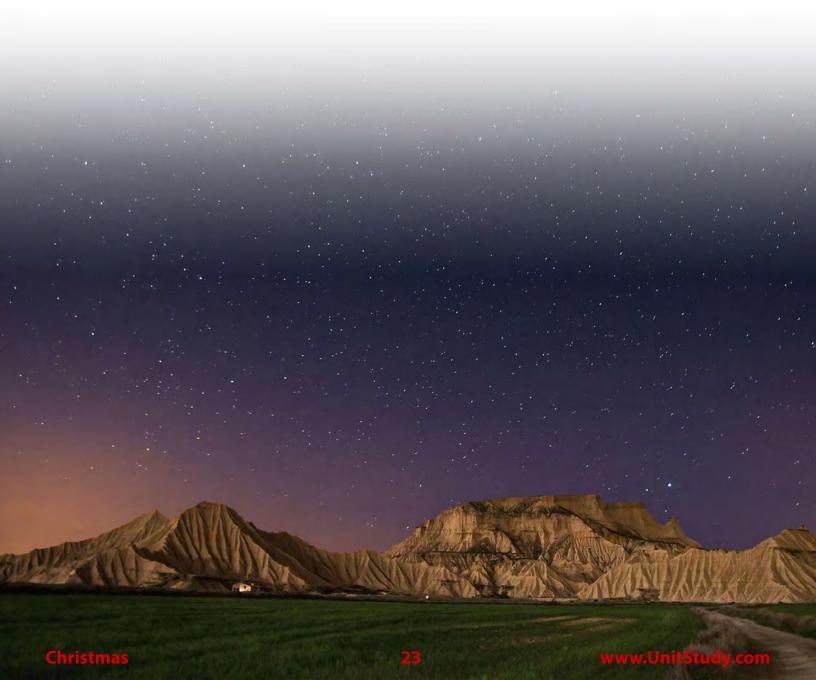
Using your Bible or the Internet sites shown below, find **Mary, the mother of Jesus**. Who was she, and why is she important? Summarize your answer in your journal. **Scripture suggestion**: Luke 1:26. **Website suggestions**: Mary, Mother of Jesus, and Mary

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet site shown below, find the answer to these questions and record your answers in your journal along with the source of your information (book, website, etc.).

- 1. Where did Mary live when the angel spoke to her—what part of the world—in what town or village?
- 2. What does it mean to be "espoused" as Mary was espoused to Joseph?
- 3. What is meant by the word "Christ," as it is used in the Bible? **Website suggestion**: Easton's Bible Dictionary

Internet Resource

Christmas Star Ornament



Christmas: Week One — Day Three LOWER LEVEL

This day will be spent learning more about Mary and the good news that the angel shared with her about the Son of God.

Take Me There

Video: Child Reads Christmas Scripture

Video: Children Sing "Away in a Manger"

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God." (Luke 1:30)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Word Central and Webster's 1828 Dictionary

Jew

law

told

dream

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible, a map, or the Internet sites shown below, look up **Nazareth**. Where is it located, and why is it important in our study of Christmas? Write or narrate a paragraph about Nazareth in your journal. **Website suggestions**: Nazareth—Map and Nazareth

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet sites shown below, read the following questions and find the answers. Write or narrate your answers for your journal.

- 1. What was the name of the angel that God sent to tell Mary the wonderful news? **Scripture suggestion**: <u>Luke 1:26</u>.
- 2. What does the word "Emmanuel" mean? **Scripture suggestion**: <u>Isaiah 7:14</u>. **Website suggestion**: Emmanuel

Internet Resources

The Angel and Mary Coloring Page Gabriel Visits Mary



Christmas: Week One — Day Three UPPER LEVEL

Take Me There

Video: Nazareth Village

Video: College Choir Sings "O Holy Night"

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

(Luke 1:32-33)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Webster's 1828 Dictionary and Dictionary.com

fulfillment chosen conceive cousin

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible, an atlas, or the Internet sites shown below, look up **Nazareth**. Where is it located, and why is it important in our study of Christmas? Write or narrate a paragraph about Nazareth in your journal, and draw a map of its location. **Website suggestions**: Nazareth—Map and Nazareth

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet sites shown below, find the answers to these questions and record your answers in your journal along with the source of your information (book, website, etc.).

- 1. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." Isaiah 11:10. Who was Jesse, and what does this verse mean? What is a Gentile? **Scripture suggestions**: Ruth 4:17 and 1 Samuel 17:12
- 2. What important things do the verses in **Today's Quote** tell us about Jesus? List these things, and then explain their importance in your journal.



Christmas: Week One — Day Four

LOWER LEVEL

Today we will investigate the celebration of Advent and learn more about the geography of the Holy Land.

Take Me There

Video: Around Bethlehem

Video: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

"For no word from God will ever fail."

(Luke 1:37)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. Website suggestions: Word Central and Webster's 1828 Dictionary

angel light came love

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible, a map, or the Internet sites shown below, find **Palestine**. Can you find **Bethlehem** and **Nazareth**? Draw a map of the Holy Land in your journal. **Website** suggestions: Map and Palestine

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet site shown below, read the following questions and find the answers. Write your answers in your journal.

- 1. Some Christians prepare for Christmas with a very special traditional time called "Advent." What is Advent? **Website suggestion**: Advent
- 2. Read **Today's Quote** again. What does this verse mean to you? Imagine how Mary must have felt, knowing that she would have a tiny baby that was the Son of God! Pretend you are Mary or Joseph, and describe the feelings they might have had when the angel gave them the news about Jesus' birth.
- 3. Interview a family member or friend, and ask them to describe a favorite Christmas memory. Write a story about or draw a picture of their memory in your journal.

Internet Resource

Stained Glass Decorations—Beautiful!



Christmas: Week One — Day Four UPPER LEVEL

Take Me There

Video: Around Bethlehem

Video: College Choir Christmas Flash Mob

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Christmas Journal:

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered.

"May your word to me be fulfilled."

Then the angel left her.

(Luke 1:38)

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Christmas Journal. **Website suggestions**: Webster's 1828 Dictionary and Dictionary.com

behold firstborn father blessed

Interesting People and Places

Using your Bible, an atlas, or the Internet sites shown below, find **Palestine**. Draw a map in your journal of the Holy Land, making sure that you identify the cities of **Nazareth**, **Bethlehem**, and **Jerusalem**. **Website suggestions**: Map and Palestine

Using your Bible, books, or the Internet sites shown below, find the answers to these questions and record your answers in your journal along with the source of your information (book, website, etc.).

- 1. Some Christians prepare for Christmas with a very special traditional time called "Advent." What is Advent, and how is it celebrated? What are the meanings of the different colors candles used in an advent wreath? **Website suggestions**: Advent and What is Advent?
- 2. Put yourself in Mary's place after the angel's visit. Write about how you might feel, what you would think, and what you would do next.
- 3. Ask a friend or family member to describe their favorite Christmas memory, and then write a short story in your journal that tells their story.



Christmas: Week One – Day Five

This week, we've learned so much about Christmas, and we will spend today reviewing some of the information that we've seen!

LOWER LEVEL WINDUP

Spend some time looking at and reviewing this week's pages in each student's Christmas Journal.

- 1. Review the **WOWs** (**WORDS OF WISDOM**) by writing them on 3x5 cards. Flip through the cards with the child to see how much they remember and review the meanings of the words. Save the cards for use throughout this unit study, having the student collect them in an envelope that they can decorate with their own drawings.
- 2. Talk about the four INTERESTING PEOPLE AND PLACES they have read about this week. Does the child remember some of the stories about these people and places? This is a great time to review what the student has written or narrated about some of these people in their journal.
- 3. Have the student talk about their favorite part of this week's study. Was it a part of the **READ AND DISCOVER** questions, one of the **INTERESTING PEOPLE AND PLACES**, a favorite Internet site, or perhaps a favorite book?
- 4. Take some time today to work together on the family's Christmas Album—gathering drawings, photos of project efforts, and putting them in the album.

UPPER LEVEL WINDUP

Looking at your Christmas Journal, review all of your work from this week with your parents.

- 1. Share your favorite findings of the week—your most interesting person, fact, or book. Why was it a favorite?
- 2. Have one of your parents review your **WOWs (WORDS OF WISDOM)** with you, asking you for the spelling and definitions of your words for this week.
- 3. Which Internet sites were the most interesting? Did you discover other sites that were also helpful?
- 4. This month provides the perfect opportunity for you to begin planning a Christmas service project for someone or a special family in your community! Take some time to think of someone that you would like to express your thanks to or share some of your blessings with. Develop and write down a plan for your service project, describing who it will be for, what you need to do (step-by-step), and the plan for how to get the project completed. Work on your project in the coming weeks, as time permits— try to complete it the week of Christmas!

Additional Internet Sites

Prophecies of the Messiah

Prophecies Fulfilled

God's Story—The Story of the Birth and Ministry of Jesus

Bible Gateway

Advent: A Season of Preparation

The Advent Wreath—Prayers and Customs

Advent and Forgiveness

The Meaning of "Messiah" (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

The Meaning of "Christ" (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

The Meaning of "Jesus" (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

Searchable Bible Dictionaries

Children Pray: Advent and Christmas

Favorite Findings of the Week

It can be helpful to keep track of some of the favorite things you have discovered this week. Use this page to record some of these things for later review and further study.

Books:			
People:			
Places:			

Cool Words:	
Family Connections:	
Family Project of the Week:	
Internet Sites:	
Notes:	