

Time For Christmas: Hebrews

Hebrews 1:1-4

Week of Nov 29

As you enter into prayer now, take a moment to settle your mind. Put aside your concerns and what needs to get done today, or what didn't get done today. Take a slow, deep breath. Center yourself in His Peace. He is the Alpha and Omega. The Beginning and End. You are found in Him.

Be Still.

Welcome to Advent.

I grew up in a traditional liturgical church where we sang hymns every Sunday. For those of us used to the worship choruses of today, it's helpful to understand that many hymns were written in a time where reading wasn't the norm for everyone. What people received in church as far as the reading of the Bible or the songs that were sung were their only avenue to theological understanding. So hymns can read more like a theology lesson at times than a song! As we look forward to the birth of the Christ child this season, we'll meditate on one of these advent hymns each week as we prepare our hearts. They are rich with meaning and encouragement, and if you're unfamiliar with them, find recordings of them to enjoy this season!

Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.
Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.
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Pause and Pray.

Jesus, I am here because I want to experience You. As I meditate on this passage, draw to mind those things that You would have me become more aware of. Center my heart and mind on Yourself. Use your Word to draw my heart to You. Amen.

We begin our Time for Christmas series with Hebrews 1:1-4, which will provide the back drop for the series.

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

REFLECT.

In our series on Judges, we saw repeatedly how God used flawed humans to lead his people Israel with mixed results. He is always surprising us with who He will use in his grand plan, flaws and all. With the arrival of Jesus, He continues to show how much love He has for us, regardless of our imperfections.

“In these last days, He has spoken to us by his Son.” Jesus, what do you want to speak to my heart today? What do I need to hear from you, to prepare me to serve you this day? (PAUSE)

“The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.” God, as I think about what concerns me today, I ask you to sustain the following: (PAUSE)

As I think of your purifying work for me, Jesus, and your position at the right hand of God—I recognize that I am not worthy but I am so grateful for the position I hold as your child. Accept my prayer of thanks. (PAUSE)

PAUSE, PRAY AND ASK.

Our world often forgets the truth of advent. It's not hard to get wrapped up in it ourselves. Decorating and planning and cooking and traveling and gifting—it's four short weeks of celebration plus everything else.

Lord Jesus, I ask for myself this advent season, that I would be focused on the truth of Hebrews 1. That you came. You spoke, You purified, and You reign, now and forever. I ask that I would live in the knowledge of that daily. (PAUSE).

Lord Jesus, I ask for my family this advent season, that we would focus on this truth: That you came, and because of You and your love, we can love one another in a new and completely different way. (PAUSE).

Lord Jesus, I ask for my community of faith, that we would focus on this truth that because of You and your love, we can show kindness like You did and continue to. (PAUSE).

YIELD.

I return now to the text:

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.

We close our time with the first prayer of the advent wreath. The advent wreath is a symbol of the coming Christ child, and each Sunday, another candle is lit. It culminates with the lighting of the Christ candle, at the center, on Christmas Eve. This prayer was said at the lighting of the first candle.

Bestir, O Lord, Thy might, we pray thee and come; that, defended by Thee, we may deserve rescue from approaching dangers brought on by our sins, and being set free by Thee, obtain our salvation. Who livest and reignest, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.