

Advent (Week 1) – Hebrews 2:14-18

Main Idea: In Christ, God came into the world He created, becoming one of us so that we might become one with Him.

Introduction

As the Christmas season approaches each year, the church enters **a season historically known as Advent**. The word comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning “coming,” “arrival,” “invasion,” or “interruption.” Beginning in the fifth century, the church sets aside the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Day as a time to pause, reflect, and remember the miracle of the incarnation—not simply the birth of Jesus as a baby, but the eternal Son of God taking on human flesh in order to accomplish the mission of salvation (Luke 19:10). **Advent is a season of reflection and expectation, a time when we look back to the Word becoming flesh (John 1:14) and look forward to His final coming in glory.** In a culture saturated with commercialism, sentimentalism, and religious confusion, Advent keeps our focus on the truth the Scriptures so clearly declare: **In Christ, God Himself entered our world, stepped into the frailty of human existence, and took upon Himself the nature of those He came to redeem.** This year our Advent series come through the lens of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a letter written to show how Christ fulfills the entire Old Testament story as the One who brings the shadows of the old covenant into their true substance (Col. 2:17).

The Epistle to the Hebrews was written to a group of Jewish believers who were facing tremendous pressure and temptation to abandon Christ and return to the familiar customs, rituals, and legal practices of Judaism. Their faithfulness had become costly. Their communities opposed them, their families misunderstood them, and the comforts of old religious structures appealed to them. Into this environment, the author of Hebrews writes not poetry, but strong exhortation and serious encouragement. From the opening verses, he reminds them that God’s revelation has reached its fullness in Christ, who is the radiance of His glory and the exact imprint of His nature. Everything God spoke through the prophets finds its fulfillment in Christ as the Messiah. The entire structure of the old covenant—the priesthood, the sacrifices, the temple services—was never an end in itself but a shadow pointing forward to the substance found in Christ. The message is unmistakable: do not drift away from Christ, for He alone is the fulfillment of everything God has promised. For a people tempted to turn back to the old practices of Judaism, Hebrews proclaims that Christ is greater than all that came before Him.

I. Why Jesus Came | Hebrews 2:14-18

Hebrews 2:14-18 offers one of the most profound descriptions of the incarnation found in Scripture. The author tells us that since God’s people share in flesh and blood, the Son Himself likewise “partook of the same things.” This means **Christ did not merely appear as a man, nor did He simply act like a man. He truly became man.** He entered the full experience of human life, embracing weakness, suffering, sorrow, temptation, and even death. He felt hunger and thirst (John 4:7). He wept at the tomb of a friend (John 11:35). He experienced rejection, loneliness, and pain—This was not accidental—It was essential. Christ took on flesh so that through His death He might destroy the one who has the power of death—that is, the devil—and deliver those who live their entire lives enslaved to the fear of death (Rom. 8:1-2; Col. 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8). **To die, He had to become man, for God cannot die. Hence, the purpose of His birth was His death. Bethlehem was the beginning of a road that led with perfect intention to Calvary.** Jesus came not merely to teach or model virtue, but to stand in the place of sinners, to bear their guilt, to satisfy divine justice, and to free them from the tyranny of sin and fear. **The incarnation, therefore, is a deliberate divine intervention. It is God stepping into human suffering and death to conquer both.** Advent reminds us that God did not remain distant from the world He created. He entered it fully, taking on the condition of those, He came to save so that He might redeem them completely.

To Ponder:

1. How can you intentionally go structure this Advent season in your life (home, work, relationships) to focus on the true King rather than drifting into distractions?

The fear of death is not merely the fear of the unknown; it is the fear of judgment (Matt. 10:28; Rom. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:27; 1 John 4:17-18). Sin enslaves people, and death stands before every person as the doorway to accountability before God. But Christ came to break this power. By taking on flesh, dying in the place of sinners, and rising again, He removed the curse that hangs over humanity. The condemnation that rightly belonged to us was placed upon Him. This is why **only believers can face suffering without despair, trials without fear, and death without terror**. The One who became like us in every respect is also the One who intercedes for us, strengthens us, and promises to never leave us (Matt. 28:20; Rom. 8:34; Phil. 4:13; Heb. 4:15; 7:25; 13:5). **Advent proclaims that in Christ, God drew near to His people so that His people might draw near to Him without fear.**

To Ponder:

2. What fear most consistently shape the way you think and live (the fear of death, the fear of failure, fear of being misunderstood, fear of rejection, fear of losing control)? Where and how can you find rest as a believer?
3. What areas in your life do you need to respond with trust and obedience to Christ rather than worry and anxiety?

The account of the Magi in Matthew 2:1-12 gives a vivid picture of the response the Advent of Christ produces in people. These men traveled a great distance to find the One they had long heard about, most likely because generations earlier the prophet Daniel had instructed their predecessors in the Word of God. When they found the child, they bowed down and worshiped Him. Their joy was overwhelming, and their worship was truthful. Herod, however, responded very differently. When he heard that a King had been born, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. He saw Christ not as Savior but as a threat. His power, his control, his desires, and his comforts all felt endangered. **His reaction exposes the deeper issue that Advent confronts: the sinful heart does not naturally welcome Christ as King.** Wherever Christ's authority presses against the kingdom of self, the heart struggles. **Herod exemplifies the many false rulers that seek to dominate our lives—pride, lust, greed, anger, fear, and self-will.** These "kings" promise satisfaction but are only capable to produce slavery and destruction. They are pretenders to the throne that belongs only to Christ. The Magi, on the other hand, show us the right response. Having encountered the true King, they departed by another way rather than returning to Herod. Their direction changed as Christ took His rightful place on the throne of their lives. Those who bow before Him do not return to the old paths. **The story of the Magi and Herod teaches us that everything in life is either drawing us toward Christ or pulling us away from Him.** Advent calls us to examine the rulers we serve and to choose the better King, whose reign brings freedom, joy, and peace.

The entire narrative of Scripture moves toward the moment when God took on flesh. The old covenant, with its priests, sacrifices, laws, and rituals, was never the final answer. These were shadows that anticipated the coming of the One who would fulfill them all. Christ's coming is the turning point of redemptive history. He is the better sacrifice, the final High Priest, the true Temple, and the perfect revelation of the Father. **The incarnation is the moment the promises of God become reality in the flesh of His own Son.** Advent calls us to rest in this truth. Christ came because we could not save ourselves. He came because sin had enslaved us, death threatened us, and the devil accused us. He came because no human effort, no amount of religious performance, and no act of moral improvement could ever bring us back to God. He came because He was willing, in love, to enter the brokenness we created and restore the life we lost. And **because He came, we can walk in a new direction with joy, hope, and assurance that He is with us.**

To Ponder:

4. What "false kings" most often sit on the throne of your life decisions (ex: comfort, anger, envy, approval, lust, success, control)?
5. Considering what happened to the Magi, what would it practically look like for you to "go another way" as you seek to follow Christ faithfully?