# **Advent**

Meditations,
prayers,
scripture, and
recorded new hymns
for
public worship and
personal devotions

from the series:

Fresh Views of Timelemss Truths

Ken Bible

LNWhymns.com

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### Isaiah 40:3-5

(NASB)

"Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the uneven ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley; Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

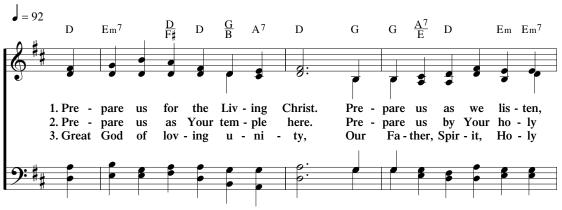
# O God, for me make the waiting...

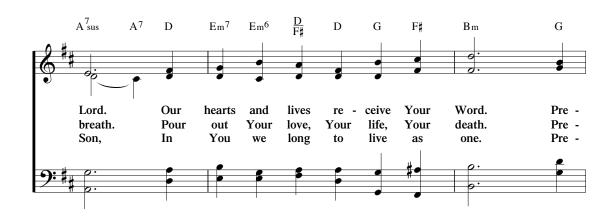
O God,
for me
make the
waiting and
hoping of Advent
no longer just a season,
but a constant hunger for You.

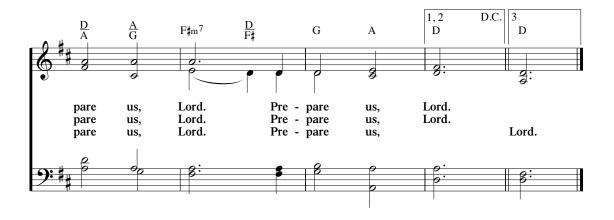
Hymn Recording: Prepare Us

# Prepare Us

Isaiah 40:3-5







WORDS & MUSIC: Ken Bible

PREPARE US 8.8.8.4.

#### Genesis 3:14-19

(NASB)

Then the Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,

Cursed are you more than all the livestock,

And more than any animal of the field;

On your belly you shall go,

And dust you shall eat

All the days of your life;

And I will make enemies

Of you and the woman,

And of your offspring and her Descendant;

He shall bruise you on the head,

And you shall bruise Him on the heel."

To the woman He said,

"I will greatly multiply

Your pain in childbirth,

In pain you shall deliver children;

Yet your desire will be for your husband,

And he shall rule over you."

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

Cursed is the ground because of you;

With hard labor you shall eat from it

All the days of your life.

Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;

Yet you shall eat the plants of the field;

By the sweat of your face

You shall eat bread,

Until you return to the ground,

Because from it you were taken;

For you are dust,

And to dust you shall return."

#### God's Promise to Adam and Eve

God made us like Himself. He made us lords, to rule over His creation. He made our home a beautiful garden and filled it with all we could ever want or need. He drew near to us. He walked with us. Life was beauty, abundance, wholeness, harmony, and peace.

Sovereign God honored us with the power to make choices. We used that power to reject Him. We mistrusted His goodness. In our arrogance we ignored His wisdom and pursued our own way. We still do, and every day we eat the bitter fruit of our fear and pride.

But when we rejected Him, God did not reject us. Even in judging us He planted the seeds of our salvation:

- He decreed that an age-long battle would ensue between Satan and Eve's
  descendants. Satan would strike their heel, but they would strike his head. They
  would crush it. This is the Bible's first promise of Messiah. A Son of Man, a
  descendent of Eve, a Deliverer would forever defeat Satan and end his
  destructive influence over our race.
- 2. Even death, our greatest curse and punishment, became part of His plan of salvation. What a tragedy it would have been for us to live forever in our fallen state, separated from God, the source of all good! Therefore in love God immediately proclaimed that we would die, and He closed the path to the tree of life so that our corrupted condition wouldn't go on forever (Genesis 3:24). Death, though terrible, could end our separation from Him, if we chose to repent and trust Him again. Death could reopen the way to life, to rebirth, to a new creation where life would be all He intended it to be.

With paradise destroyed, within minutes our loving God began to unveil the marvelous mystery of salvation—a salvation already planned before the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34; Ephesians 1:3-4; Revelation 13:8). He immediately began to point us toward Jesus Christ.

Father, we cannot fully grasp Your goodness.

It is too far above us.

It is too broad in time.

We cannot trace Your love and all its magnificent ways.

Hymn Recording: <u>Before the Starry Universe</u>

# **Before the Starry Universe**



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CCLI Song #3980954. For CCLI information call 1-800-234-2446.

8.6.8.6.8.6. w. Ref.

MUSIC: English Melody

### Isaiah 55:1-2

(NASB)

"You there! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance."

### **Desire God**

```
People long for God,
      their Creator,
      their source,
      their completion,
      their Father.
Even as they
      ignore Him or
      deny Him,
       run from Him or
      try to replace Him,
He is their longing.
He is their desire.
He is their fulfillment.
For believers as well,
He is what is missing.
He is what we chase in
      so many wrong directions.
Turn to
       Him.
Desire
       Him.
Long for
       Him,
      the All-in-all.
```

Hymn Recording: **Hear the Longing** 

# Hear the Longing



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Traditional Folk Tune and Ken Bible LONGING FOR GOD 4.4.7.4.4.7.D.

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### Micah 5:2-5a

(NIV)

But you, Bethlehem...though you are small...out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace.

### 2 Corinthians 1:20

(NASB)

As many as the promises of God are, in Him they are yes; therefore through Him also is our Amen to the glory of God through us.

# **Christmas Is the Story of a Promise**

```
Christmas is the story of a Promise.
For hundreds of years
God had been making
promises to His people.
He had promised
      a Prince,
      a Shepherd,
      a Healer,
      a Conqueror,
      a Prophet,
      a Priest,
      a Lion,
      a Lamb.
He had promised
      Peace.
He had promised
      Freedom.
He had promised
      Love and Life
      without end.
Finally,
one evening,
in the blackness of midnight,
the promises all came wrapped together
as one magnificent Promise.
The Promise was
```

a Baby. The Promise was

The Promise was

and the Promise is Jesus.

Emmanuel.

God Himself.

Christmas is the story of a Promise,

Hymn Recording: <u>The Promise</u>

# The Promise

TUNE: The Holly and the Ivy 2 Corinthians 1:20



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arr. by Ken Bible

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# Isaiah 40:9-11

(NASB)

Go up on a high mountain, Zion, messenger of good news, Raise your voice forcefully, Jerusalem, messenger of good news; Raise it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

Behold, the Lord God will come with might, With His arm ruling for Him.
Behold, His compensation is with Him,
And His reward before Him.

Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry them in the fold of His robe; He will gently lead the nursing ewes.

### **Father, Give Me Jesus**

Father, Jesus is all Your holiness,

Your wisdom,

Your purity and love.

He is all Your truth,

Your completeness,

Your perfection.

As I know Him,

I want to know Him more.

As I want Him,

I gladly release everything else.

Father, You eagerly give me everything good.

Give me Jesus.

Give me His Spirit,

His mind,

His beautiful, unbroken relationship with You.

Give Him to every individual I love.

Give Him to Your Church,

to our entire race.

Father, for every hunger,

every need,

every day,

give us Jesus.

Father, in Jesus Christ You give us
all that Your boundless love
ever longed to give.
All Your power,
all Your wisdom, love, and holiness are
complete in Him, and
He is ours, and
we are Yours.

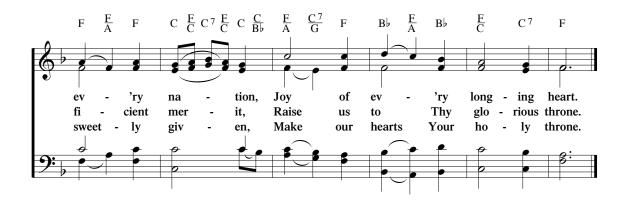
Hymn Recording: Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus

# Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus



WORDS: Charles Wesley and Ken Bible MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7.D.



### John 1:14-18

(NASB)

The Word became flesh, and dwelt [lit., "tabernacled"] among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and called out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who is coming after me has proved to be my superior, because He existed before me." For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him.

#### Matthew 5:17

(NASB)

"Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill."

### Hebrews 10:11-14

(NASB)

Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but [Christ], having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

#### **Christ in Genesis and Exodus**

In Genesis, at the very beginning, when God spoke the universe into existence, Jesus Christ was that sovereign, creative Word. All that the Father willed, the Word brought to reality (Genesis 1; John 1:1-18).

Christ was the deliverer God promised to Adam and Eve. He was their descendant who would crush Satan's head (Genesis 3:15).

Christ was the rainbow's promise to Noah that in the face of overwhelming evil, life would always triumph (Genesis 8:21; 9:8-17).

Christ was the heir promised to Abraham and the sacrifice God provided in place of Isaac (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:4; 22:8, 14).

Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest. Melchizedek and the entire Old Testament priesthood pointed ahead to Him (Genesis 14:17-20; Hebrews 7; 10:19-23).

In the Exodus, Christ was the Passover lamb. Through His blood God's people were saved from death (Exodus 12). Christ was the manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16) and the Bread of the Presence (Exodus 25:30). His life was the completion of the entire sacrificial system and won forgiveness for all our race (Hebrews 10:11-14).

Jesus Christ fulfilled Sinai's law for all of us (Matthew 5:17; Romans 10:4). Moses saw the back of God for a few seconds (Exodus 33:18-23; 34:1-7). In Christ we see Him face-to-face and are changed into His glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).

The Tabernacle in the wilderness feasted our senses on reminders of God's presence (Exodus 40), but Jesus Christ is Himself God's tabernacle among us and within us (John 1:14).

Under the Old Testament law, the transcendent God could not be pictured in physical form, and anyone who tried was guilty of idolatry. But Jesus Christ is "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15) and "the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3, NIV).

In the creation, at Sinai, and in the wilderness, to Adam and Abraham and all God's people, the Father longed to make Himself known and trusted and loved. His desire is fulfilled completely and forever in Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God with Us.

Consider this:
Why did God wait so long before sending
Jesus Christ,

the final answer for all our needs?

Because we can't understand Him without
the law, the history, the Psalms, and the prophets.

They form the necessary backdrop for
all He is and all He has done.

Without them, we can't fully receive Him as
the fulfillment of all God's promises and purposes,
as our Sacrifice, our Great High Priest, our Redeemer, and our King.

**Hymn Recording: Christ in Genesis and Exodus** 

# Christ in Genesis and Exodus

TUNE: Once in Royal David's City (IRBY)

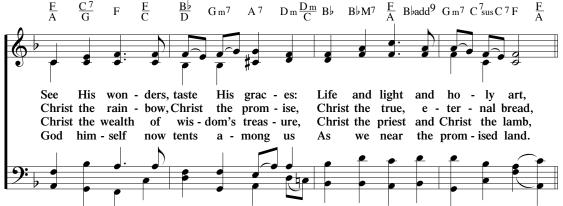
Genesis 1; 3:15; 8:21; 9:8-17; 12:1-3; 14:17-20; 15:4; 22;

Exodus 12; 15; 16; 19; 25:8-9, 30; 33:18-23; 34:1-7; 40:34-38;

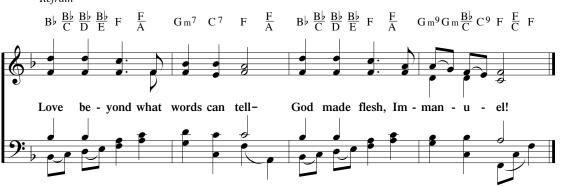
Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-18

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-18

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#### Psalm 98

(NASB)

Sing a new song to the Lord,
For He has done wonderful things,
His right hand and His holy arm have [a]gained the victory for Him.
The Lord has made His salvation known;
He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered His graciousness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel;
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth;
Be cheerful and sing for joy and sing praises.
Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
With the lyre and the [b]sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord.

May the sea roar and all it contains,
The world and those who dwell in it.
May the rivers clap their hands,
May the mountains sing together for joy
Before the Lord, for He is coming to judge the earth;
He will judge the world with righteousness
And the peoples with fairness.

#### **Reflection on Psalm 98**

From the very beginning, God has longed to be with His people. From the garden to the wilderness, from the tabernacle to the temple, God has burned with the desire to live among His people and be their God in the fullest possible sense. He planned it. He promised it, and in His absolute sovereignty, He determined that it would be so. He came once to become one of us and to give His own life to rescue us. And He left only to pour out His Spirit on us and to prepare for our full, eternal union with Him. The same sovereign love that caused Him to come once is bringing Him back. He has promised, and He yearns for us with the heart of a Father. Nothing can keep Him away. Nothing. All His people, all the nations, all creation, rejoice! Stay ready! Wait expectantly! HE IS COMING!

**Hymn Recording: Psalm 98** 

# Psalm 98

Tune: WARRENTON, alt. (Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing)



MUSIC: The Sacred Harp, 1844, and Ken Bible

WARRENTON 2 8.7.8.7.w.Ref.

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### Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

(NASB)

The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.

For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace On the throne of David and over his kingdom,

To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of armies will accomplish this.

# **Christ the Light**

#### Darkness:

separation from Light ignorance uncertainty suffering fear lostness grief death

#### Light:

the presence of God truth knowing complete well-being joy belonging love life

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:4-5, NIV)

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12, NIV)

The city [New Jerusalem] has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb. (Revelation 21:23, NASB)

Hymn Recording: Christ the Light

Christ the Light *Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; 60:1-3, 19-21; Luke 1:76-79; John 1:4-9; 8:12;* 1 John 1:5; Revelation 21: 22-27; 22:5, 16



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#### Isaiah 11:1-9

(NASB)

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch from his roots will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
And He will delight in the fear of the Lord,
And He will not judge by what His eyes see,
Nor make decisions by what His ears hear;
But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
And decide with fairness for the humble of the earth;
And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.
Also righteousness will be the belt around His hips,

And faithfulness the belt around His waist.

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
And the calf and the young lion and the fattened steer will be together;
And a little boy will lead them.
Also the cow and the bear will graze,
Their young will lie down together,
And the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,
And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.
They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
As the waters cover the sea.

### **Kingdom of Peace**

Peace begins in God.

It begins with His completeness in Himself and with the love and perfect unity among the Father, Son, and Spirit.

Peace comes to us in Christ.

He who is one with the Father and one with the Spirit became one of us.

And as we simply trust Him, like children, He becomes one *with* us.

When Christ has finished what He has started, when we are one with Him, we will be one with the Father and one with the Spirit as well.

As we are one with them,

we will also be one with each other, and the peace of God will be perfect and complete.

Creation itself will then be transformed.

As Romans 8 says:

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration...

in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. (vv.19-21, NIV)

Peace will reign in all creation:

no more disharmony; only

unity,

contentment,

completeness, and

well-being;

full, open, fruitful, unimpaired relationships throughout all reality.

Just imagine!

Beauty and truth,
pleasure and purity,
humanity and holiness,
justice and mercy, will be
full and in perfect harmony,
just as they have always been

```
full and in perfect harmony in God.

Art and science,
celebration and reflection,
giving and receiving,
worship and play
will simply be facets of being in Him constantly and completely.

Everyone will be
beautiful in their God-breathed individuality.
We will be
```

We will be
like Him,
with Him, and
complete in Him
forever.

O come, Prince of Peace!

Hymn Recording: Peace, Peace, Peace

# Peace, Peace, Peace

TUNE: Still, Still, Still Romans 5:1-11



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Traditional Austrian Melody; arr. by Ken Bible STILL, STILL, STILL 3.6.9.8.3.6.

# 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

(NASB)

The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

### **God Keeps His Promises**

During His final days on earth, Jesus told His disciples what was to come:

"All the nations of the earth... will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

(Matthew 24:30-31, NIV)

Every year Advent and Christmas shout this truth: God keeps His promises.
Though the promises are ancient, and the wait is long, and the fulfillment seems so improbable,
God always keeps His promises.

For centuries God had spoken through His prophets, telling in amazing detail of a coming Messiah.

Jesus Christ came exactly as prophesied.

The same God promises that this same Jesus will come again.

He urges us to be watchful, to be faithful, for the Day will come when least expected.

Lord, we are watching. We are waiting. We are obeying. Come, Lord Jesus!

The great drama of salvation, with all its faithfulness and betrayal, its patient endurance and apostasy, its self-centeredness and self-sacrifice, is going on right now.

Each of us is taking part day by day.

Father, when Jesus returns, may I be faithfully at my post, trusting, serving, and eagerly expecting Him.

**Hymn Recording: The Trumpet Will Sound** 

# The Trumpet Will Sound

Matthew 24:30-31; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 7:10-12; 22:20



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MUSIC: George Frederick Handel and Ken Bible

TRUMPET CALL

5.5.9.5.5.9.5.5.7.



### **Isaiah 65:17**

(NASB)

behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.

### John 14:1-3

(NASB)

"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms; if that were not so, I would have told you, because I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will take you to Myself, so that where I am, there you also will be."

### **Energetic Waiting**

```
Waiting on You is
      active and
      energetic.
You call us to wait
      focused on You,
      trusting You,
      obeying You,
      glorifying You,
      serving You wholeheartedly,
       eagerly anticipating
             our full joining with You.
Father, we believe that You are
      all You say You are.
We believe You will do
       all You say You will do.
You say You will judge the world
      in perfect righteousness.
You say Your judgment
      could come at any moment.
You say Your judgment
      will determine our eternal destiny:
deep and endless life or
      deep and endless death,
unending joy in You or
      unspeakable separation from You.
So, today and every day
we will await Your coming
      actively and
      energetically.
Our hearts will be standing at the door,
```

waiting,

listening, and longing for You.

Father, You call us to wait on You.

passive.

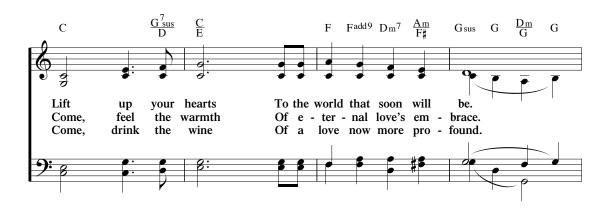
But the waiting You want is not

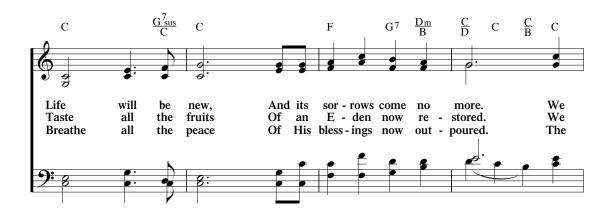
Hymn Recording: Come, Our Lord!

# Come, Our Lord!

TUNE: Old Black Joe *Isaiah 65:17-25; Revelation 21:1-22:5* 







WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Stephen C. Foster; arr. by Ken Bible FOSTER Irregular

