

TAKE TIME OUT

Pastoral Retreat

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ADVENT MEDITATIONS



November/December 2020

Week before Advent: CHRIST the KING

Psalm 47:8-9

⁸God is King over the nations; God sits on His holy throne. ⁹The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

Opening prayer:

In Christ we have a King; **who holds a Shepherd's staff.**

In Christ we have a King; **a stranger among the known.**

In Christ we have a King; **servicing the Word of God.**

Our King serves us; **by washing our feet.**

Our King serves us; **with a body broken in love.**

Our King serves us; **from a wooden throne.**

Christ is our King; **holds the poor and the needy.**

Christ is our King; **gives His life for us all.**

Christ is our King; **meets us here and now.**

Let us worship the King of all Kings; **let us worship our Servant and Lord.**

CHRIST WAS!

John 1:1-5 *The deity of Jesus*

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in Him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Poem: JESUS ©Janice Morgan 1994

*He has been there since time began,
He is both the Spirit and the Man.
Thinking; contemplating; weighing all things,
Considering creation as all heaven sings.
He spoke and it happened in heaven and earth,
Then things seen and unseen were given their birth.
The Light in the darkness, the Word to the lost.
The giver of life Who will not count the cost.
The brightness of love shining out from His face,
The touch of His healing the warmth of His grace.
His presence brings peace and the breath of His power,
He is strength to His people in their weakest hour.
In the fullness of glory He sits on His throne,*

*Yet the smallest of us to His heart is well known.
He is in all things, and all things are in Him,
He is everything manifest, though our vision is dim.
All seeing, all knowing, encompassing all,
His countenance drawing His flock to His call.
He is the visible of God the invisible,
He is the humanity of God the Spiritual.
The epitome of wholeness, the reality of God.*

CD: The Best Worship Songs...ever! **Disc 2: Track 12: Jesus be the Centre**
by Michael Frye& Kathryn Scott *can be found in SF 1377*

Jesus, be the Centre, be my source, be my light, Jesus.
Jesus, be the Centre, be my source, be my light, Jesus.

Chorus:...

*Be the fire in my heart, be the wind in these sails;
Be the reason that I live, Jesus, Jesus.*

Jesus, be the Centre, be my hope, be my song, Jesus.
Jesus, be the Centre, be my hope, be my song, Jesus.

Chorus:...

Jesus, be my vision, be my path, be my guide, Jesus.
Jesus, be my vision, be my path, be my guide, Jesus.

Chorus:...

Jesus, be the Centre, be my source, be my light, Jesus.
Jesus, be the Centre, be my source, be my light, Jesus.

Chorus:...

CHRIST IS!

Daniel 7:13-14

¹³As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And He came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. ¹⁴To Him was given dominion and glory and Kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and His Kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

John 18:33-37

³³Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" ³⁵Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have You done?" ³⁶Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If My kingdom were from this world, My followers would be fighting to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, My kingdom is not from here." ³⁷Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the Truth. Everyone who belongs to the Truth listens to My voice."

CD: The Best Worship Songs...ever! **Disc 3: Track 12: JESUS CHRIST** (once again)
by Matt Redman *can be found in SF 865*

Jesus Christ, I think upon Your sacrifice,
You became nothing, poured out to death.
Many times I've wondered at Your gift of life,
And I'm in that place once again.
And I'm in that place once again.

Chorus:...

*And once again I look upon the cross where You died,
I'm humbled by Your mercy and I'm broken inside.
Once again I thank You; Once again I pour out my life.*

Now You are exalted to the highest place,
King of the heavens, where one day I'll bow.
But for now, I marvel at this saving grace,
And I'm full of praise once again.
I'm full of praise once again.

Chorus:...

Thank You for the cross,
Thank You for the cross,
Thank You for the cross, my Friend.

(Repeat)

Chorus:...

*And once again I look upon the cross where You died,
I'm humbled by Your mercy and I'm broken inside.
Once again I thank You; Once again I pour out my life.*

CHRIST will COME AGAIN!

Acts 1:6-11

⁶So when they had come together, they asked Him, "Lord, is this the time when You will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by His own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹When He had said this, as they were watching, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. ¹⁰While He was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, Who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven."

Revelation 14:14

Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like the Son of man, with a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand!

Revelation 19:16

¹⁶On His robe and on His thigh He has a name inscribed, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Reflection:

"What did we just see?" said Theophilus. The other disciples with him were looking as dazed as he felt. They all slowly turned together and started walking back to Jerusalem, but none knew how to answer his question. It was a day's journey and they trudged for some time in silence. When they stopped for a rest to take food and drink, they felt more able to talk about what had happened. Andrew broke the silence, "I don't know what we have just experienced but things Jesus told us are beginning to come together." "What do you mean?" asked Simon. "Well, we asked Him if this was the time He would restore the kingdom to Israel. But He said that time was not for us to know." "I've been thinking about that too" said Bartholomew. "But what did we see?" asked Theophilus again. "I want to know if you saw the same thing or if I was dreaming or had somehow slipped into a trance-like state?"

Thomas was quick to reply, "Well I saw Jesus lifted up off the ground by some invisible force, then a cloud came and He disappeared out of sight. Then, suddenly there were two men dressed all in white standing beside us but I didn't see them come and I didn't see them go! Once before I didn't believe, I will not make the same mistake twice, so, if I say that's what I saw, that's what happened!" The others all laughed and it broke the intensity of processing events. Peter and John spoke in unison, "Good for you Thomas!" Theophilus had difficulty speaking he was laughing so much with relief. "Thanks Thomas, at least now I know what I saw was real". Andrew was still lost in thought, "Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will give us power, but what does that mean, I wonder?" "Perhaps He meant the same kind of power we have seen in Him, you know, signs, wonders, and miracles?" said Peter. "We have already experienced something like it" John replied. Bartholomew took a good swig from his pouch before he spoke. "Just before Jesus floated above ground He said that we would be witnesses not just in Jerusalem but all over the world. I can't get that out of my mind and I think He meant that His Kingdom is not limited to Jerusalem, but exists wherever people believe and hold Him in their hearts." "Wow! That's deep" said Thomas. "Yes it is" said John, "But I think Bart's on to something. I've been pondering what Jesus meant by excluding Israel in His reply to our question. 'Israel' encompasses the people of God, could it be that God's people now include everyone who believes, no matter who they are or where they come from?" "That makes sense" said Peter, "remember how the temple curtain was torn in two? But I can't quite get my head around what we do about 'unclean' things and including those who don't even know these laws." Andrew suddenly jumped up! "Perhaps that's where the Holy Spirit comes in? The link of understanding and power between humans and God! If we believe and trust, all things will be made clear to us, didn't Jesus tell us that?" They all fell into silence once more, pondering what had been discussed. Simon broke the silence this time, "Well, all I can think about is the words of those two mysterious men in white. They said that Jesus would come back in the same way we saw Him go. But we don't know when, so we had better get ready and keep ourselves ready. We don't want Jesus finding us sleeping again, like in the Garden of Gethsemane!" They all wholeheartedly agreed, and with that, got up and continued their journey back to Jerusalem chatting happily together about their thoughts, motivated for whatever future the Lord may lead them to.

CD: Songs of Fellowship Hymns **Disc 1: Track 7: King of the Ages**
by Stewart Townend & Keith Getty *can be found in* **SF 1407**

Chorus...
King of the ages, Almighty God,
Perfect love, ever just and true.
Who will not fear You and bring You praise?
All the nations will come to You.

Your ways of love have won my heart,
And brought me joy unending.
Your saving power at work in me,
Bringing peace and the hope of glory.

Chorus...

Your arms of love are reaching out
To every soul that seeks You;
Your light will shine in all the earth,
Bringing grace and a great salvation.

Chorus...

The day will come when You appear,
And every eye shall see You.
Then we shall rise with hearts ablaze,
With a song we will sing forever.

Chorus...

CHRIST the KING...come!

Closing Prayer:

Turning round in never ending orbit, our world repeats its cycle
Creation set on life's sustaining path is placed in human hands
Things fall apart that human minds refuse to hold in centre
Order from chaos is turned around and anarchy runs riot

Creator God, help us, each and every one, to see beyond our surface!

Through time we shall compare the ages
A myriad deceitful gospels assault our hearing
Some subtle flicker on the edge of vision, perhaps a trick of light
But wait – resurrection softly beating; perception that life is shifting
Revelation is breaking out; surely Christ's Second Coming is close?

Lord Jesus, help us, each and every one, to distinguish between Truth and fiction!

The One who ordered the constellations and made the bubble secure
They watch and wait their course to take in dazzling whiteness cleansing
We hardly dare to look, but stare upon events apocalyptic unfolding
With blinded eyes we turn to Christ, His glory no longer in heaven
But here on earth, back from the tomb, the Son of Man returned.

Holy Spirit, help us, each and every one, to be ready to make You welcome!

Amen!
