

Waiting for a Prophet

Advent in the Church calendar is the season leading up to Christmas, it is the time when we anticipate or wait for the coming of Christ. In the Old Testament there were three official offices, prophet, priest and king. In all three roles there is a sense of anticipation of someone better to come, someone who fulfills those roles perfectly. Our Advent series this year explores those roles and their fulfillment in Christ.

Deuteronomy 18: 14-22

1. Read Deut 18: 14-15. What is the key word? What similarities do you see between the nations in v14 and today's world?
2. What was the role of a prophet? (v18-19) Why was it important to listen and obey the prophets?
3. Moses, the author of Deuteronomy was seen as the archetypal prophet but was nearing his death. Who are some of the great prophets God raised up throughout the Old Testament? What were their limitations?
4. We get a sense throughout the Old Testament that people were still waiting for the ultimate prophet. What about the New Testament? (See John 1:21; 6:14; 7:40)
5. Who does the New Testament church see as the fulfillment of this expectation? (See Deut 18: 15, 18-19; Acts 3:23-26)
6. The Old Testament prophets were great but how is Jesus so much more? (See Heb 1:1-3)
7. Thinking about Jesus fulfilling the prophet role, at Christmas what are we celebrating? (See John 1:14)
8. How might we respond to Jesus? (See Deut 18:15; Matt 17:5)

Over the Advent period we are often bombarded with a cacophony of messages so it can be a good idea to set aside time to listen to Jesus in preparation for celebrating Christmas. Share some Advent activities you have found helpful and think about what you and your family might like to commit to this year.

For example, use an Advent Devotional book, read through the book of Luke one chapter a day, use an Advent calendar, work through BibleProject Advent guide (<https://bibleproject.com/guides/advent/>), listen to an Advent podcast (<https://www.desiringgod.org/great-joy>), as you set up a nativity scene discuss what each piece represents and what they heard, and so on.

Pray Together

Give thanks that God has spoken to us through his Son, Jesus.

Pray for each other as you seek to listen to Jesus amidst the clutter of the weeks leading up to Christmas. Ask him to show you something you had not noticed before about his glory.

Waiting for a Priest

Hebrews 10:1-18

1. What do you know about the role of the Priest in the Old Testament?
2. What was the major limitation of the Priestly system? (Heb: 1-4, 11)
3. If God doesn't desire sacrifices that he, himself instituted, what does he want of us? (See Heb 10:5-7, also Ps 40:6-8, Hos 6:6, Rom 12:1)
4. How does Jesus fulfil God's desire perfectly? (Heb 10: 8-10; John 4:34; Luke 22:42)
5. What are the tenses of salvation outlined in Heb 10:12-16 (what has happened, is happening and will happen)?
6. What is the God gave the Israelites (Jer 31:31-34) and how is it fulfilled in Jesus (Heb 10: 15-18)?
7. What is the best response we can have as we understand what Jesus has achieved for us (Heb 10:19-22)?

Pray Together

Take some time to ask God for forgiveness of your sins and give thanks for the forgiveness we have in Christ.

Waiting for a King

Think about some of the kings in our world and in history. What do you know about kings? What is your attitude to kings and monarchy? What makes a good king today?

2 Samuel 7:1-17

1. In the Old Testament what made a good King for Israel? (See Deut 17: 14-20; 2 Sam 7:1-17)
2. King David's dynasty ended in 587BC. How did the Old Testament prophets understand the promise God made in 1 Sam 7:16? (See Isaiah 9:7)
3. How did the New Testament church understand the promise of 1 Sam 7:16? (See Acts 2:29-33; Heb 1:8 quoting Ps 45:6-7)
4. What did Jesus claim for himself? (See Matt 19:28; Matt 13:41)
5. When did Jesus' kingdom commence? Is Jesus King today?
6. What does it mean that Jesus is the King of Kings? (See Eph 1: 21-23; Phil 1:5-11; Rom 14:10-11)
7. What does Jesus expect of us? (Matt 6:33) How might our attitude to monarchies today interfere with our relationship to Jesus as our King?
8. As we approach Christmas what aspects of Jesus kingship and kingdom will you be celebrating?

For more on the Kingdom of God watch <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/gospel-kingdom/>;

Pray Together

Take time to praise and worship Jesus as King.