

Jesus, was always the Son of God, was always God, One with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus did not become the Son of God, Jesus was the Son of God in His incarnation. Our Author explained the manner in which Jesus is God and Man, ("found to be with Child through the Holy Spirit.") By the way, this is the only place in the Bible where Joseph is called the, "son of David." It is mentioned to show Jesus' legal descent from David through Joseph. Although Joseph wasn't strictly the father of Jesus, he was the one appointed by God to take on the legal requirements of His father. This Man, born of Mary was David's Son by Joseph's legal paternity and God's Son by the Holy Spirit. It is a marvellous thing.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Ⓟ O heavenly Father, we give You our humble and joyful thanks for the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the salvation You have provided for all the people of the world in Him we praise Your Holy name. Keep us mindful of His Second Advent of our Savior, when in exaltation we will join Him in the eternity of bliss.

In the assurance that You are here to listen to all who call on You in truth and purity, we pray for all people everywhere. Let Your Spirit prevail in every home and school, in every shop and store, and in every kind of labor or industry. Show Your honor and glory to the nations of the Earth. Overthrow all who would hinder the progress of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Protect and defend all who are persecuted for His name's sake, and prosper all who love Your truth. Be with the homeless, the fatherless, and the comfortless, help them in their affliction to trust in You. Send them the deliverance that will turn their hearts and bring them to a confession of that name that is above every name, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

For the wounded in spirit, the sick in mind, the distressed in heart, we pray that You would make Your face shine on them. For all strangers, all travelers, and all who are away from home in any service or calling, we pray and ask You to accompany them with Your light and love.

For captives and prisoners, for the desolate and forsaken, and for all in peril of life or soul, we implore Your aid and comfort. For the sick and the aged, for those in labor and those in anguish, for the dying and those who mourn their passing, be a most gracious Host.

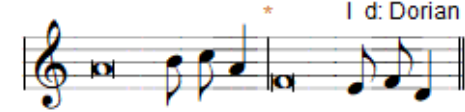
Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. **(Time of silent prayer.)**

For the gift which no words can describe, the gift of Jesus, we pray. O heavenly Father, we ask that this gift may be ours in faith. Grant that our hearts are a fit dwelling place for Your Son and that we will know the joy of His presence, the blessing of following Him and have life in His name.

© **Amen.**

ADVENT FOUR

Chant Tone



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| <p>Introit</p> <p>Oh that You would rend the heavens and — come down,* that the mountains might quake at Your — presence.</p> <p>I wait for the Lord, my — soul waits,* and in His word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord,* more than watchmen for the — morning.</p> | <p>O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love,* and with Him is plentiful — redemption. And He will redeem Israel* from all his in iquities.</p> <p>Glory be to the Father and to the Son* and to the Holy — Spirit; as it was in the be — ginning,* is now, and will be forever. — Amen.</p> <p>Oh that you would rend the heavens and — come down,* that the mountains might quake at your — presence.</p> <p><i>(Antiphon, Isaiah 64:1; Psalm 130:5-8)</i></p> |
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Collect of the Day

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of — Zion!*
Shout aloud, O daughter of Je | rusalem!
Behold, Your King is com | ing to you;*
righteous and having salva | tion is He.
Blessèd is He who comes in the name | of the Lord.*
We bless You from the house | of the Lord.

(Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26 alternative)

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ENTRANCE PRAYER: O Lord of hosts and King of glory, we come before You eagerly anticipating the celebration of Your Son's birth. We give You thanks for clearly identifying Him through Your prophet Isaiah as the one born of a virgin. We thank You that through Your Word we can clearly trace His earthly ancestry to King David. We are sure that He Who was born in Bethlehem is truly the One You promised to send. For all the marvelous things You have done we sing Your praise in high exaltation. As the day approaches when He will come again as Judge of all nations, keep us mindful of the urgency of our task, that Your Church will go quickly and spread the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

THE SEASON OF ADVENT DRAWS TO A CLOSE, THE CANDLES IN THE ADVENT WREATH ARE ALL LIT, THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS IS UPON US. In the excitement of the final days we begin to hurry ever more on our goal to get all of our shopping done, all of our cards to those remembered people, and our special goal of getting some time to relax. God has invited us all in this Advent Season to prepare: Prepare our voices to sing His praises, Prepare our bodies to go and worship, Prepare our hearts to receive Jesus for our life and salvation. We welcome all who worship with us on this fourth and final Sunday of Advent. There is nothing more delightful than singing the hymns of the season, with high exaltation to God for the glories that abound.

THEME OF THE DAY:

The Birth of Jesus

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Isaiah 64:1) Psalm 130:5-8

Isaiah 64 is the continuation of a prayer from the people. In verse 1 they were pleading with God, both from their status as the chosen and from God's knowledge and concern, that He would appear in some remarkable and surprising manner against their enemies. Psalm 130 is one of the "Song of Ascents," author unknown. Verses 5-8, encourage waiting, hoping, and watching that God will fulfill all He has promised. Put together we ask that God would use His marvelous power to defeat our enemies with His Second Advent to vindicate us from those who claim He does not exist.

COLLECT

Our Collect reminds us that we (the New Testament people,) are at all times looking forward to the Second Coming of Jesus. We ask that God would do this work, "quickly."

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Isaiah 7:10-17

Isaiah was sent to Ahaz to persuade him to trust in God rather than to rely on political alliances. He was warned that judgment was coming on his allies. Instead of trusting God, Ahaz gave his allegiance to Assyria. Isaiah told Ahaz that Assyria would also be destroyed unless he believed in God. God offered Ahaz a sign as proof. Ahaz pretended that he didn't want to test God. The truth is that Ahaz didn't want to believe. Ahaz wore out God's patience and received the sign of our marvelous virgin born Savior, not in his lifetime, but in the Fullness of Time.

GRADUAL—Zechariah 9:9, Psalm 118:26 alternative

Our trust is in the return of our King, the Lord. Zechariah. 9:9 is in our Gradual, to remind us about the Palm Sunday event, Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, His Advent in power. Psalm 118 is an unidentified song of praise. It is sung in anticipation of the coming Savior. We sing in exaltation as we wait for marvelous Second Advent of our Christ.

EPISTLE LESSON—Romans 1:1-7

Jesus Christ came in human form through the line of David. He came in a state of humiliation (which we commemorate in a few days) but later entered into a state of exaltation. True man He is also true God. He came with the power of God, and set aside that power to die on the cross. He is coming to us in His Second Advent in the power God, to bring us to that marvelous place where we will never die.

GOSPEL LESSON—Matthew 1:18-25

Our Gospel Lesson concentrates on the Man, Jesus, Who lived in the First Century in Palestine. The Author's concern was to show that the Man,