

## **Goosebumps & Justice Advent Reflections**

### **1 & 2**

#### **Opening Words**

A: Light looked down and saw the darkness.

B: 'I will go there!', said light.

A: Peace looked down and saw war.

B: 'I will go there!', said Peace.

A: Love looked down and saw hatred.

B: 'I will go there!', said Love.

A: So, he,  
The Lord of Light,  
the Prince of Peace  
the King of Love  
came down  
and crept in  
beside us.

B: Be still  
for our waiting God  
is shuffling among the heavens  
not with tinsel and starlight  
but with the weight of justice

A: Be still  
for the incarnation is anxious  
labouring in the womb  
impatient for the birth  
of righteousness

B: Be still  
for there are cracks in the darkness  
brief now  
but with the breaking of bread  
they lengthen

This is advent  
The preparing

### **1 & 2**

#### **John 1**

<sup>1-2</sup> The Word was first,  
the Word present to God,  
God present to the Word.

The Word was God,  
in readiness for God from day one.  
<sup>3-5</sup>Everything was created through him;  
nothing—not one thing!—  
came into being without him.  
What came into existence was Life,  
and the Life was Light to live by.  
The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness;  
the darkness couldn't put it out.  
<sup>6-8</sup>There once was a man, his name John, sent by God to point out the way to  
the Life-Light. He came to show everyone where to look, who to believe in.  
John was not himself the Light; he was there to show the way to the Light.  
<sup>9-13</sup>The Life-Light was the real thing:  
Every person entering Life  
he brings into Light.  
He was in the world,  
the world was there through him,  
and yet the world didn't even notice.  
He came to his own people,  
but they didn't want him.  
But whoever did want him,  
who believed he was who he claimed  
and would do what he said,  
He made to be their true selves,  
their child-of-God selves.  
These are the God-begotten,  
not blood-begotten,  
not flesh-begotten,  
not sex-begotten.  
<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and blood,  
and moved into the neighborhood.  
We saw the glory with our own eyes,  
the one-of-a-kind glory,  
like Father, like Son,  
Generous inside and out,  
true from start to finish.

### **3 & 4**

#### **Prayer**

It is a time of whispers  
of rumours and echoes  
angels are unfurling their wings  
stars are dancing new steps  
and the universe is drawing breath  
for now we live in the waiting time

Let the darkness gather  
let the seasons change  
let the nights draw in

to their darkest moment

the light is on it's way

so come now  
be a blessing to the frantic and worried world  
come now  
and find space  
silence  
stillness

for God is slipping into skin  
and restless in the womb

It is advent

God, we come to you in our waiting.

We wait with our fears,  
our anxieties and frustrations,  
our pains and regrets,  
our shame and confusions.  
God, help us to wait in peace.  
We wait with impatience:  
We rush around, preparing for the festivities,  
Not leaving the space to prepare our hearts.  
God, help us to wait in faith.

We wait in excitement:  
We are ready to celebrate!  
We know the story with its humbleness, simplicity and wonder.  
God, help us to nurture our joy.

We wait with thanksgiving:  
We are free and able to celebrate.  
We have others around us to share the journey.  
We are able to wonder at the marvel of your gift.  
God, help us to receive your love.

We fill our worship with words. We talk, talk, talk but never listen. So, let's do what we never do. Let's wait on God. Now. Let's be quiet. Still. Focused. Not for a moment but for a while... And listen for God.

We wait silently  
Searching for God  
In our inner recesses,  
The chambers of our soul.  
Quietly listening  
For that still, small voice,  
That flicker of light in the darkness.

*Silence*

God waits silently  
In our inner recesses,  
The chambers of our soul,  
Gazing lovingly  
On our treasure,  
Awaiting our response.  
Amen

**3 & 4**

**But...**

Joseph	But Mary?!
Mary	But what?
Joseph	But how?
Mary	But it just is!
Joseph	But it can't be!
Mary	But it is!
Joseph	But it can't be!!
Mary	But it is!!
Joseph	But no!
Mary	But yes!
Joseph	But how?
Mary	But I don't know?!
Joseph	But you must?
Mary	But I don't!
Joseph	But an angel!?
Mary	But an angel!
Joseph	But how?
Mary	But don't go there!
Joseph	But not me? ( <i>disappointingly</i> )
Mary	But not you ( <i>sympathetically</i> )
Joseph	But are you sure?
Mary	Joseph!!!
Joseph	But what will we do?
Mary	But what can we do?
Joseph	But we should get married!
Mary	But when?
Joseph	But soon?
Mary	But who?
Joseph	But where?
Mary	Now?
Joseph	No buts there!
Mary	But are you sure?
Joseph	But is there a choice?
Mary	But what will people say?
Joseph	But do we care!
Mary	But I'm scared?
Joseph	But don't be?

Mary But why not?  
Joseph But God seems in charge!  
Mary But do you believe me? (*surprised*)  
Joseph But why not?  
Mary But really?  
Joseph But really!  
Mary But Joseph. (*relieved*)  
Joseph But Mary.  
Mary But what will we do?  
Joseph No more buts, just trust.  
Mary Just trust?  
Joseph Just that!  
Mary Just that?  
Joseph Just that!  
Mary Just a bit worried.  
Joseph Just a bit! (*both begin to wander off*)  
Mary Just hope things are okay?  
Joseph Just come on!  
Mary Just now?  
Joseph Just now!

## **5 & 6** **Waiting**

So we wait.  
And so we wait as Sarah waited...  
Ninety years for a son to fulfil God's promise, we wait in hope for what we thought had been promised to us.

*Silence*

As Moses waited...  
40 years in the desert being prepared by God to lead his people, we wait for emptiness and humility; for bravado to wither.

*Silence*

As Israel waited...  
40 years in the desert, hungry, depressed, thirsting, unsure, we wait for things to move on and for generations to pass.

*Silence*

As prophets waited...  
1000 years of promises that God would raise us a saviour, we wait for things to change.

*Silence*

As Mary waited...

9 months of her first adult years for the child of God, we feel the birth pangs yet fear for the child.

*Silence*

As John the Baptist waited...

Scanning the crowds for the one whose sandals he would not be worthy to untie, we long for an experience of the divine.

*Silence*

As Jesus waited...

30 years of creeping time

40 days of temptation

3 years in the midst of misunderstanding

3 days in the depths of hell

*Silence*

So we wait for God's time, preparing the way.

Our turn to toil on levelling and straightening paths.

Our turn to watch the time horizon,

Our turn to pass on the hope - the one who promised is faithful and will come back

*Light candles*

*Silence*

We wait for angels singing Hosanna, Glory to God in the highest.

We wait for a new star to appear so we might follow it to the place.

We wait for wise men and shepherds bearing precious gifts.

We wait for the birth of a child, a child full of grace.

We wait impatiently.

*Silence*

We wait for hope

The hope that the darkness cannot overcome.

let us wait

with quiet boldness,

tender daring,

simmering anger,

impatient justice.

*Candle is lit*

let us wait for provocative peacemaking

this advent,  
enough to crack open the moribund and dry faith of the world  
in it's spent cravings.

*Candle is lit*

let us wait for a message  
that disturbs the world with restless whispers  
about god and incarnation,  
goosebumps and justice.

*Candle is lit*

let us wait  
and muffle our laughter  
behind an unnerving truth  
heaven-shaped  
sharp-edged  
waiting to crack it all open  
and let the glory through  
with a living word:  
Jesus

*all candles are lit*

We wait in peace and expectation...

*Silence*

**5 & 6**

**Closing**

Quietly, the creeping of the light  
conspires against the darkness  
and with slow elegance  
crushes the shadows  
one by one.  
And on the cusp of promise  
the silence wilts with the burden of waiting  
caught in the 'not yet' of incarnation.

It is a heavy silence  
that bears the burden of war,  
an exhausted planet,  
a community that has lost its belonging.  
But light cannot be caught by armies or by time  
and in the first gasp of God,  
it erupts and breaks free,  
it's brightness cast across the universe,  
wave on eternal wave,

never to be constrained,  
and charging against the shadows  
casts the darkness into the forgotten night.

Light came into the world and said,  
"I will crush your darkness."  
Justice came into the world and said,  
"I will proclaim your freedom."  
Peace came into the world and said,  
"I will turn your conflict."  
The Word came into the world and said,  
"I will call your name."  
Love came into the world and said,  
"I will share your life, always."

Amen