



Dec 14: God's Care for us.

Hebrews 1:1-3 (NIV)

1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

We need to be reminded during this season, that **God cares about us so much, that he has made a way to be with us.**

When do you feel cared for?

- Isn't it when people take the time to speak with you?
- Isn't it when people act on your behalf?
- You feel cared for when people speak and act on your behalf, and for your good.

In this text God speaks.

- God speaks through his Son.
- This Word; this son; Jesus is...
- He is the Heir of all.
- He is the agent of Creation.

- He is the radiance of God's glory.
- He is the exact image of God.
- He is the sustainer of all.
- He is the purifier of all. The son has provided purification for sin once and for all.
- It may not seem like it, but we're doing Christmas here. These verses tell us that Jesus left the splendor of heaven and came into our neighborhood and camped out in a human suit.
- The incarnation is God's declaration of His purpose to save the world. The incarnation is God's downpayment on the cross. The baby in the manger is God's way of saying, "*I will pay this debt of sin*" owed by every human ever.

In this text, God acts.

- He does something. He became like us. Took on human flesh. He lived with us. Then sacrificed for us.
- All of those things fit into what we just described when we tried to define what it looks like when someone "cares" for us.

God really does care about you.

- He speaks to you. He acts for you. He has your best interest in mind.
- Nowhere in scripture is this more clearly seen than when the prophet says "*His name shall be called Immanuel.*" (Isaiah 7:14)
- Have you ever considered all the things that had to go right for Jesus to become the purifier of all sin?

Ralph Muncaster assembled prophetic statements together that give a complete picture of the coming Messiah. When you see an asterisk, it denotes a prophecy found in the OT that would have to be fulfilled for someone to really be God's promised Messiah.

"The Messiah will descend from Shem,* through Abraham,* Isaac,* Jacob,* Judah,* Jesse,* and King David.* He will be born in the city of Bethlehem in the region of Ephrathah* when a bright star appears.* It will be a miraculous, virgin birth.* (10 prophecies already.)

The Messiah will be unique, having preexisted his birth.* He will perform many miracles: calming the sea,* causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, the mute to talk.* He will be referred to in many ways, including God with us,* Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.* He will be a great teacher and will use parables.* One day he will rule over everything* and all nations will bow down to him.*

But the Messiah will come to save mankind.* He will become the offering for man's sin*; he will present himself to Jerusalem as both the anointed king* and the Passover Lamb.* This will occur exactly 173,880 days after the decree by Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem.* So four days before Passover, the Messiah will present himself to a rejoicing Jerusalem riding on a donkey.*

But then he will suffer greatly.* He will be rejected by many, including his friends.* He will be betrayed by a friend* for 30 pieces of silver.* Later that money will be thrown down in the temple* and will eventually go to a potter.* At his trial he will not defend himself. He will say nothing* except as required by law. Israel will reject him.*

The Messiah will be taken to a mountaintop identified by Abraham as “The Lord will provide.”* There he will be put to death with his hands and feet pierced.* His enemies will encircle him,* mocking him, and will cast lots for his clothing.* He will call out to God, asking why he was “forsaken.”* He will be given gall and wine.* He will die with criminals.* But none of his bones will be broken.* He will be pierced.* He will be buried in a rich man’s grave.* But he will not remain in the grave.*”

Think about one person meeting all these criteria!

- Muncaster went a step farther and calculated the odds of one person meeting each of these requirements individually; then he combined all of them. Let’s throw some numbers up.
- He estimated the odds (conservatively) that these requirements would be met by one person in human history at **1 in 10 to 110th power**. The standard benchmark for something to be considered an impossibility (without outside help) is **1 in 10 to the 50th power**.
- Another help is to give you an idea of how big these numbers are. If you were to count all the **known atoms on the universe**, you would only get to **10 to 80th power**.
- In your **human body** right now, there are **7 times 10 to the 27th power** atoms. That’s a 7 with 27 zeros after it. Another way to say it is that it’s 7 billion billion billion. That’s not even a drop in the bucket of the known atoms in the universe.
- And the odds of someone fulfilling all of these prophecies is exponentially greater than even that.

The life of Jesus is no coincidence.

- Muncaster used only prophecies about Jesus that *were intriguing to HIM!* If you count them up, he used about 30 prophecies.
- But most every Bible scholar will tell you that there aren’t just 30 prophecies about the Messiah in the OT that Jesus fulfilled – there are over 300 of them! 322 to be exact.

There simply aren’t any numbers that big. It’s too staggering.

- One person fulfilling all of these prophetic statements is impossible...*unless there is outside help*.
- God is that outside force. God has directed all of human history to move and shake in such a way as to bring about every one of these events that are required for there to be one who would be born in a manger, and called *Immanuel*.

- And why? A: He does this to assure that there would be purification for my sins. And yours.

Care causes us to care.

- God's care is for us. So he sent his son. Christmas is how we know he loves us.
- And His care compels us to care. We care for him. For each other. For our town. For our world.

Father, may we see with fresh eyes your great care for us. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. That great care causes us to care. May we ask ourselves always what kind of care we ought to be involved in. Let us start today, right now. In the name of Immanuel, God with Us, Jesus, we pray, Amen.