

*The Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us.*

JOHN 1:14

FROM HEAVEN

A 28-Day Advent Devotional

A. W. TOZER

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INTRODUCTION

A JOURNEY OF WAITING AND PREPARING

F*rom Heaven* is a collection of 28 daily readings from the beloved 20th-century pastor and writer A. W. Tozer (1887–1963). The selections have been gleaned from his recorded sermons—which have been edited for print—his published books, and his editorials while serving as editor of *The Alliance Witness* magazine (now *Alliance Life*). Each reflection has been carefully selected for the season of Advent.

Advent is the time of waiting and preparing for Christmas. From the Latin *adventus*, meaning “coming,” Advent proclaims the coming of Christ in two ways: it celebrates his long-awaited arrival as Messiah, and it anticipates his return as King of kings and Lord of lords. In the Western church calendar, Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, the Sunday

closest to November 30, and lasts through Christmas Eve (December 24).

Common practices associated with Advent include lighting candles as a reminder that the Light has come to our dark world, keeping an Advent calendar, following prescribed Scripture readings and prayers, and reading daily devotionals. This devotional was compiled to help readers grown in their faith by reflecting on the wonder of the incarnation, the extent of God's love, and the hope for Christ's return. For each day, you will find one or more passages of Scripture included with each excerpt from Tozer. The editors of this volume suggest that the reader contemplate each devotional throughout the day and how it unpacks the truth of Scripture.

Advent does not always last for four full weeks each year, as the season can start any time between November 27 and December 3. So if you are using this book during a year when Advent is shorter than 28 days, consider combining multiple readings as needed in order to read through the entire volume.

As a result of reading these devotional selections, Tozer would want that each reader not simply learn more about God's work in Christ, but truly worship and serve God in awe and gratitude.

—THE EDITORS



Week 1

DAY I

THE LOST PRESENCE

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God.

GENESIS 3:8

. . . the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden . . .

GENESIS 3:23

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

JOHN 1:14

Adam had lost the presence of the Creator God and in the Bible record of the ages that followed, God never dwelt with men again in quite the same way.

To the Israelites, God dwelt in the Shekinah, hidden in the fire and the cloud. Occasionally He would appear

in what theologians call a theophany, an appearance of the Deity. God might speak briefly with a man as He did with Abraham in the tent door or with Gideon on the threshing floor. God did not linger; His appearance always cautious and veiled.

Even when God showed Himself to Moses it was in the fire of the burning bush or while Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock. The eyes of fallen, sinful men were no longer able to endure the radiant majesty and glory of deity.

Then, in the fullness of time, He came again to men, for “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

They called His name Immanuel, which means God with us. In that first coming of Jesus the Christ, God again came to dwell with men in person.

I will have you know that I am not a prepositional preacher but at this point we must note three prepositions having to do with the coming of Jesus, God appearing as man.

He appeared to dwell *with* men. He appeared to be united *to* men. He came to ultimately dwell *in* men forever. So, it is with men, and to men and in men that He came to dwell.

I always note with a little chuckle the frustrations of the translators when they come to such passages as “No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18).

God's Word is just too big for the translators. They come to this phrase in the Greek: *The Son hath declared Him*. In the English of the King James Version it is just *declared*. In other versions they skirt it, they go around it, they plunge through it. They use two or three words and then they come back to one. They do everything to try to say what the Holy Ghost said, but they have to give up. Our English just will not say it all.

When we have used up our words and synonyms, we still have not said all that God revealed when He said: Nobody has ever seen God, but when Jesus Christ came He showed us what God is like (paraphrase of John 1:18).

I suppose that our simple and everyday language is as good as any.

“He has revealed Him—he has shown us what God is like!”

He has declared Him. He has set Him forth. He has revealed Him. In these ways the translators shift their language trying to get at this wondrous miracle of meaning.

But that man walking in Galilee was God acting like God. It was God, limited deliberately, having crossed the wide, mysterious gulf between God and not God; God and creature. No man had seen God at any time.

“The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father . . .” (John 1:18)—will you note that *was* is not the tense? Neither does it say that the Son *will be* in the Father's bosom. He *is* in the Father's bosom. It is stated in present, perpetual tense; the continuous tense, I think the grammarians call it. It is the language of continuation.

Therefore, when Jesus hung on the cross He did not leave the bosom of the Father.

You ask me, then: “Mr. Tozer, if that is true, why did our Lord Jesus cry out, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’” (Mark 15:34).

Was He frightened? Was He mistaken?

Never, never!

The answer should be very plain to us who love Him and serve Him.

