

## ***Advent Meditation Moments***

**This Advent Time of Meditation is meant to offer you an opportunity to escape from the mad rush of the world for a few moments, and to focus on God, God's attentiveness to you, and your response to God's activity in your life. Each week Beautiful Savior will offer a different meditation, based on the Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, hallmarks of the abundant life that Jesus offers us.**

### **Advent IV: Love**

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more I called them, the more they went from me; they kept sacrificing to the Baals, and offering incense to idols. Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them...How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel?... My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and no mortal, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. Hosea 11:1-4, 8-9

**Context:** Through the words of the Prophet Hosea, we hear God's absolute anguish, that the people whom he has loved so dearly and desperately betrayed him by turning to pagan idols. Historically attacks by foreign forces were seen as God's vengeance; and yet, and yet, God proclaims absolute love for God's people--- regardless of how they have responded to God.

**To think about:** The Bible does not tell us why God chose a certain people to be a blessing to other peoples to demonstrate God's concern for all nations. God just did. And in spite of that people's constant struggle with remaining true to their calling, it is God who shows abiding love and faithfulness to them. In Jesus, the child whose birth we will celebrate in a few days, we have the final and absolute sign of this divine love. It is a love which will end on the cross, but a love which lifts Jesus from death unto life eternal—which is the gift given to followers of Jesus.

***Psalm of Love: 139:1-12***

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

*We always keep hidden in the depths of our being our true selves, and rarely reveal who we are to others because we are afraid of rejection. How wondrous that*

*the God of the Universe knows you so intimately---and still says, You are my child, my beloved.*

### **Closing Prayer**

Loving God our heavenly Father, we bow before you,  
knowing we do not deserve your grace and mercy.  
Thank you for calling us your beloved children for the  
sake of Jesus, whose birth we mark once again. Fill us  
with this divine love, so that we may love others as we  
are able. Amen

### Love Has Come



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;  
last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

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*Love Came Down at Christmas*

Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,  
Love incarnate, love divine;  
Worship we our Jesus:  
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,  
Love shall be yours and love be mine,  
Love to God and to all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.

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By Christina Georgina Rossetti,  
(5 December 1830 – 29 December 1894),  
who was an English writer of romantic,  
devotional and children's poems.