

THOUGHTS FOR ADVENT

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Thoughts for Advent by Ashton Oxenden

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ASHTON OXENDEN

**THOUGHTS
FOR ADVENT**

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BY THE

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THOUGHTS FOR ADVENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE COMING DAWN.

THE Season of Advent has long been observed in the Christian Church : some think as far back as Apostolic times ; but certainly for the last fourteen hundred years. The Church has appointed the four weeks of Advent to wait, as it were, upon the great festival of Christmas, and to prepare our minds for all the blessings which that day commemorates.

The Saviour's first coming into this world was the great object of expectation to the

Church of old. Holy men looked forward to it with longing hearts. Faith enabled them to see Christ as it were in the distance. It was a kind of telescope to them: it brought the Saviour near to them. Thus it is said of Abraham, that he 'rejoiced to see the day of Christ: he saw it, and was glad.' His own life had passed away many hundred years before Jesus appeared; but he beheld Him with the eye of faith. Others also of the Patriarchs had momentary glimpses of the coming Redeemer. The Prophets too, by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, were enabled to speak of His advent as of a thing most certain. He was the great object to the believer from age to age—the hidden treasure, which was one day to enrich and gladden a ruined world.

Many of course lacked this faith. They could not, and would not, believe in the promised Deliverer. His advent was a truth they could not grasp. They 'believed not

the report' which announced His coming. Some *ridiculed* the idea, and regarded it as an event that would never come to pass. Others were too *careless*, and too much absorbed with the world's interests, to concern themselves about a thing which seemed so vague and so distant. It was a matter which conveyed no interest to them.

And yet God's word, which never fails, came true. In spite of man's unbelief and indifference, the Saviour appeared. The long-looked-for day at length dawned. When 'the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son.' The world was staggered by His appearance. It could not realise the event. 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.' But the few who did receive Him welcomed Him with all their hearts, and accepted Him as 'God's unspeakable gift' to a needy world.

We all know what passed in the thirty-three years which followed ; how Jesus lived here among us, such a life as had never been