

It's been a long time coming Christmas Day 2016

It takes a long while for Christmas to come. When did you open the first door on your Advent Calendar? How many sleeps was it till Christmas? Far too many! Twenty-four sleeps! Christmas is never going to come! Mind you, there are things to keep you going – chocolate in the Advent calendars to look forward to every day; parties at school or nursery; a visit to the pantomime perhaps, or taking part in the school show or nativity play. Still, Christmas is a long time coming for us; but it's here now and there are lots of things to do today.

Christmas was a long time coming the first time round too! There were lots of promises of a great king who would come to rule and to help His people. Psalm 72 is a prayer for the king, and at the same time is a picture of the king who is to come one day. That king will live for ever and will be king for ever; no human king did that ever! He will be a king who will love what is right and do what is right and help his people do what is right. He will be a king who will care for His people, especially those who need help, people who are weak and vulnerable, people who are treated badly by others. He will be a king who will rule over the whole world, from one end of the world to the other and whose people will be found in every part of the world. People came to see that this is a picture of a King who will come one day and they began to pray that God would send this king.

He was a long time coming. Hundreds of years past and there was still no sign of this king. Then things began to happen: an angel came to visit Mary and tell her that she will have a baby who will be a great king. 9 months later, her boy is born and the angels tell some shepherds that a new king is born in Bethlehem and that they should go to visit him. Then a new star appeared in the sky and some wise men watching the sky saw this new star and decided to follow it; they thought that it must mean something special. They followed the star to the king's palace in Jerusalem and asked King Herod about the new king; he was furious and wanted to kill this new king, but Jesus escaped! Jesus grew up to teach people that God is king and that we should live in God's ways; He died and rose again and is king forever, king for people across the whole world. He was a long time coming, but it happened just as the old words said, and was well worth waiting for. Jesus is our King: He teaches us that God is King and that we should live in God's ways. He was a long time coming, but is still God's gift to the world. We learn to love Jesus, to trust Him and to live in His ways and love other people.

This present is a long time coming!! I brought along a shoebox because for lots of people this is their Christmas present; there are lots of things inside, so come to help me empty it to show these things; finally, there is a heart shape to show that this box comes with love from people like us to poor people across the world; it comes with our love to reflect God's love; God has loved us in giving us Jesus so we want to show our love to other people and tell them that God loves them too. They may feel that this love is a long time coming when they are poor, but I hope that this present is worth waiting for.