



Just a few more days until Christmas Eve, friend. How are you doing? Come and sit. Let's pause the day for a time and listen—I mean really listen for a moment.

Hark—yet another word of Christmas. But what exactly does “hark” mean? You may be thinking, “I have no idea, but I do know it's the beginning word for the title of the iconic Christmas carol, *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*. In fact, it's a favorite during the holiday season. But if you're like me, though you've sung the song hundreds of times during your lifetime, you've never really listened to the words or even thought much about them.

But this carol is a call to capture the attention. Words like “hark,” “herald angels,” and “hail,” alert us to the fact that something important is being shared. The word “hark” means to listen. This word, as well as others in the title, alert us to something important. They are as flashing neon signs that should capture and captivate. In essence, these words scream, “you don't want to miss this!”

So often we miss the true meaning of the season and much more often than that we miss moments during the season carved out by God just for us. Moments meant to bring depth and detail to Christmas, but so often missed because of busyness or lack of not being fully present.

Cell phones, social media, Christmas parties, Christmas shopping, dare I say it, the Hallmark Channel—often we are so caught up in these harmless activities, that we fail to Hark the Lord's voice. Rather than hear and heed, we hasten and hustle.

For 50 Christmases I've heard or sung *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*, but it wasn't until last year that I chose to bend my ear and truly listen and experience the words.

And as I carefully surveyed the third verse of this carol, really paying attention to all of the lyrics, I realized how rich with promise and provision these words are, and how they remind us of the character and purpose of Jesus' coming.

*Hail the heav'n born prince of peace!
Hail the Son of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n with healing in His wings.*



*Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth.
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

“Hail,” which means “praise or applaud,” reminds us to give praise and thanks to Jesus. Praise to the Prince of Peace, the One who calms hearts, anxieties, feelings and frustrations.

Praise to the Son of Righteousness, the One who, Himself, is holy, set apart, and complete. And thank you that the Son of Righteousness makes us right, sets us apart, and makes us complete in Him.

Praise to the Light of the World who uncovers the darkness with the radiance of His glory.

Praise to the Life-giver, who gave of Himself that we might experience Eternal Life forever.

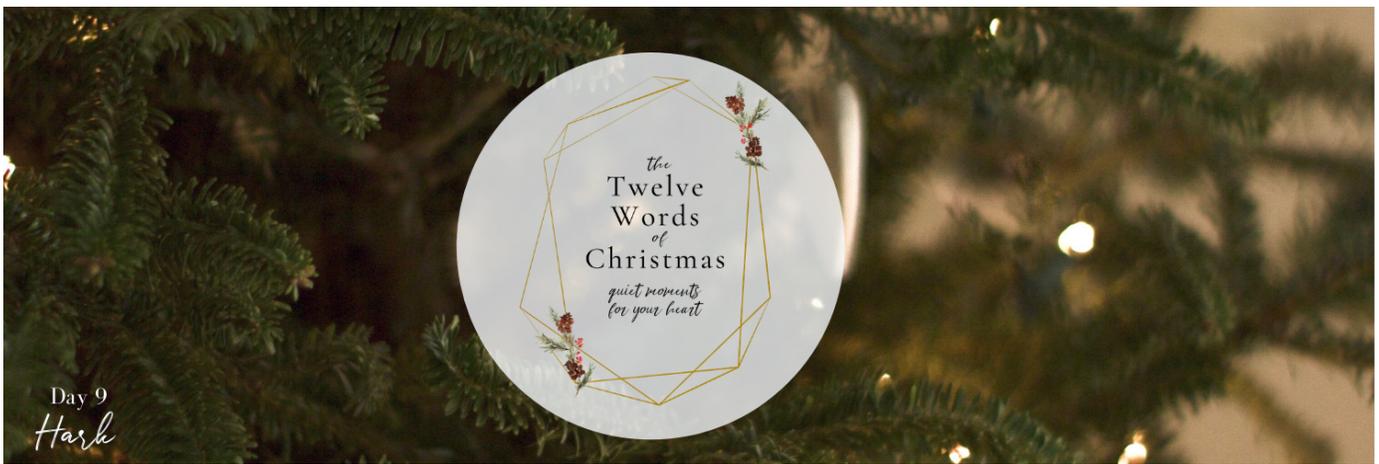
Praise to our Healer, the One who cures disease, mends hearts, and sews up the broken pieces of our messes and mishaps.

Praise to the One who laid His glory down, so we might have relationship with the Eternal.

And then the refrain:

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing, glory to the newborn king.

Hark—Give glory! Applaud! Give thanks for this glorious gift, King Jesus. That is the meaning of this familiar carol. It’s a call for us to praise, to thank and to remember the wondrous work of our loving Savior, Jesus Christ.



Will you “Hark”? Will you listen and pay attention? We never know how or when the Lord will choose to bend our ear and ask for our attention, so shouldn't we be attentive at all times to the sound of His voice? Shouldn't we remain in a stance spiritually, emotionally, and mentally that allows us to hear and to heed. Shouldn't we be looking and listening for the sound of His voice, for the sign of His calling?

As you go about your day today, position yourself in a stance of hearing. Ask the Lord to make your ears attentive to His call.

Isaiah 55:1-3 says,

“Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.”

Lord, help me harken unto thee. Cause me to incline my ear to You today and hear Your instruction. Help me listen diligently to Your voice. Get my attention however You need, so that I can experience You in every way this season. I want to hear, that my soul may live and be refreshed in You. In Jesus' name, amen.