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CHICHESTER 



**Who then  
is this?**

Lent Course 2023



**2023**  
**Year of the  
Old Testament**

# A welcome from the Bishop of Chichester

With a Lent course, I always look to see if there are any pictures or drawings, and whether there's something online to download to watch or listen to. It's a sneak preview that tells me whether I'm likely to enjoy it or not.

I hope that in this course you will certainly find something to discover and something to enjoy. I hope it will deepen your faith, whether you are using it in a group with other people, or just with a friend, or on your own. The course seeks to help you pull the meaning of the Old Testament into your encounter with Jesus, sharpening your awareness of his death and resurrection at Easter, and its tremendous significance.

The title of the course, 'Who then is this?' invites us to answer the question that the disciples asked about Jesus when he calmed the storm (Mark 4:41). Just when they thought they were getting to understand him, some astonishing thing happened that made them think again.

We look back to people and events in the Old Testament to help us answer this question with the exploration of our minds and with the devotion of our hearts.

Artists, hymn-writers and Christian teachers have searched the Old Testament for stories that indicate how God's mysterious presence is evident in Jesus in a new and compelling way.

In this Lent Course we shall use their work to explore how accounts of a miraculous birth, a hidden identity, and the capacity to speak the truth wisely and with authority all point to Jesus, who is fully human and fully divine.

There is no right or wrong way to use this course. You will have used it well if you come to Easter Sunday with a richer sense of the resurrection as God's plan for how all things, across time, will come to perfection in the glory of heaven.



# **Introduction**

The forty days of Lent, which prepare us for Easter and our celebration of the glory of Christ's death and resurrection, are intended to help us grow in our faith and discipleship as followers of the risen Lord.

Through prayer, fasting/self-denial, and almsgiving, we strive to become more attentive to God's presence in his word, in our worship, and in the poor and needy.

This year's Lent Course asks a crucial question, one that the first disciples asked about Jesus when faced with his wonderful works and teaching: 'Who then is this?' But it is, and always will be, a vital question for all who follow Christ and believe him to be the Saviour of the world.

To further that, this course provides rich resources for communities and individuals to explore this question. It offers readings from Holy Scripture accompanied by prayerful reflections and probing questions, accompanied by music, and illustrated by images.

Each unit contains:

**A striking image for contemplation**

**A scriptural passage for reading and pondering alone and/or with others**

**A profound spiritual reflection**

**Questions on the theme, for deeper exploration**

**A hymn**

**A prayer**

The reflections are also available in the form of short podcasts, which can be listened to communally or alone.

Our aim, throughout this course, is to do in Lent what the well-known Advent Collect advises: to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest God's message to us, so as to deepen our discipleship and further our journey as communities and individual believers, seeking closer fellowship with the Lord.

**The Revd Dr Earl Collins**  
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