

Advent Carol Service 1988 2

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Date: 27 November 1988

Preacher: Harry Robinson

[0 : 00] So it's a great delight to celebrate this 11th Advent carol service. To have the choir here to lead us in doing what this psalm calls us to do.

Psalm 123 is one of the 15 psalms of ascent, some of which we're going to talk about on each of the Sunday nights in Advent.

The psalms of ascent are those which were sung by the pilgrims as they made their way up to Jerusalem. From the quiet squalor of their homes, from the rough work in the fields and in shepherding, from the poverty of their circumstances, and no doubt sometimes from the tragedy of their personal lives, they made their way up to Jerusalem to give themselves at some particular festival to the business of praise and thanksgiving, to be lifted up out of the personal squalor of their lives, perhaps, in order that they might do what Psalm 123 begins by doing, when it says, To thee I lift up my eyes, O thou who art enthroned in the heavens, to lift our eyes from the circumstances of our daily life, from the quandaries in which we find ourselves, to lift them up to the one who is enthroned in the heavens.

Isaiah writes about this experience when he says, You shall have a song as in the night, when a holy feast is kept, and gladness of heart, when one sets out to the sound of the flute, to go to the mountain of the Lord, to the rock of Israel.

And in Advent we set out to be reminded again of the faithfulness of our God, and we lift our eyes from the confining circumstances of our own minds and hearts to the one who is enthroned in the heavens.

[2 : 29] What a wonderful joy. What a wonderful joy it is to have the choir help us to do that in such a wonderful way that we might lift up our hearts unto the Lord in this way and in this worship.

And having done that, they describe what the circumstances of their lives are like. They see themselves as those who are servants looking to the hand of their master, as a maidservant looking to the hand of her mistress, because they won't take orders from anybody else but from the Lord. As they have come to worship him, so they submit to obeying him, and they wait on him. And what do they wait for? If you look at the next verse, verse 3, they wait for the Lord to have mercy on them.

And the mercy of the Lord was that he should renew his covenant with them, for he indeed had promised to be their God, and they had committed themselves to be his people.

And so they watched as servants to see what he required of them, to wait for the moment when he would dismiss them from the burden and bondage of their lives and bring them in freedom to himself.

[4 : 04] And they waited for him to give them the sign. And in the midst of that, they longed that he should have mercy upon them and renew his covenant with them, that in all the conflict and uncertainty of the world in which they live, they might be assured of God's love for them and God's continuing purpose of redemption towards them.

Because it wasn't an easy world in which they live, as it is not an easy world in which we live, what made it difficult for them may indeed make it difficult for us.

And if you look in those last verses of Psalm 123, they were full up, they were fed up. Too long our souls have been satisfied or sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the crowd.

contempt is, if you go back to Matthew chapter 5, is worse than anger. It's the worst degree of anger that's mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount.

And to suffer the contempt of those around you because of your persistence in being obedient to God and seeking to serve him with your life is very difficult indeed.

[5 : 36] And I think in our world with all its sophistication, all its secular materialism, all its self-sufficiency, well, God bless them, but there is a sense in which they hold in contempt the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

and I find that extremely difficult. That his words are not heard, his gospel is not understood, and the joy of his salvation is not proclaimed and is not appropriated by people.

They hold in contempt those who would put their faith and trust in God. and so it's necessary that we come to this place where we rejoice in the one who inhabits the heavens, who is enthroned in the heavens, the one who can have mercy upon us, the one to whom we are committed to in obedience, and the one who will ultimately bring us to the place of true worship and true understanding.

we're left with this psalm at a kind of low point, aren't we, when it concludes, too long our souls have been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease and the contempt of the proud and self-sufficient.

We're left there, but we're left there trusting that God will show his mercy, committed to the obedience of him, and because we can, in the midst of our circumstance, lift up our eyes to him who is enthroned upon the heavens.

[7 : 30] All of you know that Psalm 121 says, I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, but Psalm 123 takes us further and says, I will lift up mine eyes unto him who is enthroned in the heavens.

And indeed, it's the very thing we do when we kneel in prayer or bow our heads as we did tonight and turning from the circumstances of our life, we address him who is enthroned in the heavens and we say, Our Father, in my life and in our circumstance, hallowed be your name.

So what those pilgrims sang long ago as they made their way towards the great festival in Jerusalem, we sing as we work through the days of Advent to the great festival of Christmas in which we celebrate the one who is enthroned in the heavens becoming a child and dwelling among us as God had through all his prophets promised he would one day do.

So there is much to rejoice in. There is much reason to lift our eyes from the mean circumstances of our lives and to focus them upon him who is enthroned in the heavens.

Amen. Amen. psalm psalm psalm psalm psalm Amen.

[10 : 06] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

We'll do the last two verses again, a little better this time.

For thy people to deliver, for thy child and care of me, for to reign in us forever, now thy Christian Savior to me.

For thy child and care of me, for thy child and care of me, for thy child and care of me, for thy child and care of me, for thy child and care of me.

[13 : 12] God, love, and power, your word and your six screws within us, yet set patient on the coming of your Son. There's sat holy law for you this night, and sustained us with your promise to lead for God.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Amen.

Amen. All the fathers of the Lord join, ere the world will play our songs, He is of the crown and mountain, all that is and having holds.

He is the name of all things, yet to come the least in hope, evermore and evermore.

So let us sing the Lord bring alive. An alma. Finally. This is another healing, so we all gave back the one that by the London Devil Heist says, Estado Chaos mermaid já size hull God bless you.

[15 : 28] God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. A parable to explain Advent. The sixth lesson is taken from the Gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 25, verses 1 to 13.

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

[18 : 25] As the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, Behold the bridegroom, come out to meet him. Then all those maidens rose and trimmed

their lamps, and the foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps have gone out. But the wise replied, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you. Go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other maidens came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he replied, Truly I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour. The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. "Batty.. Do not know you? "Have you dart,ry'n Tea How many?

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[20 : 32] With sadness forever rejoices.

He eager waits to breathe the day. He eagerly began singing by babb china and cultures, living in birthing only.

Las quiero cantar sodamn. Signum justcek.

See the Lord from heaven descending With grace and truth and power unending Who is the Lord with righteous reign Who is the Lord with righteous reign Who is the Lord with righteous reign Who is the Lord with righteous reign Who is the Lord with righteous reign

Who is the Lord with righteous reign Who is the Lord with righteous reign For Hislynn- sätt . . .

[23 : 09] Ride with her share and take the joy beyond the Hippist, and take the joy beyond nets.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

The seventh lesson tells us of the preparation for the coming of the day of the Lord.

It is taken from the first book of Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, chapter 4, commencing at the 13th verse through to chapter 5, the 11th verse, 1 Thessalonians.

[25 : 50] But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall always be with the Lord.

Therefore comfort one another with these words. But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you.

[26 : 58] For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

When people say, there is peace and security, then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape.

But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night or of darkness.

So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we wake or sleep, we might live with him.

Therefore encourage one another, and build one another up, just as you are doing. The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you.

[28 : 59] Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly expectation of thy coming, grant that we, who with joy receive thy only begotten Son as our Redeemer, may without fear behold him when he shall come to be our judge, even thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Amen. Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold fast that which is good. Render to no person evil for evil.

Strengthen the faint-hearted. Support the weak. Help the afflicted. Honor all people. Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you forever.

[30 : 38] Amen. Amen. Amen. And the twelve, the vi measure you presents us along with the Holy Spirit.

Sków religieren, and in the host of the Holy Spirit, Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.