



“The Lord Has Come As Long Promised”

**5** PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Philippians 4:4-5; Psalm 85:1-2, 6, 8**

Rejoice in the Lord / always.\*  
 Again will I / say, rejoice!  
 Let your gentleness be known to / all men.\*  
 The Lord / is at hand.  
 Lord, You have been favourable / to Your land;\*  
 You have brought back the captivity of / Jacob.  
 You have forgiven the iniquity of Your / people;\*  
 You have covered / all their sin.  
 Will You not revive / us again,\*  
 that Your people may re- / joice in You?  
 I will hear what God the / Lord will speak,\*  
 for He will speak peace to His / people.

**6** SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Luke 21: 46b-48a**

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my savior, for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant.”

**7** READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

**8** PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord, we implore You, give ear to our prayers and lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You now live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**9** PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

**10** SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK  
**Ye Sons of Men, Oh, Harken**

TLH 75, LSB 345  
 Valentin Thilo, Jr.



1. Ye sons of men, oh, hearken:  
 Your heart and mind prepare,  
 To hail the almighty Savior,  
 O sinners, be your care.  
 He who of grace alone  
 Our Life and Light was given,  
 The promised Lord from heaven,  
 Unto our world is shown.

4. Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus,  
 Turn not from me aside,  
 And grant that I receive Thee  
 This blessed Advent-tide.  
 From stall and manger low  
 Come Thou to dwell within me;  
 Loud praises will I sing Thee  
 And forth glory show.

**1** BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:  
 In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**2** SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED  
 I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
 Maker of heaven and earth.  
 And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our  
 Lord, who was conceived by the Holy  
 Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered  
 under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died  
 and was buried. He descended into hell.  
 The third day He rose again from the  
 dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at  
 the right hand of God, the Father  
 Almighty. From thence He will come to  
 judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy  
 Christian church, the communion of  
 saints, the forgiveness of sins, the  
 resurrection of the body, and the life  
 everlasting. Amen.

**3** PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER  
 Our Father, who art in  
 heaven,  
 hallowed be Thy name,  
 Thy kingdom come,  
 Thy will be done on earth as it  
 is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily  
 bread;  
 and forgive us our trespasses  
 as we forgive those who  
 trespass against us;  
 and lead us not into  
 temptation,  
 but deliver us from evil.  
 For Thine is the kingdom and  
 the power and the glory  
 forever and ever. Amen.

**4** PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

*Morning.* I thank You, my  
 heavenly Father, through Jesus  
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You  
 have kept me this night from all  
 harm and danger; and I pray that  
 You would keep me this day also  
 from sin and every evil, that all my  
 doings and life may please You.  
 For into Your hands I commend  
 myself, my body and soul, and all  
 things. Let Your holy angel be with  
 me, that the evil foe may have no  
 power over me. Amen.

*Evening.* I thank you, my  
 heavenly Father, through Jesus  
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You  
 have graciously kept me this day;  
 and I pray that You would forgive  
 me all my sins where I have done  
 wrong, and graciously keep me this  
 night. For into Your hands, I  
 commend myself, my body and  
 soul, and all things. Let Your holy  
 angel be with me, that the evil foe  
 may have no power over me. Amen.

THEME OF THE WEEK: **The Lord Has Come As Long Promised**

God makes promises and keeps them. We, who are here below, are caught in the middle. God HAS made promises in the past and kept them. He HAS also made us promises in Jesus Christ. We are still waiting for Him to keep those promises for us. God has been faithful. Will He be faithful in the future? This week's passages navigate the often-difficult pilgrim path of living by faith here below, a life opposed by the devil, our own heart, and soul and will. A life opposed by this world. We are often tempted to believe God has abandoned us. But, God's eyes are upon you in Jesus. He is faithful. He will keep us and see us through.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 11:2-10: A Messiah of Comfort and Forgiveness**

Isaiah 40 is the dominate hermeneutic for interpreting the Messianic work of Jesus, not Malachi 3. At least, that is what Jesus says here in Matthew 11. This passage highlights that, even for John the Baptist, the identity and work of Jesus can still be tricky to figure out. The Holy Spirit works through Jesus to preach the Gospel to John. Jesus is fulfilling Isaiah 40 and bringing comfort and forgiveness to Israel like God promised. This is good news. God keeps His promises to His people even though they often have a hard time wrapping their minds and hearts around what He is doing for them in Jesus Christ. Thank God He is faithful to His promises to us. *O God, keep me ever in Your tender mercies by Your Word and Spirit. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 4: A Lonely Way**

Increasing faithfulness often leads to increasing solitude. King David is increasingly alone. First, he feels that God is farther from him than he was before. When God seems far away we are tempted to trust in what is tangible. Ahaz will make this mistake with Assyria and forsake the Lord. But the Lord gave Ahaz a sign—Immanuel. God is with us. Before that day David teaches us the same. Sometimes God seems far away and appears not to care. Never the less, do not trust your senses. Trust God's promises to you. When you lie down and sleep you have peace. God is with you in Jesus. He is your safety. *O Lord, when my reason and senses are telling me You are far from me, speak Your Word again and give me life. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **1 Corinthians 4:1-5: Sound Judgments and Cares**

This devotion is for pastors, and those who care about their pastors. When I was a younger pastor, I cared deeply about the judgments of others upon my faith and practice. Now, when I hear a judgment, I weigh it differently. When my four-year old tells me I'm a "bad daddy," I could get upset, but her older siblings did that, too. I care very little about the judgments of four-year olds. Sadly, too many pastors are wrapped up in the judgments and cares of those whose judgments and cares weigh little on the cosmic scales of God's plans and purpose. Pastors, do what pleases God. Steward His mysteries, not the mysteries of men, which are nothing. *Make me mindful of Your just decrees and judgments made clear in Christ, and nothing else. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: **Malachi 3:1-6: The Right Offerings to the Lord**

What is the Righteous work of the Holy Spirit? What is His aim? His aim is to drive Jesus Christ into our hearts and minds—daily. This is the only way any of our offerings are right. They are not right by their doing. They are right by faith. Israel's great sin is that they WILL NOT receive Jesus well. They want to rest in Moses and Abraham. Their hearts are wrong, so their works are all-wrong. Children of Abraham are not children of flesh and heritage, they are children of faith in the God of Abraham Who sends Jesus full of the Holy Spirit. He makes our hearts right so we can offer what is pleasing to God—a broken spirit and a contrite heart. Our God will never turn away. *O Holy Spirit, break me and make me new. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 1:39-56: Out of the Mouth of...Old Women.**

God keeps His promises. He doesn't ask us to cooperate. He does what He promises to do. Elizabeth is a very old woman. Mary is very young. God doesn't care. Divine Might makes Divine Right. He is going to keep His promises and drag us into them despite our age, infirmity, or laughter. It is pleasant, though, when our hearts and minds do not rebel against the will of God. In that we find great beauty and example from Elizabeth and Mary. For men and women alike the humility and resolution flowing from faithfulness of Elizabeth and Mary is of supreme importance for our daily lives. Working *WITH* the grain of God's Word and Will is always better for us. *O God, give me faith and humility like Elizabeth and Mary. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **Romans 1:16-25: Faith is Right. Everything Else is Going to Hell.**

St. Paul is clear and categorical. Faith makes us right with God. Everything else is going to hell. God works in this word to sweep away everything that we humans might dare use to justify ourselves, sometimes even before we begin trying to justify ourselves by those things. He is consigning all things to hell so that we might come to believe that there is no other way for Salvation than by faith. We cannot be justified by anything before God, but by faith alone. Faith is a trust that our God is not holding out on us. A trust that He is a good gift giver in Jesus Christ. *O Lord, during this Advent season save me by the might of Your Son. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 98: Everything is Right when God Acts**

St. David is remembering the day when God acted for him. Those days are always beautiful. It is important to note that this is not simply a day when everything seems to go right with the day. Our kids listen. Husband takes out the trash. Etc. St. David is remembering a Day when God kept His promise to him as King and to Israel as her God. For us, God acts in the Spirit-filled Jesus Christ. When we are wondering about God keeping a promise—we look to Jesus. Israel falters, and David, when they looked past the Word and Promise of God. For us, looking past the Word of God means looking away from Jesus. Bad idea. *O Lord, keep my eyes and heart fixed where true joys are found, in Jesus Christ alone. Amen.*

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