



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 1st December 2024

1st Sunday in Advent

compiled by Angela Banfield - Lay Assistant

MEEKNESS & MAJESTY

Light looked down and beheld Darkness,
thither will I go, said light.

Peace looked down and beheld War,
thither will I go, said peace.

Love looked down and beheld Hatred,
thither will I go, said Love.

So, Light came and shone,
so, peace came and gave rest,
so, came Love and brought life.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. (Laurence Housman 1865 -1959)

Thinking of these lovely words we pray:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this season of the year when we prepare for our Christmas celebrations and for Jesus coming again to our world.

Thank you for the knowledge of your eternal goodness and love that Jesus shared. We ask that through your gracious love we will be a people prepared and looking forward to the day when He comes again in glory. We stand upon Jesus' promises of salvation by grace, and trust in His mercy as we pray -

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, the power and the glory.
For ever and ever. Amen

Hymn: STF 362

1] Meekness and majesty, man-hood and deity,
in perfect harmony the man who is God.
Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity,
kneels in humility and washes our feet.

*O what a mystery - meekness and majesty
bow down and worship for this is your God .
This is your God. This is your God.*

2] Father's pure radiance, perfect in innocence,
yet learns obedience to death on a cross:
suffering to give us life, conquering through sacrifice—
and as they crucify, prays 'Father forgive'
O what a mystery

3] Wisdom unsearchable, God the invisible,
love indestructible, in frailty appears:
Lord of infinity, stooping so tenderly,
lifts our humanity to the heights of His throne.
O what a mystery

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

Isaiah 11: Verses 1 - 10 The Peaceful Kingdom

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and
with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy
mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day
the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling
shall be glorious.

And now the hymn, Hark the glad sound! Which continues our thoughts on what meekness and majesty
look like. 170 STF

1] Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long;
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

2] He comes the prisoners to release,
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

3] He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.

4] Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.

Philip Doddridge (1702– 1751)

Reflection

We see in this early prophesy from the prophet Isaiah, that God's Kingdom is represented with meekness and majesty. The majesty of a lion, our king of the jungle gently living alongside creatures that we know are usually its prey. In this vision of The Kingdom, we learn that everything is different there, even the ways upon which judgement is based, upon fairness, upon knowledge and on understanding, rather than evidence. It is a completely different way of doing things from our own. With this in mind then perhaps we can understand and see meekness in a lion, who sets aside its predatory nature and allows the majesty of a vulnerable child and a calf to live. We see the same in the bear with a cow and the leopard and kid, the wolf and the lamb. Is it too much of an ask to see mankind living peacefully with everything and everyone? Not in God's kingdom it seems, so as we pray Thy kingdom come, let's pray for meekness to come as well. For as St. Paul says of Jesus:

Christ's Example of Humility in Philippians chapter 2 verses 1 - 11

So, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Again, we could find ourselves thinking that as he is now exalted and given the name that is above every name, Jesus will appear as a more recognisable king. Wearing jewels and fine robes of state and ruling from a throne of gold. Yet, what does the glory of God look like? We read about a lamb in Revelation, a servant washing his friend's feet, a baby in a stable, a man on a cross, the fulfilment of law, in The New Testament the fulfilment and perfection of mercy and forgiveness. He hasn't changed his values or his standards of meekness, not weakness. Because meekness was his choice and with grace it can be ours.

Our lovely hymn reminds us who Jesus was and is, and who we should be - 272 STF

1] From heaven you came helpless babe, entered our world, your glory veiled,
not to be served but to serve, and give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the servant king, he calls us now to follow him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering,
of worship to, the Servant King.*

2] There in the garden of tears, my heavy load he chose to bear;
his heart with sorrow was torn, 'yet not my will but yours' he said.

This is our God

3] Come see his hands and his feet, the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space, to cruel nails surrendered.

This is our God

4] So let us learn how to serve and in our lives enthrone him,
each other's needs to prefer, for it is Christ we're serving.

This is our God

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

Our prayers of intercession are based upon the advent hymn, Come Lord Jesus Come. Written by Francesca Leftley (1950) it is 168 in STF

Heavenly Father, we come In Jesus' name to pray for our world. This is the world Jesus' died to save, our world that needs to see a clear vision of Jesus at work today as his perfect love and merciful care is revealed through his disciples.

Come Lord Jesus come, come Lord Jesus come, come Lord Jesus come, to this world of ours.

Heavenly Father we so often feel inadequate as we consider the suffering and injustice that so many people endure.

Lord, we need you now, Lord, we need you now, Lord, we need you now, in this world of ours.

Heavenly Father we are filled with anxiety, and fears that spoil our witness to Jesus as we try to serve you

Fill us with your peace; fill us with your peace; fill us with your peace; in this world of ours.

Heavenly Father, we sometimes find it so difficult to really love our neighbours as ourselves, especially if they are different from us, or maybe not very friendly.

Touch us with your love; touch us with your love; touch us with your love; in this world of ours.

Heavenly Father, at this time of year when we prepare to celebrate Christmas and night is longer than day, enable us with your Holy Spirit's power to shine the light of Christ into every situation.

May we see your light; may we see your light; may we see your light, in this world of ours. Amen

Our final hymn is a masterclass of hope, written by John Wesley (1707 - 1788) 177 STF

1] Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinner's slain;
thousand thousand saints attending s
well the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

2] Every eye shall now behold him
robed in glorious majesty;
we who set at nought and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to a tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

3] Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears;
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture, with what rapture,
gaze we on those glorious scars.

4] Sing amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own:
come Lord Jesus! come Lord Jesus!
Everlasting God come down.

May God Bless you this Adventide and for evermore. Amen