

Worship at Home 22 November 2020 – Waiting for a King

A short act of worship for use in people's homes, provided by Mrs Rosie Greenhalgh

Today's service uses material from 'Worship in the Waiting', written and created by Sara and Sam Hargreaves for **engageworship**, a ministry of Music and Worship Foundation CIO ¹.

Call to worship *from Worship in the Waiting* ¹

Wake up! Get ready! Line the streets to shout, anticipate the coming of your King!
Rehearse the anthem, put the bunting out, and rouse the neighbours with Advent carolling:
Wake up! Get ready! Line the streets to shout!
His rule will end the reign of suffering, so come with your despair, depression, doubt –
anticipate the coming of your King!
Wake up! Get ready! Line the streets to shout, anticipate the coming of your King!

Read Daniel 7 vv 13-14 ² [To listen to the reading click here](#)

The relevant verses are found between 2:57 and 3:30 minutes.

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Hymn Jesus shall reign (*Singing the Faith* 328) [To join in with the hymn click here](#)

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| 1. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does his successive journeys run; his kingdom stretch from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more. | 4. Blessings abound where'er he reigns; the prisoner leaps to lose his chains; the weary find eternal rest, and all who are in want are blest. |
| 2. For him shall endless prayer be made, and praises throng to crown his head; his name like sweet perfume shall rise with every morning sacrifice. | 5. Let every creature rise and bring its grateful honours to our King; angels descend with songs again, and earth repeat the loud amen. |
| 3. People and realms of every tongue dwell on his love with sweetest song; and infant voices shall proclaim their early blessings on his name. | <i>Isaac Watts (1674-1746)</i> |

Prayer of Adoration

All hail King Jesus! All hail Immanuel! King of kings, Lord of lords, bright morning star.
Throughout eternity I'll sing your praises and I'll reign with you throughout eternity.

King Jesus, we praise you this morning for all that you have achieved for us. You were there in the beginning, the mighty Word. Without you nothing was made that was made. Yet you laid your glory by, became flesh, and took on the nature of a servant. You lived a perfect human life, laying down that life for love of your friends; for love of us. You became obedient to death – even death on a cross – that we might inherit eternal life.

All hail, Redeemer, hail! For thou hast died for me.

Thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

King Jesus, we rejoice that you are exalted to the highest place. At your name every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. We rejoice that one day you will come again on the clouds of heaven to be our judge. We anticipate the coming of our King.

Hosanna to the Son of David! Hosanna to the King of kings!

Glory in the highest heaven, for Jesus the Messiah reigns. Amen.

Read Matthew 25 vv 31-46 ² [To listen to the reading click here](#)

The relevant verses are found between 4:08 and 6:32 minutes.

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison and go to visit you?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was ill and in prison and you did not look after me."

They also will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or ill or in prison, and did not help you?" He will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me." Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

Prayer of Confession

King Jesus, truly I tell you that sometimes I have closed my eyes to the needs of others.

Truly I tell you that I have seen another's pain and distress, and passed by on the other side.

Truly I tell you that I have witnessed oppression and not raised my voice.

I am truly sorry for what I have done and for what I have not done. I ask your forgiveness, because what I did not do for one of the least of your brothers and sisters, I did not do for you.

Give me a new heart and put a new spirit in me; remove my heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh, I pray, so that I may be a sheep and not a goat. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Reflection: Waiting for a King *from Worship in the Waiting*¹

Next week we enter the season of Advent. The word “Advent” means “coming”, and when something is coming, we wait for it with anticipation. What are you waiting for this Advent? Are you hoping for the end of lockdown and a real family Christmas; or for a Covid vaccine?

Perhaps you are just looking forward to some time off, or a peaceful end to this challenging year? In the midst of our hopes for our own lives, Advent asks us to listen for a deeper whisper, echoing down through history, radiating across the world: “A king is coming. A king is coming.” Advent has a mysterious character. It is about yearning, waiting, anticipating. The prayer of Advent is - come, Lord Jesus. Come, King Jesus.

Today we don't talk so much about kings, but we do long for new rulers, for changes in authority and power, as shown in the recent US Presidential election. In the UK we voted for Brexit to shake off our ties to the European Union. And in the last few years we've seen a rise in political activism, and protests about the need for action on things like climate change and racism.

Beyond politics, we are also aware that our lives are shaped and controlled by other influences - business, media, technology; and if we look even deeper we see the insidious authority of what the Bible calls the “kingdom of this world” or “principalities and powers” or the “dominion of darkness”. The human race is waiting, anticipating, yearning for a new ruler; what the Bible calls the true King of an alternative Kingdom.

Near the beginning of our service, we heard a prophecy from Daniel chapter 7 about God's coming King. Israel was oppressed by foreign powers for about 600 years before Jesus arrived, but because of this prophecy and many others, Jews had something to hope for, something to wait for. The people of Israel had waited a long time for their promised King, but they had a vision that one day someone sent from God would establish an everlasting Kingdom. Israel sensed that their new King was coming, that God was sending his Messiah to liberate them from captivity.

Eventually, Israel came under the power of the mighty Roman Empire. Roman Caesars called themselves the “sons of God” and demanded that all their subjects pledge allegiance to Caesar as Lord. Anyone who resisted was crushed under the military weight of the Roman Army. Six hundred years had passed, and yet for Israel the Messiah establishing his new Kingdom seemed further away than ever.

And then, miraculously, he comes. Their promised Messiah, the Son of God, the Son of Man. Jesus. He even uses the Son of Man title to refer to himself, saying in language which echoes Daniel 7:

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him...” (Matthew 25:31-32)

With this and many other statements Jesus shows himself to be the promised Messiah and King. And yet, there is a twist to this tale. Jesus' idea of “king” is almost the exact opposite of the kind of king that anyone is expecting. Israel was anticipating a powerful ruler who would defeat Rome and establish a political kingdom on earth. But Jesus announces that his kingly rule, the Kingdom of God, will be a paradoxical and subversive Kingdom. When he is being questioned by Pilate, a powerful Roman leader, Jesus answers him by saying:

“My Kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my Kingdom is from another place.” (John 18:36)

The Kingdom of Jesus is an upside-down Kingdom. Its watchword is not 'Power' but 'Love', for God is love. The first are last, the poor are blessed, outcasts are welcomed, light shines from the darkness, life comes out of death, and victory comes from sacrifice. Powerful and religious people can't accept this kind of King, but the "least", the downtrodden and those whom society rejects come to see that they are invited to be part of this very different kind of Kingdom.

If you are a Christian, you belong to a new Kingdom. You have been set free from the captivity of the "dominion of darkness" and freed to live by love. Your identity is not primarily about your country of birth, your family, or your politics. You are first and foremost a citizen of Jesus' Kingdom. This Kingdom is bigger than a political or geographical area, because this King is the one who created politics and geography in the first place!

The King is coming. In fact, in one sense, for us the King has come! The unexpected, upside-down Kingdom of Jesus has burst into our world, and we can be people who declare that coming Kingdom to everyone around us by showing that our lives are based on love for others.

Everything we do in our lives - our families, our work, our hobbies, our celebrations, our passions - all of it can be done in the light of Jesus being the true King and his reign breaking out on earth as it is in heaven. So the challenge for us is to make this prayer - "Come, King Jesus" the centre of our Advent this year. To learn what it means to live with expectation and hope for the coming Kingdom of God in our world. Come, King Jesus! Amen.

Hymn We wait with great expectancy Sam Hargreaves³ *from Worship in the Waiting*¹
to the tune of 'God rest ye merry, gentlemen' [To listen to the song click here](#)

1. We wait with great expectancy
to see your Kingdom come.
We trust your word to be fulfilled
and pray your will be done.
So in our world of ache and loss
we're calling out, as one:

Chorus 1
*Come Lord Jesus,
we hunger and we yearn
for your return.
Come Lord Jesus,
oh we pray for your return.*

2. You came to us so long ago
and you will come again.
We long for heaven on the earth,
an end to grief and pain.
Lord, may our lives anticipate
and usher in your reign.

Chorus 2
*Come Lord Jesus,
we long to know you here,
come and draw near.
Come Lord Jesus,
oh we long to know you here.*

3. So lead us in your patience, Lord,
and help us match your pace,
to walk the straight and narrow road
in rhythms of your grace,
and may this Advent way of life
all hurriedness replace.

Chorus 3
*Come Lord Jesus,
and teach us how to wait,
you are not late.
Come Lord Jesus,
help us worship as we wait.*

Prayer of Intercession: Come, King Jesus *from Worship in the Waiting*¹

Son of Man, come in glory! **Come, King Jesus.**

King Jesus, I bring the world I live in before your throne. Many nations are suffering, their peoples hungry or thirsty, oppressed, or forgotten in the global Covid pandemic. When they suffer, you suffer, Lord. I bring these places to you, naming those countries on my heart...

Son of Man, come in glory! **Come, King Jesus.**

King Jesus, I bring my local area before your throne. Many people are hungry and thirsty, struggling with basic necessities like clothes or housing. Thank you for people and organisations who work for justice for these my brothers and sisters. When the 'least' are blessed, you are blessed, Lord. I bring these people and organisations to you, naming them before you...

Son of Man, come in glory! **Come, King Jesus.**

King Jesus, I bring the people on my heart before your throne. In these difficult times I pray for those in debt or in prison, those who are ill or who feel lonely and friendless, those suffering because of the lockdown. When I feed, clothe, phone or visit them, I serve you. Speak to me about how I can make a difference, as I name those I know who are in need...

Son of Man, come in glory! **Come, King Jesus.**

King Jesus, I bring my church before your throne. Separated as we are by lockdown, yet in you we are one. Help us serve you as we serve the least of our brothers and sisters. May we see your face in the broken people of this world, and respond in love; may we be sheep and not goats. Lead us into our Advent journey, to know your rule and reign in our lives.

Son of Man, come in glory! **Come, King Jesus. Amen.**

Below is one of the Tiny Advent Poems written by Amy Scott Robinson and made available through *Worship in the Waiting*¹. They try to capture the Advent feeling of waiting and anticipation.



Hymn Sing we the King

(MHB 116 or Singing the Faith 185 with changes to vv 2 & 3)

[To join in with the hymn click here](#)

1. Sing we the King who is coming to reign,
glory to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain!
Life and salvation his empire shall bring,
joy to the nations when Jesus is King:

*Come let us sing: praise to our King,
Jesus our King, Jesus our King:
this is our song, who to Jesus belong:
glory to Jesus, to Jesus our King.*
2. All men shall dwell in his marvellous light,
races long severed his love shall unite;
justice and truth from his sceptre shall spring;
wrong shall be ended when Jesus is King:
3. All shall be well in his kingdom of peace;
freedom shall flourish and wisdom increase;
foe shall be friend when his triumph we sing;
sword shall be sickle when Jesus is King:
4. Souls shall be saved from the burden of sin;
doubt shall not darken his witness within;
hell hath no terrors, and death hath no sting;
love is victorious when Jesus is King:
5. Kingdom of Christ, for thy coming we pray,
hasten, O Father, the dawn of the day
when this new song Thy creation shall sing:
Satan is vanquished and Jesus is King:

Charles Silvester Horne (1865-1914)

Blessing

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet. Come, King Jesus!

And the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and all those you love, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Acknowledgements

- 1 Worship in the Waiting Church Service Pack An Advent Journey
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