

Advent 2

December 6, 2020 Bethlehem

Psalm 51:7-9

Our Advent Lord "Let it snow" Forgiveness

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Dear friends in Christ Jesus, our Advent Savior;

As I wrote this, I was listening to Christmas carols on Spotify, the music streaming service. Its time! Thanksgiving is past and the celebration of our Savior's birth quickly approaches. Radio stations local, satellite and streaming offer many choices for listening to Christmas carols.

Pastor Bode has put together a sermon series on a "Treasury of Carols." The first carol is the very familiar "Let It Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow." Although more a song about winter we associate the thought with the Christmas season. Can't you just hear Dean Martin crooning that wish? So, what if "the weather outside is frightful," or, "the fire is slowly dying." Let it snow.

During this Advent season of repentance, thus the purple paraments, we remember our sins against God and each other. They are frightful because they hurt others and damn us. We are slowly dying like embers in a fireplace because the wages of our sin is death, even eternal separation of soul and body from God's presence.

So what. Over all that sin and death, covering it deeply so he does not see it, **Our Advent Lord 'Lets it Snow' Forgiveness.** We shall be whiter than snow. We have cause for celebration.

Psalm 51 is a penitential psalm. Would those with repentant hearts over their sins, "For I admit my rebellious acts...Against you, you only have I sinned and I have done evil in your eyes," who sang King David's song 51 have gotten "whiter than snow" as a metaphor for forgiveness? David certainly "got it" as he wrote this Psalm when Nathan came to him after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband, Uriah.

It does snow in Jerusalem and Israel. Not like in Houghton, MI, or Buffalo, NY but snow is not uncommon. The summit of Mt. Hermon on the Syria Lebanon border is snow covered in winter. The melting snow in spring waters the rich land at its base and replenishes the Jordan River. David wrote in Psalm 133, verse 3, "It is like the dew (or waters of melting snow) from Hermon running down on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD commands this blessing: life to eternity."

Our Advent Lord, for David the coming Savior, for us the Savior who has come, lets it snow forgiveness on us. In that forgiveness we are whiter than snow. In that forgiveness we have life to eternity. The Son of God came to earth to be our forgiveness through his holy life and innocent death as our Substitute on Calvary's cross. The Bethlehem star and Jesus' cross are deeply linked as we know well.

We repent because the weather outside is frightful. Not meteorologic weather. Our sins, and others' sins cause terrible, frightful storms in the lives of the people around us. Creation itself is subjected to corruption, and with us decay. The weather inside is frightful as well, not quite so cozy and perfect as the song, "Let it Snow." Our thoughts, our designs, our plots often are in contradiction to God's Word.

In place of rightful retribution, our Advent Lord lets it snow forgiveness. Covered in Christ's blood we shall be whiter than snow. We are whiter than snow in our holy baptisms, and through the Lord's Supper, through and the preaching of Christ crucified and risen again for us.

We have become like Christ. One day in Jesus' second advent either through my death or his return that match will become visible. In our white robes we will be like him. "The Ancient of Days clothing was white as snow," Daniel wrote, [7:9].

Our advent Lord lets it snow forgiveness matches what we sang in our hymn of the day, Jesus Sinners Does Receive. "Oh, how blest it is to know, Were as scarlet my transgression, It shall be as white as snow by your blood and bitter passion." We have cause for celebration.

Our evening's Christmas carol includes the final thought, "But as long as you love me so, let it snow, let it snow, let it snow." In our application we say to our Advent Lord, "Because you love me so, I know you will continue to let it snow forgiveness on me." David knew this. He wrote, "Let me hear joy and gladness, Let the bones you have crushed celebrate."

We hear joy and gladness in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. David prayed that God would be gracious to him according to his mercy. Why? David believed God is merciful. It was on the basis of that mercy that King David celebrated. We sing the verses immediately following our text in the Offertory, the "Create in me." We sing them immediately following the gospel proclamation and affirmation in the sermon because God has restored to us the joy of our salvation.

David wrote with a broken heart and a contrite sigh, "Remove my sin with hyssop, and I will be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." In guilt, David's bones felt like God had crushed him. Now clean and white as snow in forgiveness he felt strong again to celebrate.

Advent like Lent is a penitential season. Repentance in the second part of the broad sense is faith. Faith is celebration in the good news of our Advent Lord. He came first to redeem the world. He will come again. Here is the connection of Advent to End Time.

Jesus will return to gather his people to himself for the eternal perfect celebration of the marriage feast of the Lamb. Meanwhile, Advent Lord, let it snow, let it snow, let it snow forgiveness. Amen. <SDG>