

**What Do YOU Have For me?**  
**Psalms 85:1-13**  
**December 15, 2024**

This Psalm is not a Psalm of David but of the sons of Korah. They were of the tribe of Levi and were temple musicians. I guess it makes sense that the musicians might have a song they would like to sing. The hand bells are working with the Christmas Eve service and the songs that will be played and sung. As you know, the instrument that I am most familiar with is not stringed or brass but the radio.

These musicians knew more than music, they knew their history as well. They begin with thinking of a time in the past where the LORD was favorable to the land of Israel. He restored what once was at the time of Jacob, the same Jacob who had the 12 sons and a daughter, the same Jacob whose son Joseph told of a time when the whole family would bow to him. This came true and Jacob who was losing it all to drought in Israel had his fortunes returned, somewhat in Egypt but fully as his descendants some 400 years later would be restored back in the land of Israel.

Yes, their sin in the wilderness was dealt with and their children entered the land of Israel those 40 years later with a plan to conquer the land of milk and honey and establish the lineage of Jacob in the promised land, the land promised way back in the time of Abraham, the father of them all.

It seems the sons of Korah may have thought of those times in the past but the thinking is that they were looking at the time soon after the return of the exiles from Babylon which were met with some opposition as we can read in Ezra and Nehemiah.

These sons, knew of all the years that had passed since the Israelites had been hauled off to Babylon for their sin, yes, the sin of turning their backs on God. Yes, they tell of God in this Psalm, of God relenting of His anger and restoring their fortunes. The sons of Korah can see that the people are have now recognized their sin and of those who had died since the exile. Now they are wanting the Lord to forgive and restore them by speaking peace and not be angry any more and yet wanting the exiles to not return to the folly of turning their backs on God again.

You may be wondering why this Psalm for Advent. What were the sons of Korah wanting? They were anticipating the Lord to show mercy on the people, to speak peace to His people, to His saints while at the same time wanting the people to take stock of why they are in the situation they find themselves.

Yes, Advent is a time to take stock. We are looking forward to the coming of Jesus and yet, what if we had been waiting for thousands of years instead of just one year or 11 months?

Can you put yourself into the time before Jesus showed up in that manger? Life going along, day by day, yes maybe, once in awhile wondering when the Messiah would come. You had heard of His coming, but over the years those who should have known who the Christ would be, had added to who He was to be by bringing the world and its view of kings. They had put aside all those clues of the LORD's view of bringing His Son into the world, in a stable, to parents of no account, to instead speaking in a worldly view of royalty. So many passages that pointed to the Messiah and yet, they were influenced by the world.

Oh, we shouldn't be too surprised that they had their heads turned by the world. There are so many today who believe who have been swayed by the world. We would expect people to think that the world will continue on forever, just as it has but there are those who are counting on Jesus coming again to rule almost in paradise. They are thinking He is coming to reign on this earth, this earth that has been tainted by sin. It wasn't only humans that were affected by sin but all of creation was tainted by the breaking of that one commandment. Jesus is coming but His coming again will mean and end to sin, sin that was paid for on the cross and an end to this creation.

The Bible says He will have a new heaven and earth, one where there will be as John writes in Revelation: *7:15-17 "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will shelter them with His presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and He will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

Jesus came to rescue us from our sin but in order to do that we needed to be changed. Yes, we were changed from sinner to saint as Jesus shed His blood on that cross. That change was given to most of us through the water and the Word in our baptisms.

He was born in a manger, no place for a king and then was nailed to a cross meant for criminals. No, they didn't see it coming. They were looking for a king, just as

the wise men and yet, the wise men were directed to go to Bethlehem from the place where a king should be normally found.

Jesus, the Messiah defies what the world expects. They see God coming to give the things they want in this world. You know all those presents over the years that you had so much anticipation of receiving. You may not have always gotten what you wanted but you got gifts that you were happy to get, even if those socks and underwear may not have been what you were expecting but they were just what you needed even if they weren't anywhere in your mind for the gift.

We look under the tree and wonder what's under there for me. Yes, we want the things of this world but as we spend this time in the lead up to Christmas in this time of Advent we should be preparing for what do You have for me?

Yes the shepherds saw what was in that stable. They understood what was told them by the angel: *Luke 2:10b -11* "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed one, the one promised to Adam and Eve, way back in the garden was finally here.

Jesus had come, not as royalty but humbly, in a manger to two ordinary people. No fanfare just some shepherds but yes angels, a multitude of heavenly hosts saying: *Luke 2:14* "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" Or as some manuscripts and some versions of the Bible have it like you may have memorized it for your Christmas program, peace, good will among men, as found in the King James version of the Bible.

We see that Jesus was to bring peace as the exiles wanted. We see it from the angels but later on in His life Jesus also talks of peace when He was telling His disciples about His leaving them when He said: *John 16:33* *I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*"

This was before He went to the cross and yet, it was as if He had already gone to the cross. He had overcome the world. He had lived a perfect life and was on the way to the cross to finish up. Many would look to what He had done already, attributing it to the Messiah who was to come. Yes, He had overcome the world that looked to have the Messiah to come and rule on this earthly world. He would rule, but it would be from

His heavenly throne until that day He would come again to bring about a new heaven and earth.

The Sons of Korah were wanting the LORD to bring about the salvation of Israel. They knew that their salvation came from God. They were looking forward to the day when their salvation would come to fruition in the land given them, the land of Jacob whose fortunes were restored by the power of God.

They understood that it was those who looked to the Lord and listened to Him speak, speak peace to His people, to His saints. That peace can only be had by His giving us faith and making us righteous through the one Jeremiah spoke of : *Jeremiah 23:6 In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which He will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'*

The Lord is our righteousness, just as the sons of Korah saw the Lord as the people of their day's righteousness. They were wanting the Lord to fix things in a world that had all sorts of turmoil. There were those who didn't like the idea of Israelites coming back and trying to reestablish what they had before and were causing trouble.

We, too would like the Lord to fix our world too. We would like Him to come again and make all things new but until then, what is to happen each Advent season? We are never to forget how He came the first time and that He promised to come again.

We look to Jesus in the manger who came for our sins to live the life we could never live because we sin each day and deserve to be punished. We look then to Jesus for forgiveness. We look to Him but we must also recognize our sin, that we have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

You need to be reminded of your sins. Sins that affect your lives and affects the lives of those you have to deal with and those who seem to be gifted with so much and yet do not want Jesus to be their Savior because they think they can handle it all by themselves. We know they can't so we are tasked with letting them know of one who can, who did and will continue to do until He comes again.

This Advent we are to prepare to receive Him. There are many preparations to be done this time of year. Yes, we may wonder what might be under the tree for us but it will never match what Jesus has for each of us, the reason He came to this earth and that is where steadfast love met faithfulness and where righteousness and peace kissed each other, in that Child, born in that manger, in that manger in the city of David, Jesus.