

## About the Theme—Come, Lord Jesus

The prayer “Come, Lord Jesus” is more than a petition asking Jesus to be with us at mealtimes. The prayer “Come, Lord Jesus” is an urgent plea focusing on the end of time.

St. Paul describes the end of time as the time when “*the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed,*”<sup>1</sup> the day “*when the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality.*”<sup>2</sup> The Creeds identify this day as the day when Jesus will come to judge the living and the dead. St. John the Apostle and Evangelist viewed a glimpse of this coming day. He recorded this glimpse in Revelation. He saw the coming down of the holy city, new Jerusalem, out of heaven, and he heard the voice declaring, “*Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.*”<sup>3</sup> St. John continues to describe what he saw: “*No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.*”<sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup>These and other amazing sounds and sights moved John to pray at Revelation’s conclusion: “*Come, Lord Jesus!*”<sup>6</sup>

We hear the apostles’ testimony, and we, with them, yearn for this day to arrive. And so, we join our voices to the Biblical prayer, “Come, Lord Jesus.”

Advent, therefore, is a time to focus on Jesus’ coming again on the Last Day. Advent is also a time when we get to remember Jesus’ first coming, when Lo! God *came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man.*<sup>7</sup> Prophets had long sung<sup>8</sup> about this first coming. In the fullness of time, the Savior came, this “flow’ret bright.”<sup>9</sup> He filled the air with the sweetness of glad tidings of great joy for all people, sweetness that to this day “dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.”<sup>10</sup> This Savior is the Star coming out of Jacob’s family<sup>11</sup> who “from sin and death He saves us and lightens ev’ry load.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:52

<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:53

<sup>3</sup> Revelation 21:3-4

<sup>4</sup> Revelation 22:3-5

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in “E’en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come”

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 22:20b

<sup>7</sup> Nicene Creed

<sup>8</sup> “Lo, how a Rose E’er Blooming,” stanza 1

<sup>9</sup> Lo, how a Rose E’er Blooming,” stanza 1

<sup>10</sup> “Lo, how a Rose E’er Blooming,” stanza 3

<sup>11</sup> “There Shall a Star Come Out of Jacob.”

<sup>12</sup> “Lo, how a Rose E’er Blooming,” stanza 3

To announce His arrival, angels tore the sky apart with light,<sup>13</sup> singing glory to God, giving earth a glimpse of heavenly bliss<sup>14</sup> as they told shepherds news of the Savior's birth...news that continues to lead our glowing hearts in thanksgiving<sup>15</sup> as we sing of Christ, the Eternal Word made flesh and bone, whose birth made known the kindness of the Lord.<sup>16</sup>

Advent is also a time when we remember that Jesus still comes today to calm our restless souls and anxious minds,<sup>17</sup> feeding his flock<sup>18</sup> as He—our shepherd—gives us precious food from heaven<sup>19</sup>—His gifts of Word and Sacrament. Through these gifts, He keeps our hearts believing<sup>20</sup> by speaking comforting forgiveness to us presently sitting in darkness, mourning 'neath our sorrow's load<sup>21</sup>.

Today's hymns and anthems focus on these comings of Jesus, too, while today's program begins and ends focused on the Second Coming, urging Jesus to come with clouds descending and return to reign.<sup>22</sup>

“Make haste, O God, to deliver me!  
O Lord, make haste to help me!”<sup>23</sup>

“Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance.”<sup>24</sup>

“Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might.”<sup>25</sup>

Come, Lord Jesus.

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<sup>13</sup> “Behold the Marvel of This Night,” stanza 1

<sup>14</sup> “Behold the Marvel of This Night,” stanza 2

<sup>15</sup> “Sing to the Child,” stanza 1 and “Still, Still, Still” stanzas 2 and 3.

<sup>16</sup> “O Sing of Christ,” stanza 1

<sup>17</sup> “O Jesus, Grant Me Hope and Comfort” stanza 2

<sup>18</sup> Messiah, “He Shall Feed His Flock”

<sup>19</sup> “One He Came in Blessing,” stanza 2

<sup>20</sup> “Once He Came in Blessing,” stanza 4

<sup>21</sup> “Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People” stanza 1

<sup>22</sup> “Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending,” stanza 1

<sup>23</sup> Psalm 70:1

<sup>24</sup> Collect for Advent 1

<sup>25</sup> Collect for Advent 4