

## Anticipation

### Scripture Reading — Psalm 122

*I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." — Psalm 122:1*

"Are we there yet?" As much as we value Sunday worship, it would be unusual to hear these words from our kids in the car as we drove to church. We generally save that kind of anticipation for something less common.

Though we adults might nonetheless want to quote Psalm 122 on the way to weekly worship, the psalmist was more likely anticipating one of the great festivals of the old covenant. These were held at the temple in Jerusalem, and going there would have been more like attending a convention than a weekly worship service.

Still, as exciting as a festival would have been, that wouldn't explain the depth of the psalmist's joy. The psalmist was looking beyond the festival to something greater. As the city of David and the city of God, Jerusalem was where God's rule connected with human reality and the pilgrim would glimpse the kingdom of God.

In a similar way, the joy we anticipate in the Christmas season looks beyond the holiday to something much greater. We believe that in Jesus' birth the kingdom of God has come near. The child in the manger gives us a glimpse of the heavenly kingdom. As much as we look forward to it, our Christmas joy merely anticipates a joy that is still to come. It whets our appetite so that we ask, "Are we there yet?"

### Prayer

*"O Jesus, joy of loving hearts," fill us with anticipation in this Advent season so that in our celebration of your birth we might catch a glimpse of your joyous heavenly kingdom. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [God](#), [God's Kingdom](#), [Seasons](#), [Christmas](#)

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