

Watchmen

Scripture Reading — Psalm 130

I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. — Psalm 130:6

In the town where I live, the Christmas season begins with tree-lighting ceremonies. That is fitting, because Christmas is a season of light. In addition, the fact that these tree lightings take place in the darkness reminds us that Advent is a season of waiting.

One of the Bible's strongest images for waiting is watchmen who are looking for the morning to come. The psalmist who uses that image is crying out to God from the depths. In the psalms, depths and darkness describe trouble. We are not told what trouble the psalmist is in. We just hear the psalmist begging for mercy. When he says, "If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?" he confesses that he has no more reason to expect God's help than any other sinner. Yet in his trouble he waits, "more than watchmen wait for the morning."

To wait like a watchman is to wait with confidence that the darkness will not last, even if the night seems long. Watchmen wait for a dawn they know is coming. The psalmist was waiting for God, who comes with forgiveness, unfailing love, and redemption.

No matter how long our night or how deep our darkness, Advent reminds us that we wait for God, who has come in Jesus and who is coming again. In his word we put our hope.

Prayer

Gracious Father, whatever troubles we face, whatever sins haunt us, assure us that morning comes with your forgiveness and love. May we wait for you more than watchmen wait for the morning. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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