

The Hymn of the Day for the Third Sunday in Advent is “Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding” (LSB # 345)

This hymn urges close attention about the earthly coming of Jesus (Christmas). It ends up pointing the Christ’s second coming on the last day.

In verse one we are urged to get excited about Christ coming this Christmas. It reminds us that we are getting really close. It reminds us to get prepared for this season by getting rid of the things that would get in the way of a great and joyous celebration. That is what Advent is all about.

Verse two is summed up well by Luke 1:78-79 when it says: “*because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*” It reminds one of when the morning begins with thick fog and then having the Sun burn it off leaving us with a bright sun-shiny day.

Verse three urges us to come speedily with penitent hearts and tears to latch onto the great blessing of forgiveness of all our sins.

In Isaiah 25:7-9 the end of sorrow is a theme concerning the redemption of God’s people. Jerusalem, rebuilt after the Babylonian exile, was a significant milestone on God’s way to shed the light of His glory. But even when all earthly cities pass away, He will be the everlasting light in “*the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven*” (Rv 21:2). Its residents will swell to a multitude, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands. While much of the world will tremble at the coming of Christ, we, as Christians, need not fear, but rest in God’s mercy and be drawn near with Jesus’ wondrous words of love. Verse five wraps everything up with a doxology to the triune God.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you helping me to see that Jesus is the real reason for the Christmas season. Help us keep our hearts and minds focused on him. Thank you also for the wonderful news that we will a part of that great gathering on the Last Day. Amen