

December 11, 2023

## Past, Present, Future

[Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13](#)

<sup>8</sup> *Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,  
for he will speak peace to his people,  
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.<sup>[a]</sup>*

<sup>9</sup> *Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,  
that his glory may dwell in our land.*

Advent brings the past, present and future into focus in one wonderful season of preparation and reflection. For centuries God's people heard the ancient promise of the coming of the Messiah.

Advent in the present time is our preparation to celebrate Christmas and the birth of the Christ child in our hearts anew each year. In the future we long with hope for the coming of the Victorious Christ, who will usher in the fullness of His Kingdom.

In our reading of Psalm 85, we likewise see the past, present and future merged into what the *Wesley Study Bible* calls a "Prayer for the Restoration of God's favor."

First, we are reminded that God was faithful in the past, blessing His chosen people with productive land and forgiveness of sins. In the present we ask God to restore us to his favor so we can experience His grace. For the future we can rest assured that God's Kingdom will come and that his "steadfast love and faithfulness will meet." We gain a glimpse of what that future salvation will look like.

Righteousness and peace will bubble up from the ground and pour down from the sky. The land will be fertile and productive, and righteousness will pave the way for the Lord's steps. Clearly, the Second Coming, which we look forward to during Advent, will be a time of great rejoicing for God's faithful people.

Advent, in the words of the Conference's theme this year, is a time to "Proclaim Peace and Bring Good News." This is a time for celebrating God's past promises, our present personal salvation, and the hope of the coming of the Kingdom.

***Prayer:*** *Holy God, just as your people longed for the coming of the Messiah, we long for His coming in our hearts, and for that day in which He will establish the fullness of His Kingdom. In His Name, Amen.*

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