

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church

**Sermon by
Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
Advent Vesper III.
December 19, 2012
Psalm 24:7-10**



⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

⁸ Who is this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.

⁹ Lift up your heads, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰ Who is he, this King of glory?
The LORD Almighty –
he is the King of glory.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

I read the other day about Dr. Dilip Joseph from Colorado Springs. Dr. Joseph works for a group called Morning Star – doing relief work in Afghanistan. Dr. Joseph was kidnapped the other day. Who snatched him? Maybe it was Taliban insurgents. Maybe it was armed smugglers. It doesn't really matter – does it? They were evil men with guns – that snatched him – threatened him – very likely planned to kill him. I don't know how old Dr. Joseph is. I don't know where he went to medical school. I don't know his specialty – what field he took extra classes in. It doesn't really matter – does it? In the dark – in the night – a group of Navy Seals launched a rescue mission. They rescued Dr. Joseph. They took hold of him – got him onto their helicopter – and got away. One of the Navy Seals named Nicholas was wounded – ultimately fatally wounded. He died – gave up his life – to save Dr. Joseph's life! Jesus gave up his life to save sinners like us. That's why he was born a little baby – born to die –

born to save us from our sins. A thousand years before the fact – King David wrote about how all glory belongs to Jesus – our Savior from sin and guilt. Today God’s Word reminds us:

Theme: The King is Coming!

1. He comes with glory!

2. He comes in power!

Some people think Psalm 24 is connected with when they brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem – remember? When David danced with all his might – just leaping and bouncing and going around and around and around and around – he was so happy he couldn’t stand still? That’s nice – but there’s really nothing here to connect the return of the Ark and Psalm 24. What is certain is – Psalm 24 talks about something much more wonderful than that! Psalm 24 talks about Jesus coming in power and great glory – like on Judgment Day when the sky will tear open – and there will be Jesus and all his angels all around him. That will really be something!

Psalm 24 begins with the words, **“The earth is the LORD’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it...”** I read about a ranch in Montana – where there are so many dinosaur bones – that you can pay \$75 for half a day – to look around – and if you find a dinosaur bone – most likely you can keep it! Marge – who lives on her dad’s ranch – found a bone – that is most likely a triceratops’ toe bone – with Tyrannosaurus Rex teeth marks in it. That would have to hurt – and so! People are all excited if they find a small petrified piece of a dinosaur. Jesus invented dinosaurs. Jesus invented the Triceratops – with that huge shield of body armor and the three horns. Jesus invented the Diplodocus – the Freddie Flintstone dinosaur from the gravel pit. Jesus invented the Pterodactyl – the flying dinosaur. Jesus invented the Tyrannosaurus Rex – the tyrant king with his huge back legs and little front legs – and all those teeth. Jesus designed and engineered and built dinosaurs – so huge – and many of them just eating salads! Jesus invented all the different sea creatures – that live so deep in the ocean it’s completely dark – as each week a handful of never before seen creatures are discovered and scientists have to think up new names. There are new neon frogs in the dense rain forests of Papua New Guinea that most people have never seen either – never discovered by people for the last 5 to 6,000 years! The LORD is the Lord of the deepest part of the

ocean trenches – the Lord of the highest parts of the highest mountains – where the snow never melts!

⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. I preached for a mission festival a long time ago – in Hortonville! I got there very early – just to be safe I got there more than a half an hour before Church. I was shown around – hung up my gown – was made to feel very comfortable – when Pastor Free said, “Get your coat back on it’s time to greet! We don’t wait to greet people inside the Church. We meet them on the sidewalk – in the parking lot! God’s people are too important to wait for. We open the door for them!” If we open the doors wide – both the front doors to welcome what are in fact **tax collectors and sinners** – what would you do to welcome the LORD himself? If we open the doors wide – both the front doors to welcome blood bought – redeemed children of God – what would you do for the one who shed his blood to buy you back from sin and death? **⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.** The doors – the gates need to open wide!

⁸ Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Glory? What do we know of glory? Earthly glory is fast fleeting! Think about it. *The Academy Awards* – the picture of the year – that’s pretty big – and so? What was the picture of the year – the best movie of all two years ago? Do you know? Can you remember? It was **The King’s Speech**. It was about the King of England – who was supposed to rally the people of England during the time when the Nazis were bombing London. He was to inspire them – give them courage by the force of his words on the radio. The only problem was he stuttered – he stammered – he couldn’t even spit out his name! What was to be done?! That was the powerful movie of the year – just two years ago! Did you remember that? Oh, sure – now you do! The movie of the year last year. Surely you remember that – don’t you? It was **The Artist**! The Artist was a silent movie! Some people said – who wants to go to a movie where there’s no sound? No sound? Of course there was sound – music – powerful music through the whole thing. And the words the actors were supposed to say – were few and far between – printed in huge white letters on a black screen – just long enough for you to read them – and then it was back to the story and the actors – with exaggerated expressions – and the music – the

wonderful music – “faster, faster”! And so? The examples multiply. Who won the Stanley Cup this year? The **Los Angeles Kings** beat the **New Jersey Devils** – second time since 1996 that all the Canadian team were eliminated in the 1st round! Who cares about hockey? What was the name of that guy who won all the Gold Medals for swimming? Do you remember? Or the young woman who was so good at gymnastics? Do you remember? Can you name even a handful of people who won gold medals two Olympics ago? And do you know where people put their gold medals? They put them in freezer bags and hid them in the back of their freezers – behind pizzas and tater tots and little bags of sprouts from Brussels – one of the first places robbers look! Or they put them in shoe boxes and hide them under their bed. Another place robbers look! Earthly fame – that people try so hard to achieve – is fast fleeting! The glory that belongs to the LORD will last forever and ever!

⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. ⁸ Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. The LORD strong and mighty! The Hebrew word for strong also means mighty even fierce! It is the word for a formidable force like a powerful wind. We have seen again and again the power of the wind of a tornado or a hurricane – utterly smashing manmade things we think are so strong and permanent – but aren't! It's the same word for fierce and powerful like a lion! Have you looked at a picture or a video of a lion attacking? It's the might of a crocodile! Again – have you seen one of those films – where the wildebeests are making their way across a muddy river in Africa? All of a sudden the crocodiles attack and there is no escape! Might and power – the LORD has them! **The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle!**

The battle is fierce! It's the battle between good and sometimes unspeakable evil. It is the battle between life and death. It is the battle for immortal souls and where they will spend eternity! The stakes could not possible be higher! Sometimes gross and wicked evil strikes through one person – and the victims of that evil are many little people and their teachers. Sometimes evil happens on a scale that is almost impossible to understand – thousands at a time – using cardboard box cutters and jet-liners. Literally thousands – through chemical weapons in the north of

Iraq – where the Kurds live. Sometimes it is a whole race of people – the millions of Jews put to death on Poland or the people in Bosnia. People have been dying by the thousands in the *Sudan* – literally starving to death – and I dare say most Americans couldn't find the Sudan on a map of Africa. We are content to drink our egg nog – please pass the Christmas cookies and let's play our video games – of Call of Duty or Grand Theft Auto – where you shoot people who sell “hugs and kisses” and worse! Sometimes the work of the devil is one soul at a time. It used to be there was a murder – at least one – every 24 hours in Chicago. Today there is a murder – at least one – every 24 hours in Milwaukee. One of the fastest growing fields – in technical college is that of **Crime Scene Investigation** – because there are so many crime scenes to investigate! How sad is that? One would be tempted to fear and despair were it not for the fact – that the Christ child was born to crush the head of the serpent – to set us free from sin and guilt – that we might spend eternity in Heaven!

¹⁰ **Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty – he is the King of glory.** Cheese curds! I like cheese curds – fresh cheese curds – they squeek! I like cheese curds. Where do they come from? The short answer is – they come from Jesus! Think about it! A cow – eats grass and some ground up corn and other very good things (a shut-in told me *minerals*) for cows to eat. Then the farmer comes – and sits on a stool and puts a bucket under the cow – and squeezes out milk – into the bucket – and maybe a squeeze or two at a cat! And they take some of that milk and do what? I don't know exactly – but at a cheese factory they mush it around – and the next thing you know – you can go down to Mullen's and get a bag of orange or white cheese curds! If you break a bone – you should eat cheese curds – eat string cheese – and that will help your bones heal – and so? You can't make this stuff up! Now who invented cheese curds? Jesus did! Jesus invented you and me and grass and cows and milk! It's all incredible if you stop and think about it – how it all works together! Now they say there are in the United States plenty of people who don't believe in Jesus or any *god* for that matter. And they are free to do that. But if you really think it through – if there is no *god* – then none of this makes any sense at all – no point, no reason, no ultimate anything! If that's true – everything is truly hopeless! But there is hope and there is a point. The point is the Christ child born to die to save us from our sins. Jesus is the point and Heaven is the

goal. Not just when we go to heaven but already here – already now – we give glory to our King of Glory – Christ the king of our hearts. Amen!

To the LORD alone all glory!

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