

Waiting, Watching, Wondering

1 December

An Advent to Epiphany Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney



Isaiah 25 by Olivia Smith

Isaiah 25: 6-9

- ⁶ On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear.
- ⁷ And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
- ⁸ he will swallow up death for ever.
- Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
- ⁹ It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.
This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.



To wonder

Today is the first of December, a day when Advent Calendars begin when the rest of the world seems to catch on that Advent has started. My email inbox started filling up with offers of more adult Advent calendars in November – coffee, beauty products, gin and crafting materials. Many different ways to count down the days to Christmas Day, a new surprise and maybe a new discovery each day. Today's reading from Isaiah starts with a feast of food and wine but does not stop there, we have part of the Little Apocalypse of Isaiah. The prophet tells that death will come but that is not the end, there is the promise of a time when there will be no more mourning and God will wipe all tears off faces. We live in a time after the events of the New Testament, we know that Jesus came to earth, God incarnate, that Jesus lived, died and rose again from the dead. We still live with death, but because of Jesus, we live with life, and that gives us even greater hope. This is a hope that a verse of O Come O Come Emmanuel directly references Isaiah 25:8:

*O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Our reading begins with a feast, Advent Calendars may be filled with goodies but there is a hope we look forward to as we look, waiting for God Incarnate – God with us this season.

To listen

God Shall Wipe Away All Tears (from 'The Armed Man' by Karl Jenkins)

<https://youtu.be/WhXEHGKj8U4>

O Come O Come Emmanuel as recorded by Pentatonix

<https://open.spotify.com/track/4eKD9QhFqvwA4ilUAkQAbI?si=09dca0886e614998>

