



Study Three

The Way of Holiness



Michelangelo Fresco of the Last Judgement c1540

Opening Psalm : Trust in the Lord

(Read Psalm 146:5-10)



*'Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God.'* (v. 5)

The psalmist paints a striking image of God's character. Unlike human leaders, whose power fades, God remains forever faithful.

This is the One who made heaven and earth, who forever keeps his promises, defends the oppressed, provides for the hungry, comforts the weary, and loves the righteous (those living in accordance with God's will). We are shown a God whose reign is not marked by selfish power, as with so many earthly rulers, but by justice, mercy, and care for the vulnerable.

In Advent, we remember that this same God stepped into history through Jesus

– who embodied every trait described in this psalm. Christ did not arrive in royal splendour but in humility, to embrace the downtrodden, heal the sick and bring justice to the oppressed.

This passage roots us in hope: 'The Lord reigns forever.' Earthly powers rise and fall, but God's kingdom is unshakable. Advent is not only about remembering Christ's first coming, but also about longing for his return, when God's reign of justice and peace will be complete.

Until then, the challenge is to live in the light of his character - faithful, merciful, and unchanging.

The way of holiness

(Read Isaiah 11:1-10)



*“And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness;
it will be for those who walk on that Way.” (v. 8)*

Isaiah brings us a vision of hope and restoration. The prophet describes deserts bursting into bloom, dry lands singing with joy, and weak hands strengthened. It is a picture of God’s renewal— where sorrow, fear, and brokenness are replaced with joy, healing, and peace. For weary people longing for deliverance, this is truly good news.

Isaiah also talks of a ‘Way of Holiness’ on which only the redeemed will walk. This image reminds us that God’s redemption is not only about transformation of creation, but also about transformation of humanity. The Way of Holiness is a safe road, free from threat and fear, where the redeemed walk together toward their destination. It speaks of belonging, protection, and a journey shaped by God’s presence.

There is a very real sense in which Jesus becomes this Way of Holiness, as in John 14:6 where he describes himself as ‘The Way, the Truth, and the Life’. He is the road to God, the One who heals the broken and guides us into life. Advent reminds us that Christ has come, opening the Way for all his people to follow; and Christ will come again, leading us to our destination.



Jesus Christ, I am the way, the truth, and the life, Tommy Tallstig, 2023

Are you the one?

(Read Matthew 11:2-11)



‘When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?’ (vs. 2,3)

John the Baptist, now in prison, asks one of his disciples to check out whether Jesus really is the Messiah, or should he expect someone else?

John, who once boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Lamb of God, now wrestles with doubt. He had expected the Messiah to bring judgment and deliverance, but from where he was things looked different, with Jesus healing the sick, raising

the dead, preaching good news to the poor.

Jesus answers not with arguments, but with evidence: lives transformed, hope restored, grace poured out. His response is gentle but firm

- yes, I am the one, but maybe not quite the one you expected.

Advent speaks directly to this moment of doubt and waiting. Like John, we live between promise and fulfilment. We long for justice, healing, and peace, yet often the world still feels like a place of suffering and uncertainty.

Jesus' response reminds us that God's kingdom is already at work—in small, quiet, but powerful ways, through restoration, compassion and love shown.



Synopsis of Saint John the Baptist, 11C (Menologion of Basil II)

'Advent is a promise, not just a remembrance.' (Karl Barth)

'Advent creates people, new people.' (Henri Nouwen)

'It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope.' (Pope Benedict XVI)



A prayer

Lord Jesus, when doubts rise
and hope feels distant,
remind us of the signs of Your kingdom breaking in.
Open our eyes to see healing, restoration,
and good news around us,
and strengthen our hearts to trust that You are the One.
As we wait in this Advent season,
fill us with patience, courage, and joy,
so that we may walk in faith and point
others to Your light.
Amen.