



SURELY HIS  
**SALVATION  
IS NEAR**

TO THOSE WHO FEAR HIM,  
THAT GLORY MAY DWELL  
IN OUR LAND. PSALM 85:9, ESV

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## As We Gather

We do not often emphasize the psalms during the Advent season, instead being eager to read about the prophecies, anticipating Jesus' coming. Yet the psalms are God's Word during terrible times to people who lived before God's promises were fulfilled in our Savior's coming. This Advent, we focus on several psalms as we use them to prepare to celebrate our Lord's birth with open eyes and ears.

Today we focus on Psalm 85, which pleads with the Lord of hosts, "Revive us again!" That's asking for more than a little energy; it calls for rebirth and resurrection. And so the answer had to wait until Jesus came. We have been revived by our inclusion in the Body of Christ. Let the rejoicing resound!

### ✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

#### Hymn

59 – Hail to the Lord's Anointed

#### Invocation

**P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

#### Confession and Absolution

**P** God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

**C** If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

**P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**C** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**P** Let us pray.

**C** Almighty God, merciful Father, we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. But we are sorry for our transgressions and pray You, of Your bountiful mercy, to be gracious and merciful unto us. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, renew us by Your Spirit, and lead us in the way everlasting. Amen.

- P** Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. We are forgiven. With boldness and confidence we may approach the throne to find grace to help in time of need. In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.
- C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## ✠ The Service of the Word ✠

### Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**

### Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray...  
... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

### First Reading

Nehemiah 4

<sup>1</sup> But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. <sup>2</sup> And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?” <sup>3</sup> Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, “Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall.” <sup>4</sup> Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! <sup>5</sup> Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders. <sup>6</sup> So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. <sup>7</sup> Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, <sup>8</sup> and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion. <sup>9</sup> Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night. <sup>10</sup> Then Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build

the wall.” <sup>11</sup> And our adversaries said, “They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease.” <sup>12</sup> So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, “From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us.” <sup>13</sup> Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. <sup>14</sup> And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.” <sup>15</sup> And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. <sup>16</sup> So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. <sup>17</sup> Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. <sup>18</sup> Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me. <sup>19</sup> Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, “The work is great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. <sup>20</sup> Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.” <sup>21</sup> So we labored in the work, and half of the men held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared. <sup>22</sup> At the same time I also said to the people, “Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day.” <sup>23</sup> So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing.

## Second Reading

Mark 1:1-8

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <sup>2</sup> As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.” <sup>3</sup> “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.’” <sup>4</sup> John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. <sup>5</sup> Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> And he preached, saying, “There comes One after me who is mightier than I,

whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. <sup>8</sup> I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

## **Confession of Faith**

Luther’s Explanation of the Second Article

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true.

## **Hymn**

351 – Love Divine, All Love Excelling

## **Sermon Text**

Psalm 85

<sup>1</sup> LORD, You have been favorable to Your land; You have brought back the captivity of Jacob. <sup>2</sup> You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin. Selah <sup>3</sup> You have taken away all Your wrath; You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger. <sup>4</sup> Restore us, O God of our salvation, And cause Your anger toward us to cease. <sup>5</sup> Will You be angry with us forever? Will You prolong Your anger to all generations? <sup>6</sup> Will You not revive us again, That Your people may rejoice in You? <sup>7</sup> Show us Your mercy, LORD, And grant us Your salvation. <sup>8</sup> I will hear what God the LORD will speak, For He will speak peace To His people and to His saints; But let them not turn back to folly. <sup>9</sup> Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land. <sup>10</sup> Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed. <sup>11</sup> Truth shall spring out of the earth, And righteousness shall look down from heaven. <sup>12</sup> Yes, the LORD will give what is good; And our land will yield its increase. <sup>13</sup> Righteousness will go before Him, And shall make His footsteps our pathway.



*Sermon*

**Revive**

## Offertory

702 (1, 4) – As Angels Joyed with One Accord

1 As an - gels joyed with one ac - cord Up -  
2 In ev - 'ry age let praise a - bound. He  
on comes; the ad - vent of our Lord, So  
we hear His voice re - sound. His  
laud - we all and bless the name Of  
glo - rious gos - pel does not cease To  
Him who from the Fa - ther came.  
bring us com - fort, joy, and peace.

## General Prayer

### The Lord's Prayer

**C** Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## Benediction

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.  
**C** Amen.

## Hymn

### 47 – Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise

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