

**LIQUID**  
CHURCH

**Advent**

**Sunday**

**3<sup>rd</sup> December**

**2023**

**A  
THRILL  
OF  
HOPE**



# Isaiah 64:1-4

*ERV*

- <sup>1</sup> If you would tear open the skies  
and come down to earth, then everything would change.  
Mountains would melt before you.
- <sup>2</sup> The mountains would burst into flames like burning bushes.  
The mountains would boil like water on the fire.  
Then your enemies would learn about you.  
And all nations would shake with fear when they see you.
- <sup>3</sup> But you have done awesome things that we did not expect.  
You came down, and mountains shook in fear before you.
- <sup>4</sup> No one has ever heard of such a God.  
No one has ever heard such a story.  
No one has ever seen any God except you,  
who does such great things for those who trust him.

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# The Tension of Waiting in Hope

- If only God would act
- When will peace come?
- The “bells” remind us that God is not dead...
- So what should be our posture whilst waiting for God to act?
- Think of the many kinds of “waiting” you experience...

# Background versus Context



**Background** does not impact us at all because we don't enter into the surroundings (e.g., background pics on Zoom)



**Context** means those involved are impacted and/or influenced by their surroundings and are likely reacting to them in some way (e.g., the language used in the Gospels echoes that used by the Roman Empire but has a different, subversive, meaning ---- “peace”; “son of God”; etc.)

# The Christmas Story in Context

- Jesus was born into a Roman dominated world
- Octavian (adopted son of Julius Caesar) saved the Roman Republic from internal collapse by defeating Antony & Cleopatra
- Afterwards he declared, “victory with peace secured”, changed his name to Augustus and proclaimed himself “son of a god”
- Rome inherited from Greece the idea that world history would involve five great ages or kingdoms
- The fifth kingdom would be the last climactic kingdom of the whole world (eschaton = end of the age or human history)

# The Christmas Story in Context

*From a Biblical perspective, The Eschaton is...*

not about the destruction of the earth,

but about its transfiguration,

not about the end of the world,

but about the end of evil, injustice, violence

The eschaton is the Great Divine Cleanup of the World

# The Christmas Story in Context

- The **imperial kingdom of Rome** had as its program, peace through victory
- The **Kingdom of God** has as its program, peace through justice
- ***Both intend peace***—one by violence, the other by nonviolence
- When Luke’s angels announce “peace on earth” to the shepherds at Bethlehem, is it peace through victory or peace through justice?



# What should be our posture whilst waiting?

1. Gospel disconnected to a transformed world (personal salvation)?
2. Passively wait for God to do His thing (divine intervention)?
3. Actively participate in God's agenda?
  - Collaboration with God to help change us as individuals
  - Collaboration with God to help change the world
4. How will you “wait in hope” this Advent?