

Sundays and Seasons

Lessons and Carols for Advent (Based on the O Antiphons)

INTRODUCTION

The O Antiphons are a set of medieval refrains originally used before and after the singing of the Magnificat. They were in use already in the eighth century. Each invokes the Messiah under a different title derived from the Old Testament. This title is then amplified, and followed by an appeal to "come" and save us in a particular way. Around the twelfth century, they were collected into a Latin verse hymn, which was later translated by John Mason Neale, finally becoming the beloved Advent hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel" (LBW 34). These antiphons form the structure of this service. They are pointed for chanting, or they may be spoken. The corresponding stanza of "O come, O come, Emmanuel" is sung after each antiphon.

GATHERING SONG

OPTION A: Hark, the glad sound!

OPTION B: Fling wide the door

OPTION C: Wait for the Lord

DIALOGUE

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.

Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!

I will hear what the Lord God has to say—

A voice that speaks for peace.

Peace for all faithful people

and those who turn to him in their hearts.

God's help is near for those who fear him,

that his glory may dwell in our land.

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.

Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!

OPENING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, through the ages you have sent your promise to your people in many ways, through many voices. But in these last days, your Son has come to bring it among us in person. Through your Spirit, prepare our hearts to recognize him in his many forms, and to receive him as our Lord and Savior.

Amen.

FIRST ANTIPHON

O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, mightily order-¹ing all things:

Come and teach us the¹ way of prudence.

FIRST HYMN STANZA: O COME, O WISDOM (ELW 257, ST. 2)

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 40:3–5

³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

FIRST CAROL: COMFORT, COMFORT NOW MY PEOPLE (ELW 256, LBW 29)

SECOND ANTIPHON

O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and gave him the¹ Law on Sinai:

Come with an outstretched arm¹ and redeem us.

SECOND HYMN STANZA: O COME, O LORD OF MIGHT (ELW 257, ST. 3; LBW 34, ST. 2)**SECOND LESSON: Exodus 6:2–7a**

²God also spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD. ³I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name 'The LORD' I did not make myself known to them. ⁴I also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they resided as aliens. ⁵I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are holding as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶Say therefore to the Israelites, 'I am the LORD, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. ⁷I will take you as my people, and I will be your God.

SECOND CAROL: COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS (ELW 254, LBW 30)**THIRD ANTIPHON**

O Root of Jesse, standing as an ensign before the peoples, before whom all kings are mute, to whom the nations¹ will do homage:

Come quickly to de-¹ liver us.

THIRD HYMN STANZA: O COME, O BRANCH OF JESSE (ELW 257, ST. 4; LBW 34, ST. 3)**THIRD LESSON: Isaiah 11:1–10**

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

THIRD CAROL: LO, HOW A ROSE E'ER BLOOMING (ELW 272, LBW 58)**FOURTH ANTIPHON**

O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can close, you close and no¹ one can open:

Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the sha-¹ dow of death.

FOURTH HYMN STANZA: O COME, O KEY OF DAVID (ELW 257, ST. 5; LBW 34, ST. 5)

FOURTH LESSON: Isaiah 42:5–9

⁵Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: ⁶I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, ⁷to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.

⁹See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.\

FOURTH CAROL: O LORD, HOW SHALL I MEET YOU (ELW 241, LBW 23)

FIFTH ANTIPHON

O Dayspring, splendor of light | everlasting:

Come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shad- | ow of death.

FIFTH HYMN STANZA: O COME, O DAYSPRING (ELW 257, ST. 6; LBW 34, ST. 4)

FIFTH LESSON: Luke 1:68–79

⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷²Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, ⁷³the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, ⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."\<

FIFTH CAROL: AS THE DARK AWAITS THE DAWN (ELW 261)

SIXTH ANTIPHON

O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, the cornerstone unit- | ing all people:

Come and save us all, whom you formed | out of clay.

SIXTH HYMN STANZA: O COME, O KING OF NATIONS (ELW 257, ST. 7)

SIXTH LESSON: Isaiah 35:4–7a

⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

SIXTH CAROL: SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME (ELW 263, LBW 28)

SEVENTH ANTIPHON

O Emmanuel, our king and our lawgiver, the anointed of the nations | and their Savior:

Come and save us, | Lord our God.

SEVENTH HYMN STANZA: O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (ELW 257, ST. 1; LBW 34, ST. 1)

SEVENTH LESSON: Isaiah 7:14

¹⁴Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

SEVENTH CAROL: AWAKE! AWAKE, AND GREET THE NEW MORN (ELW 242, WOV 633)

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

Our world stumbles blindly toward chaos—

come and be our Wisdom.

What we imagine to be strength is really weakness—

come and be our mighty Lord.

We yearn for a standard to look up to—

come and be our Root of Jesse.

We languish in prisons of mind and spirit—

come and be our Key of David.

The darkness grows thick around us—

come and be our Light of day.

We are scattered, lacking a sure leader—

come and be our King of peace.

We need to know that God is with us—

come and be our Emmanuel, that we may rejoice in you.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

In our Savior Christ, God is with us. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

OPTION A: Rejoice, rejoice believers

OPTION B: People, look east

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