

Week of the Third Sunday of Advent 2025

Date:	December 19, 2025 (Friday) [Year 2]	
Theme:	Joy	
Collect:	Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.	
Psalm:	Morning: 40, 54	Evening: 51
1st Lesson:	Zechariah 7:8 – 8:8	
2nd Lesson:	Revelation 5:6-14	
3rd Lesson:	Matthew 25:14-30	

Reflection:

Morning Psalm 40

In Psalm 40, the reciter praises God for answering the cry. The plea is for God to continue being the help and deliverer. Two contrasting but meaningful verses: 5 – “Great things are they that you have done, O Lord my God! How great your wonders and your plans for us! There is none who can be compared with you.”; and 13,14 – “For innumerable troubles have crowded upon me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see; they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me. / Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me.”

Morning Psalm 54

Psalm 54 is a 7-versed short psalm. It is a plea for protection, vengeance for the enemy, and trust in God’s past deliverances.

Evening Psalm 51

Psalm 51 is a thoroughly penitential Psalm, approaching God with most humble sorrow for the transgressions. Sometimes we offend someone we love, and the feeling of guilt overwhelms us. That is the tone of this Psalm. There are number of verses that made it into the book of common prayer: 11 – “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”; 16 – “Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.” And a famous verse: 18 – “The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

Zechariah 7:8 – 8:8

The Chapter 7 explains why the people were exiled and the land was laid in ruin. Chapter 8 renews the Lord’s commitment to rebuilding Jerusalem back into a city bustling with old and young alike, and continue to be their God.

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Revelation 5: 6-14

What a sight to behold – seeing the one ready to open the scroll, and the four living creatures and the 24 elders all singing songs of praise to the lamb that was slain! And all of the angels on heaven follow and sing with full voice!

Matthew 25:14 – 30

Another parable by Jesus. This one is about three servants (slaves) who were entrusted one with five talents, one with two talents and one with one talent. A footnote in the link to the reading shows that one talent was worth more than 15 years' wage of a laborer! So even one talent was quite a sizeable amount.

Bottom line, the two servants doubled the investment (5 x 2; and 2 x 2). But the one with one talent didn't invest. It was really possible to do the same as others and did (1 x 2) and doubled the investment, had he tried, but he just hid the money.

Can we modernize the parable? Suppose the master was gone for 12 years. The one with five talents converted into Bonds and doubled the holdings for a 100% gain. The one with two talents took considerable risk and bought shares in a stock that eventually doubled the holdings. The third just kept the money in a checking account that earned nothing the entire 12 years. He could have placed the money in a CD or even a Savings account. Supposing that one talent was worth \$1,000,000.00. At 0.4% interest rate, savings account doesn't sound much, but even then, 0.4% compounded annually would have generated \$44,890.64! If invested in a High Yield Savings at 4.0%, it would have been \$539,454.06!! Over 50% of the original holding!

So obviously the third servant was not necessarily afraid to make the money work. He was simply not interested in doing anything with it. He just didn't care, not even to place it in a Savings Account! That is why the master was not happy.

Obviously, this is a parable. God isn't going to hand you a million dollars and expect you to double it for him. We can't take it to him even if we wanted to! If a talent is literally a gift you are endowed with from birth, what do you suppose God wants you to do with it in your life time? What does success mean? What does wealth mean?

During this Advent let us review the richness of God in our lives and ponder on how we can enrich it further, and since we can't share it directly with God, let us think on sharing the gain with our neighbors who make up the body of Christ.