

## Easter Vigil Sermon – Waiting for the Lord

### Psalm 130

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;

<sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive To the voice of my supplications.

<sup>3</sup> If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

<sup>4</sup> But *there is* forgiveness with You, That You may be feared.

<sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, And in His word I do hope.

<sup>6</sup> My soul *waits* for the Lord More than those who watch for the morning-- Yes, *more than* those who watch for the morning.

<sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD *there is* mercy, And with Him *is* abundant redemption.

<sup>8</sup> And He shall redeem Israel From all his iniquities.

These are Your words, heavenly Father. Sanctify us by the truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

His family was safely sleeping at home, which gave the watchman solace as he walked the city walls at night. But it was dark and cold. It was mostly quiet. All night long he struggled with the tension between sleepiness from the quiet and anxiousness from the little sounds coming from the darkness. Yet, he has to remain vigil. He was the watchman. He had to keep an eye out for any intruders or enemies. But he longed for the morning when the sun rose, and his work was done.

Perhaps you have been up in the middle of the night, not able to go to sleep. Perhaps it is an illness or pain that is keeping you up, or maybe it is certain miseries and troubles that overwhelm your minds. You struggle in your sleeplessness, and you watch anxiously for the sun's rays to appear in the morning.

We are in the depths, the depths of guilt and sorrow, because of our sins. Where there are sins there is only darkness and death. How can we dwell in abundant life, and have holiness and goodness when our minds take hold of those passing lustful thoughts, and when we let our mouths satisfy those desires to gossip and slander? No, we are in the depths, here in the darkness of sin and death.

And more than the watchman for the morning, we long for the light of forgiveness from God. We long for His face to shine upon us and to deliver us.

Lord save us! And in His Word, we do hope. And that is why we are awake right now. That is why we are keeping our vigil. This penitential time of Lent is coming to an end. Our fasts, our time of subdued rejoicing is nearing the end. Especially the last couple days, we have had more darkness and quietness because of the dreadful strife that our Lord faced for our

salvation. Maybe it's strange to have quiet and somberness as you walk out after the services the last couple days. But it is good to have quiet. It is good to think about our sin. It is good to think about the battle that our Lord waged against sin, death, and Satan. To think about the judgment of hell that our Lord took for our sins to save us from the depths of darkness and sin.

And we know what happens, we know on what side the victory lies, because in His Word we do hope! But we who call from the depths, look forward to the first crack of light that Easter morning, where we find the proof that the victory has been won.

We wait for the Lord, we wait for the news, "Christ is risen!" Because Christ is risen, we know that our Lord has answered our prayers. He has pulled us from the depths of darkness, sin, and death, and has brought us into His light, His righteousness, and His life. Because Christ is risen from the grave we know that He has indeed won for us eternal redemption! Our sins are forgiven, and His mercies for us are new, not only on Easter morning, but every morning!

And so we wait with certain hope and rejoice, not just for the first light of Easter morning, but for the Sun of Righteousness who lives and shines on us daily with His precious gospel, healing us of our sins, and giving us eternal life with Him, yes, even having part in the resurrection unto eternal life. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the morning, is now, and ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.