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Raging Waters of Advent

Teresa TerHaar

Dordt College, Teresa.TerHaar@dordt.edu

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Raging Waters of Advent

Abstract

"Our baptism into Christ frees us and challenges us to move through the torrent of a broken world."

Posting about living under grace from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/the-raging-waters-of-advent/>

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Disciplines

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

The Raging Waters of Advent

 [inallthings.org/the-raging-waters-of-advent/](http://allthings.org/the-raging-waters-of-advent/)

Teresa Ter Haar

November 28,
2016

Daily Scripture Readings

[Psalm 124](#)

[Genesis 8:1-19](#)

[Romans 6:1-11](#)

On this first Monday of Advent, our three passages are linked by a common theme: water. *Water*. Not a manger, or sheep, or angels. Water.

In Psalm 124, David writes “If the Lord had not been on our side when people attacked us...the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, the raging waters would have swept us away.” Genesis 8 recounts that as the ark settled on the top of Mount Ararat, “...God remembered Noah and all the wild animals...and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded.” Paul questions the reader in Romans 6, “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?...Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”

Each of these writers uses the imagery of water in powerful and evocative ways. In Psalms and Genesis, the waters were dangerous. David paints a picture of the anger of Israel’s enemies, like a torrent, threatening to sweep away God’s people. But with God on its side, Israel remains safe. The writer of Genesis describes the end of the flood, recounting Noah’s patience as he waits and waits for the cleansing water of God’s wrath to recede from the earth. Ultimately, God promises never to destroy the world in that way again. In contrast, the water in the Romans passage is not dangerous, but full of hope. Paul affirms that the water of baptism is both a symbol and a reminder of the saving grace of our Lord through Christ Jesus.

As we begin the season of Advent, consider that we are waiting not just for the Christ child, but also for his sacrifice as symbolized by the water of baptism. As Paul writes, “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

Just as Christ’s birth turned the world upside down, so the raging waters of baptism turn our lives upside down. Through Christ’s sacrifice, we have died to sin and been set free from sin. We must live differently, dedicating ourselves to righteous service to the Lord. Paul calls us to live not under the law, but under grace. While Advent is often considered a time of waiting for the Christ child and thoughtful reflection, perhaps this year we need to challenge ourselves to do more than wait. The passages for today open up space for us to act with confidence in God’s saving grace. Our baptism into Christ frees us and challenges us to move through the torrent of a broken world. We know that ultimately, we WILL live with him forever.