

Hespeler, 15 December 2019 © Scott McAndless
Isaiah 35, Luke 1:46b-55, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11
A Poem for the Third Sunday in Advent, Year A

When Santa came this Christmas, I was the first in line.
I'd camped out in the tree lot amid the spruce and pine.
And when the key turned in the door at one minute to nine,
I pushed my way into the mall and cared not for the whines

Of little kids who thought that they should be the first to see
The jolly elf upon his throne. That first place was for me.
He looked at me and raised his eyebrows at me quizzically.
But then he shrugged and pat his hand upon his ample knee.

“Sit down,” he said, “and you can tell me what it was that
brought
You here in such a frenzy because I have seen a lot
And never have I seen someone so desperate that he fought
His way through regiments of elves to sit upon this spot.”



“Dear Santa, thanks for seeing me, you are my final hope.”
I said and put my hands together in a leaning slope.
“There is one thing that you could give me so that I could
cope
You might think that the world’s okay, but I can tell you,
‘nope!’

“I keep wanting things to change, for justice to be done,
That the greedy be chastised, the wicked on the run.
I want the lowly lifted up and that the poor have fun.
But nothing ever happens, sir. There is no progress, none!”

“So grant me one thing, Santa dear. It doesn’t matter how,
Just give me patience. For to you I make this solemn vow
If, in your wisdom, this small gift you do not me allow
I will go crazy if I fail to obtain patience now!”

Well, Santa took a look at me and said, “I understand.
For many others just like you are found within this land.
So let me hereby promise as I take you by the hand,
You’ll find contained in what I give you now what you
demand.

With that he handed me a box that was all wrapped in grey
And tied with ribbons that were glossy, festive, bright and
gay.
But on the box there was a tag that took my breath away.
It bore a warning: “Do not open until Christmas Day!”

So now I sit in misery, my heart filled with despair.
I have received the thing I want but still it seems unfair.
It lies beneath the Christmas tree, the answer to my prayer.
Impatience will be death for me until Christmas is there.

The Baptist lay in misery within a cell of stone
And dealt with torture everyday that made him cry and
moan.

But more than pain of body was the pain that filled his heart
To think that he had failed his quest: King Herod to
outsmart.

Now, he had hoped that someone else would take up his
campaign
and challenge that fox, Herod, and his most unholy reign.
He'd even thought that it might be the man from Galilee
Who'd take his mantle and his task and set the people free.

But ever since poor John's arrest he had been uninspired
To see what Jesus' efforts were. There was a lack of fire.
So now impatience wracked his soul. And he began to fear
That he would never live to see God's kingdom drawing
near.

John still had a few allies left on whom he could depend.
And so he called one to him and told him that he would
send

Him to this Galilean man to get the inside scoop
Was Jesus gonna do it now, or should they just regroup?

I've got to say, I've often been where John was on that day.
It's easy to despair when things don't go in the good way.
It's been a good 2000 years since Jesus came on scene
At times it seems the kingdom's further than it's ever been.

So pay attention to the answer Jesus sent to John.
He didn't claim the powers of darkness all would soon be
gone.

Instead he pointed to the kindness, healing, joy that sprang
To life in places that were visited by Jesus' gang.

For every act of kindness, each act that raises those
Who live in daily suffering, it is an act that shows
That God has not forgotten them. God's promises are sure.
But patience still is needed because old ways still endure.

It's like a box at Christmastime that's all wrapped up in
grey
And tied with ribbons that are glossy, festive, bright and
gay.

But on the box there is a tag that takes your breath away.
It bears a warning: "Do not open until Christmas Day!"

That box is there to teach and grant you what you really
need.

For patience is not something that you get because you
plead.

It's something that can grow within when practiced as an art
It comes to those who carry hope within their human heart.