

Advent of Peace – The Prince of Peace

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Date: 04 December 2022

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[0:00] Let us pray. Blessed Lord, you have caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning.

! Grant us so to hear them this morning and inwardly digest them,! that by patience and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

We are continuing this morning our Advent series, and we are going to be going through passages in the book of Isaiah.

As you would notice through these four Advent weeks, we're going to be jumping through the book of Isaiah. So we're just sort of jumping in and jumping out and jumping in.

It's a long book. So it requires a little bit of attention, and we can't really, you know, progressively go through it.

[1:14] But it's going to be helpful for us as we jump in it. And the last Sunday of Advent, we'll actually go, it's almost like we're jumping forward and forward, and then we'll go all the way back to chapter 7 of the book of Isaiah.

But keep that in mind as we go through it. These passages are particularly important prophecies about the person of Jesus Christ.

That's why the book of Isaiah is such a, it's the second most quoted book in the New Testament, second only to the Psalms. And because of that, because they, in Isaiah, you see, you encounter Jesus Christ, 700 years before his birth.

So we have one of the things that is, particularly in our passage here in Isaiah 11 this morning, by the way, it's on page 683 of your Pew Bible.

I encourage you to open that if you can. Follow along. Last week we talked about the Advent of Hope.

[2:19] And one of the things also that you'll notice is, as we go through these Advent series, all those four themes are enmeshed in and out of all of them.

So as we read this, as you're looking at it, I hope that you feel a sense of hope as you long for what is described here. But particularly today, we're talking about the Advent of Peace.

But in it too, what's one of the things that's wonderful is that none of those things are separated from one another. They are intertwined, and they are embodied fully in the person of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

So, one of the settings of the book of Isaiah is that Isaiah was writing to a country divided. Isaiah was writing primarily, Isaiah of Jerusalem, and he's writing primarily to the southern tribes, the two southern tribes of Jerusalem, Judah, in the context of the nation of Israel have been divided.

The ten northern tribes have been divided from the two northern tribes. The ten northern tribes are on the verge of destruction, annihilation by this great power in the land at this point, Assyria.

[3:40] And Isaiah writes, and he writes there in Isaiah, Isaiah writes this prophecy to Jerusalem. And in the prophecy, he talks about the failure of the line of David, the kings, their faithlessness before God.

And it points to one who will come, who will redeem Israel, who will also come from this seeming poisoned line, but will redeem the line itself.

And so let's look there in Isaiah 11. Right from the beginning, Isaiah looks beyond its present circumstances, as he prophesies. He looks beyond it, and he prophesies to the coming days.

And in fact, as you read Isaiah, even us who are reading it in our context, in our day, oftentimes when you read it, and as you read this, we are also looking beyond. Because Isaiah is prophesying

about the coming of the Lord, but he's also prophesying about the second coming of the Lord. So as we are the people who live between the two advents of our Lord, it's important especially to focus on what Isaiah is saying as we read it. To measure, and to take joy and comfort in the assurance of the promises of God in his first coming, and then look with hope at his second coming. [5:08] Because the God who will fulfill this promise in his first is the one who will fulfill in his second. So let's look in the first, in Isaiah there, Isaiah 11. Verse 1, we learn about this figure, the perfect ruler that Isaiah speaks of.

He says in verse 1, There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his root, from his roots, shall bear fruit. I love how one of the commentary writers described this first verse.

He described it as a dilemma awaiting a resolution. And it seems like that because it says there there shall come for a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his root shall bear fruit. The Messiah that's been spoken of here will shoot out from the stump. You have a picture of a tree that's been cut up that seems to have no life in it.

Right? But from that tree that has been cut up, from the line of David that has been poisoned, and that has been fitless, a shoot will spring forth.

[6:27] But not only will they shoot spring forth from the stump of Jesse, a branch from his root shall bear fruit. It's interesting that who is Jesse here that is spoken of?

It's David's father. Oftentimes, when the kings of Israel are referred to, they're referred to as the son of David. You might say the son of the previous father, the son of David. But here, there's a particular way in Isaiah, the way Isaiah describes this coming king that is not typical for the description of kings in Israel.

He refers to him as a shoot from the stump of Jesse. There's only one other shoot from the stump of Jesse. It's David himself. David the king. And I think what Isaiah is doing here is that he's pointing to this coming king is not like any other kings that have come from the line of David.

In fact, this coming king will be a second David, a greater David. This will be greater David's greatest son that will appear. And one of the things also that we see here is that the line, we've said before, the line has been weakened at the time of Isaiah's prophecy.

Now, the line that has been weakened will even weaken more by the time this prophecy is fulfilled.

Because exile is still in the future. And then, there's no more kings in Israel by the time this...

[7:51] So, this, when Isaiah talks about a shoot coming from the stump, seemingly, there was no hope. But a shoot will come fraught. But why will that... Why can we trust that?

Because this shoot is also the root. Do you see it there? A shoot will come from the stump of Jesus and a branch from his root shall bear fruit. God's word.

By the time Jesus was born, many would have seen not only that the line was weakened, but many would have seen that the line was broken. Hope seemingly gone. But God's word abided still and his promises assured.

And in the fullness of time, he brought it into reality. So, from a line of weak and fitless kings, a king like David will come. And this king will also, who is the shoot from the stump, is the root on which the whole line was based in the first place.

That's one of the things Isaiah wants us to see here. This king, this Messiah, is the one on which the whole line and even David himself rests.

[9:02] And how is this king described? Look there in verse 2. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

this king will be anointed with the spirit. He is the preeminently anointed one of God. That's what Messiah means.

It means the anointed one. And this particular king will be the preeminently anointed one of God. In fact, the word Messiah is also the word that we know as Christ in the New Testament.

So this person is given the spirit of wisdom, he's given the spirit of understanding, he's given the spirit of counsel and might and the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

This will be the traits of God's anointed king. This is the traits he will possess and display in his rule and reign. And the thing that Isaiah wants us to see is that this king will have all of these things without measure.

[10:10] What I mean without measure is that there will be no cap. David, you can say David exemplifies some of these. Solomon exemplifies some of these. But not perfectly. This king will exemplify it all in a supreme way.

He will be perfect in his rule and reign. That's why John the Baptist testified of him in the New Testament. In the New Testament that he saw the spirit descend on him and remain on him. This is God's perfect ruler. While Israel's king and all earthly rulers of the past and even rulers of today might be wise in their own highs.

The rulers of today believe in their own strength and in their own ability. This king will have the fear of the Lord and will rule accordingly. His delight even will be in the fear of the Lord.

Look at in verse 3. His delight who shall be in the fear of the Lord he shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide disputes by what his ears hear.

[11:21] But with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth. and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

This king will perfectly discern the needs of his people. He will possess in himself more wisdom than Solomon ever could and ever did.

And unlike Solomon there will be justice and provision in his kingdom for not just the powerful but even the weakest the meekest and the most vulnerable in his kingdom will be looked after.

Remember one of the indictments of Solomon's rule came after Solomon exited the sin and his son Rehoboam was ruling and one of the charges they gave against Solomon as wise as he was was that he was a hard text master.

That he enslaved the people of Israel in doing all of the in his greatness he enslaved the people of Israel as his workforce.

[12:28] This king will not be like as such. Even the poor he will deal with with equity and the meek of the earth he shall not strike the earth with the rod of and he shall strike the rod the earth rather with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

Perfect justice will reign under the rule of this king. There will be no injustice no crime no violence in his kingdom.

He will be a perfect and effective judge. Now just think about it. Can you picture have you heard of any kingdom like that ever in the history of mankind?

Do you live in such a country? It's beyond even looking at the Bible and the faithful kings of the Bible right away you can make the determination this is something we've never seen before.

This is someone this is a kind of king that has never been seen or heard of before. This is God's perfect ruler.

[13:42] Look there it says in verse 5 righteousness shall be the belt of his waist and faithfulness the belt of his loins. He clothes himself with righteousness this king and faithfulness.

His whole kingdom is one of righteousness. This king will not put a foot wrong. He will not lead the people away from their God.

Rather he will lead the people to their God. This is a shepherd king. He will lead his people to the most verdant pastures and he will fill his people and provide for them all their needs.

And in all his doings he will rule justly and rightly. And what of his works? The whole created order will also be transformed by his rule and reign.

The perfection and peace that was present in Eden before the fall will be restored under his rule and in his kingdom. Isaiah gives us a picture of that perfect safety and peace in the kingdom that this king will build.

[14:57] Look there in verse 6. the wolf shall dwell with the lamb the leopard shall lie down with the young goat and the calf and the lion and the pettened cow together and a little child shall lead them the cow and the bear shall graze the young shall lie down together and the lion shall eat straw like the hawks the nursing!

then they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea!

This is the picture of this kingdom of perfect rule of perfect safety perfect security and perfect peace! Look at the picture that's painted here by Isaiah pray and predator together verse 8 the nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra and the weaned child shall put his hand on the hatter's den imagine now for a second that little Thomas little Jane and Coyote are playing around

and there's a cobra there somewhere there's a poisonous snake and they're putting their hand in the hole what would be your first reaction horror fright terror but not such in this kingdom a little child shall lead them

Isaiah says they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain can you imagine a world like that on this holy mountain this new Jerusalem all its inhabitants will know and fear God even the animals and we see that this holy mountain is not just one particular mountain in fact it's the whole earth that is this holy mountain For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea can you imagine a world without fear not even a hint of fear there will be no exploitation in this world in this kingdom under the reign of this king the weak will not be preyed upon by the powerful and where does this security and peace comes from look there in verse the second half of verse nine the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters! that's the root that's the ground of all this peace and prosperity and joy and security everyone will know God personally now by the way if we poll the world today a survey and you tell you ask them how can we get to world peace because that's the pursuit of every you know every nation and every international organization and every beautiful pageant I think is world peace right how can we get to world peace if you ask I doubt anyone will say this if everyone knows God knows God personally there will be peace that's not the answer the world is striving after that's what the Bible tells us here that's precisely what God says how do you find security and peace and safety a world in which the knowledge of the

[18:56] Lord is like a tidal wave pouring over everyone as waters cover the sea in such a world peace will be ushered in prosperity will reign that is the kind of kingdom that this king has come to build to establish and this passage ends in verse 10 at least the verses that we're covering this morning is in verse 10 it says in that day this root of Jesse remember it's the shoot from the stump but he's also the root of the whole thing he's the one which all of it was pointed!

to in the first place this root of Jesse for the peoples of him shall the nations inquire and his resting place shall be glorious all the nations of the world will come to him he will be the signal to which they come and they draw near this Messiah will be sovereign over the whole earth because even the Gentile nations will gather to him his kingdom will be a nation a multinational multi ethnic gathering under the rule of this king how do we think about the fulfillment of this prophecy from our vantage!

Isaiah prophesied this in a time in Israel when the kings were failing the line is poisoned the line is weak Isaiah spoke of this coming king who will be a perfect ruler that Israel has never seen or the world itself has never seen and he paints this picture but how are we to understand this then in light of my vantage point one of things about prophecy especially when you read the book of Isaiah! you see that again I said before that we live between the two advents as you read the book of Isaiah you can see the fulfillment of God's word through his prophet but you can also read and look forward to the future fulfillment of God's word Isaiah prophesied that Israel would go to exile and he also prophesied not in this particular passage but that God would bring his people back to the land and that was fulfilled in 539 BC there was an end to Babylonian exile and the people were allowed to come back but we know that when Israel came back from exile Israel was not even close to the picture that's painted here of the rule of this king because this king has not yet arrived I think we can look at a further fulfillment of this prophecy in the death of Jesus Christ his death was the means by which the sovereign rule of

God was proclaimed to the whole world and he remember there in verse 10 he will stand as a signal for the peoples of him shall the nations inquire and Jesus said it of himself in John 12 when I and I when I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself by his death he drew all people to himself so that the world the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ goes out and all nations including you and I here this morning heard the gospel and are drawing near to the king and to his kingdom I think another fulfillment of the promise of this prophecy is in the life of the church itself we here as we gather this morning are part of the fulfillment of that kingdom that Jesus Christ this perfect ruler has come to establish and as we go out and make disciples of all nations we are advancing that kingdom that he has come to establish but yet with all of these three views in mind we still look forward we look forward to the fulfillment to the consummation of this promise that

[23:37] Isaiah has for us we look forward to the last day of Revelation 7 when John says in Revelation I looked and behold the great multitude that no one could number from every nation from all tribes and peoples and languages standing before the throne and before the Lamb clothed

in white robes with palm branches in their hands and crying out with a loud voice salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb we look along with Isaiah along with all of God's faithful people we look for that second advent when God's peace and security will reign and this knowledge of the Lord will be as the waters as the sea covering the earth that's what we look forward to I think the point then of this prophecy in

Isaiah is that we are meant to see that this prophecy is about Jesus do we see that there is no other king that is worthy of worship there is no perfect ruler apart from him we are to look at him and marvel at his work in accomplishing what he has accomplished and what he will accomplish and we are able to see from our vantage point that Jesus is truly the king prophesied here he is God's great king and as we see that how then shall we live that's the question that we're asking each other as Advent series we have the promise of God's perfect reign we have that and we look hopefully to it we have the promise of God's perfect peace but we have already been invited into that kingdom do you know that brothers and sisters in Christ you are already citizens of that kingdom if it sounds like I'm repeating myself from last week it's because I am you are already citizens of that kingdom and it's important that you remind yourself of that you are ever mindful of that you have his peace reigning in you you are citizens of that kingdom you are recipients of the hope that does not disappoint that nothing in this world can extinguish you are recipients of the peace of God from the prince of peace himself who welcome you as sons and daughters as fellow heirs of his kingdom and so you look to Jesus in the midst of all of it you do not look to the nations around you one of the problems with the faithful people in well fitless Israel and the fitless kings of Israel is that they were looking around at the mighty nations around them and the prophet Isaiah says to the kings of Israel and to the people of Israel look to God stand upon his promises trust in his word but Israel kept looking away from Jesus who is their hope and light and salvation to counterfeit God looking at what their eyes can see but are only temporary rather than looking with the eyes of faith at what the eyes cannot see yet but is more sure and certain than what the eyes can see more permanent than the things that we see around us what are the things that you see around you brothers and sisters do you see turmoil do you see do you see even within your own heart not even between nations against nations now within your own heart a warring against the flesh here is God's promise of peace to you look to Jesus do not turn aside from him in order to solve the problem that is before you look to Jesus he is your king he is your perfect ruler he has ushered in the perfect peace of God and he invites you to that peace!

[28:04] by his death he has made that peace secure that because of him you have peace with God and because of him in this body we can have peace with one another we from different tribes and nations and ethnicities and backgrounds and interests we can join together may we look to Jesus let us pray you you you you you you you you