

The Prophet's Vision: Anticipation and Promise | Psalm 121:1-8, Micah 5:2 and Isaiah 11:1-10

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. All right. Well, good morning, Ontario Community Church. How are we all doing this morning? Good.

Well, it's great to be with you this morning. Today, we're going to begin a new sermon series, which we're going to go ahead and put on the screen, is titled, Journey to the Major, Prophets, Promises, and the Prince of Peace.

We're going to be taking these next seven weeks, focusing on the coming of Jesus Christ. It's going to be what you would call an extended Advent series, where we're going to be focusing on, what does prophecy have to say about the coming of the Messiah?

What are the promises that God has for us? Let's talk about the Prince of Peace. It's that second slide, actually. It's okay. I put it out at the border of my bad.

[1 : 15] Our sermon for today, we're going to be talking about the Prophet's vision. The title of the sermon for today is going to be the first slide, Anticipation and Promise.

Our scripture readings are going to be from Micah chapter 5, verse 2, and Isaiah chapter 11, verses 1 through 10. As I was mentioning, we're going to go through this entire series through the Advent season.

It's just going to be preparing us for Advent, and we're going to have this nice Christmas time together. It's going to be really great. Before we go any further, what I want to do, I want us to go ahead and open in prayer, and we'll get started.

So Father God, we thank you for bringing us here today, as we're starting our new series on Journey to the Manger, a series that is going to have us as a church focus on your son, Jesus Christ, specifically on preparing the way for him to be born in the manger.

For in you sending your son, you changed the course of history. You provided a way for salvation through your son, and it is in this season that we reflect on this time, where we look to prepare our minds and our hearts.

[2 : 32] There is this anticipation and there is this promise that you bring us the Prince of Peace. And I am reminded of how, Father, your word says that the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we are just in awe.

We are in wonder of who you are. And what you have done for us by sending your son, Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ, who came to earth as a child, born in a manger.

So we ask that you are with us as we start this new sermon series, and we ask that you work in and through us today. May you teach us something, and may this teaching this morning lead to you.

Have a relationship with you and grow in faith in you. We ask that the Holy Spirit is with us today, and I am also reminded, Lord, that Scripture says that we are two or three or gathered, there you are with us.

So be with us this morning. We say all of these things in Jesus' name, and we all say together, Amen. Amen. You know, there are many times in life where we are patiently waiting for something.

[3 : 42] Can you think of a time, the last time, that you were waiting for something? I want to put that on the slide as the question here. You think of a time where you were patiently waiting for someone or something, and what I'd like to do, I'd like you to turn to the person next to you.

Let's take a couple minutes here. Turn to the person next to you. Let's take a few minutes, and let's talk about the last time you were patiently waiting for someone or something, and I'm talking about you were, you had this sense of anticipation.

So let's go ahead, let's take a couple minutes, turn to the person next to you, and let's answer that question. All right, let's go ahead and finish it on up, right?

So perhaps there was a time you were waiting for a job promotion, or maybe you were waiting for grades on the test that you were taking.

Maybe you were waiting at the DMV. Right? I got to tell you, that was a funny story. I went in and I finally got my, I got my Idaho license, and Amber was patiently waiting to get her license, and she didn't have all of the documents, so there was that sense of anticipation, not to throw her under the bus, though, but I know that feeling, and I think we all can relate to that kind of feeling of waiting for something, and you have to wait a little bit longer here.

[5 : 06] Maybe you were waiting for good news. Maybe there was a time you were longing for positive change in your life. Maybe you were anticipating that something good is going to happen even in this bad times, crazy times that are happening in your life.

I want to tell you guys a story, the story of my twin boys. Now, for those of you who know me, you, or at least you should know, I have five kids, right? I have two sets of identical twins.

So I want to tell you the story of the birth of my twin boys here. So a couple of years ago, we were in Southern California in Loma Linda, and we were waiting.

We were in this sense of anticipation, waiting for the birth of these twin boys. My wife was in the hospital, and she was close to delivering the boys.

And at that specific day, I remember, I was waiting, she was waiting. We were both waiting for these boys to be born. Now, for those of you who've had kids, which I'm sure most of you have, have kids, which I'm sure most of us have, have kids, right?

[6 : 10] Waiting for a child to be born is very exciting, right? You're anticipating the birth of a child. And Amber was going into delivery and hours and hours were passing by, but nothing was going on.

And I was waiting, and deep down inside, I got to admit, I kept thinking, I need to stay with my wife, right? Okay, she goes to deliver the babies.

It'll be a done deal. Same thing with Amber. She fell inside that I needed to stay there. Did the doctors feel the same way? Well, no.

In fact, what happened was the doctors came in and they said, you know, I don't think the boys are going to be born today. Why don't you go home? At first I was like, I don't know.

I'm not really sure about this. Well, I got to tell you, I should have stayed. I should have stayed. I should have stayed. So what happened? I was leaving the hospital.

[7 : 06] I thought, you know, I still feel like I should stay here and wait for the boys to be born. So I'll just be close by. You know, maybe there's a burger place nearby. So I went down the street.

I had lunch and I took a long time to have lunch, right? Because deep down in the back of my mind, I'm thinking, I think Amber's going to have these twins. So I eat my lunch, finish my lunch.

And I remember I was like, okay, well, I guess maybe the doctor's right. Maybe I need to go home and just go for a drive. Well, as I'm approaching my car, I remember I opened the car door and I get into the driver's seat and I'm fastening my seatbelt.

And I'm about ready to go. And do I get a phone call? I do get a phone call. I get a phone call from Amber saying, where are you? I'm going into labor.

And I said, oh, thank God, I'm close by. I was like 15 minutes away. Now, for her, 15 minutes is going to seem like two hours. For me, am I going to speed down the freeway or am I going to obey traffic laws?

[8 : 11] Well, of course I obeyed traffic laws and I tried to get there as quickly and as legally as possible, right? And I was there to make it in time for the birth of my twin boys. So that was really good.

And that was just one of those things where there's this sense of anticipation waiting for the birth of my twin boys. For the waiting for the birth of these twin boys. Perhaps there was a time where you could think of anticipating patiently waiting for something.

And today I bring up this story kind of as a nice little segue into the two Bible passages that we're speaking about. Anticipation and promise. That same way that we feel that we're excited for something to happen.

Sometimes we anticipate something good to happen. And in the case of the Isaiah passage and in the case of the Micah passage there is anticipation as in hope for the coming of the Messiah.

Now certainly it's not the birth of twin boys but it's the birth, the coming of the Messiah. And so today, our first verse, we're going to go from Isaiah chapter 11 verses 1 through 10.

[9 : 19] I'm going to put that on the slide. It's going to be on page 683 in your ESV Bible. So let's go ahead and turn there together. And as we're turning there, I want us to keep in mind that this verse is talking, it's the prophet Isaiah.

He is speaking of the future leader. The anticipation and the promise of the king. Well what king? It is the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

So let's turn there, page 683. Alright, are we all there? Isaiah chapter 11 verses 1 through 10.

So here we go.

And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes sees or decide a dispute by what his ears hear.

[10 : 39] But with righteousness, 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.

Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist and faithfulness the belt of his loins. And verse 6 here. The what shall dwell with the lamb? The wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the what?

The goat, right? The calf and the lion and the fattened calf together and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze.

Their young shall lie down together. And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the whole of the cobra. I always get terrified of that verse.

A child playing over the whole of a cobra is just not the best image that I mentally get of. But if you can imagine a child playing safe with the whole of a cobra, that's quite an image right there, right?

[11 : 45] But it says here. The nursing child shall play over by the whole of the cobra. And the wean child shall put his hand on the adder's den. We'll turn to that next page. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the what?

The knowledge of the Lord. And I love this. As the waters cover the sea, man, water can cover a lot, right? So as the knowledge of the Lord.

And in verse 10, in that day, the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the prophets, of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

So that's our first verse. And you know what? Let's keep going. Let's turn to our second verse in Micah. So that's going to be on page 9, 26.

So Micah chapter 5 verse 2. But you, O Bethlehem, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me, one who what?

[13 : 23] is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from old, from ancient days.

So we'll stop right there. And what I'd like to do, I want us to turn to, let's go to that next slide, that image here. I want to go ahead and take the opportunity to put this image that was created as a visual representation of the Isaiah and the Micah passage.

Let's go ahead and put that on the screen.

It's not that one. That one, that's the one. So we have this one as a visual representation. So when you see in here, you see this image of a tree stump, and out of the tree, that is, looks like it's dead, right?

Looks like it got chopped down, right? Out of that is the shoot, life coming out of the stump as it were. If you remember, when we were going over those verses, in Isaiah 11, one, there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

[14 : 49] There shall be the bearing of fruit there. And then you also see in here, there's different animals. I couldn't put a baby with a cobra. That didn't really come out in there. But you get the idea, though, of the different animals laying together, being together, getting along with each other.

I mean, I know a lot of songs talk about the lion in the lamb, right? It's kind of in Scripture. I know it's the wolf in the lamb, whatever. But you still get the idea that you have these predators, and you will with these non-predator-like animals that are laying with each other.

They're laying down together, being peaceful, right? You have the stump of Jesse, and then in the background, the Micah passage is talking about how the ruler will be born in Bethlehem.

So it's just a really good image of what we're talking about this morning. When we read the passage in Isaiah, we're reading about a time when the kingdom of Judah was under threat from other kingdoms or other empires, as it were.

And they were also dealing with moral decline that was happening. So when we're reading about the stump of Jesse, this verse is speaking of a kingdom that was once great, like a great tree, right?

[16 : 07] You think of a large tree with all of its leaves, right? Spreading out, it's huge. If you cut it, you're like, this is a magnificent tree. Well, then it gets cut down as symbolism of moral decline or empires, as it were, the threats of empires or this constant state of external threats getting chopped down.

That's a very harsh imagery if you think about it. A kingdom that was once great now has been diminished, but out of the stump, there comes the chute.

And think about that. Despite this tree being cut down as it were, there's hope. There's new life that's coming out of there. And this is talking about Jesus Christ.

And I want to put that next image, it's the three trees. And I think this is going to kind of help with kind of imagery. You're thinking of the big tree, and then the chopping down of the tree.

That second tree, you're looking at that, and you wonder, well, is there any hope for this tree? I know I get sad when I see a really nice tree that got chopped down. It's like, oh no, now you have a stump.

[17 : 26] But out of that stump, you have new life in it. The three trees. The first tree is a representation of a full tree showing the Davidic kingdom.

When there was strength, and there was faithfulness to God. The second tree, it represents the tree being cut down, like I was saying, moral decline, threats from other kingdoms and from empires, so to speak.

And then the third tree, the stump with the chute, it's speaking of the Messiah. Hope even when there's hopelessness. We know that as Jesus Christ.

And this new growth shows that there's hope even in the midst of moral decline, even in the midst of outside forces or threats, so to speak. There is still the coming of Christ.

And what a wonderful reminder of our Lord and our God, that His divine timing is going to happen. God will see to it that Christ will be born regardless of the moral decline, regardless of the bad things that are happening at this time.

[18 : 36] So the language that is being spoken, that's being written in the Word of God, is the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord.

It speaks of the coming King who will have divine qualities, divine attributes, as opposed to, well, you know, those human rulers, those human authorities.

I don't know about you, but I would rather place my trust in a leader, or the leader, in Jesus who has these qualities, the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom.

I mean, how, I mean, not to get too political here, but we know that our human leaders are flawed, right? To have Jesus Christ as a, the coming ruler, I'd much rather place my trust in Him.

These verses speak of Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy, but also speaking of the things that are yet to come, peace on earth.

[19 : 41] And when Jesus Christ comes to rule the earth, there will be peace, and it's talking even further, right? And thinking of these animals laying together, I mean, how often will you, would you want to put a lamb with a wolf, right?

But to think that there will be peace like that, it's just wonderful imagery, and it's a great reminder. And in the Micah passage, we find that just like in the Isaiah passage, there were threats, there were threats of empires and kingdoms.

There is promise of, as the verse says in Micah 5, 2, one who is the ruler in Israel, who's coming forth is from of old the ancient days.

And that language that is being used is talking about, is it talking about a new ruler? Or is it talking about someone that's existed before? Well, the language is very clear.

The ruler who's coming from the ancient days. Well, that's interesting language, isn't it? If you really think about it, okay, the verse is talking about the coming ruler who's going to be born in Bethlehem, the prophecies of the Old Testament, these are prophecies that had to be fulfilled.

[20 : 59] The ancient days though. We've talked about previously about how Jesus Christ was at the creation of the world, about how Jesus Christ was there, right, when we went over Proverbs.

Well, from understanding that Christ was there at the creation of the world, the foundation, the creation account, so to speak, that's speaking of Christ, the ancient one, so to speak.

Christ was at the creation of the universe and took part of it, and it just fits very nicely with this Micah passage. Christ has been there since the beginning of the creation of the world, and it reminds me of that verse in John.

In the beginning was the what? The word, right? And then further on, the word became what? Became flesh and dwelt among us.

And this should make us in awe and of wonder of who our Lord and our God is to conceal the coming of Christ and then to reveal it later on.

[22 : 03] It's just wonderful. And both of these verses are speaking of bad things that are happening in the world in regards to war and moral decline. It reminds me of things that are happening in the world today.

We think about moral decline. Well, it's the first thing that comes to your head. You don't have to answer that. But what's the first thing that comes to your mind? You think of moral decline. If you don't know, I'll just turn on the news for a little bit.

You'll probably get some information on that, right? Here about threats. I think of how Scripture talks about wars and the rumors of wars, right? It's not kind of language.

And it's just a great reminder. There's this sense of anticipation in the biblical text about the coming of the Messiah, the coming of Jesus Christ.

Much like how we wait upon the Lord, much how we wait for Jesus' second coming. And you know something that's very interesting. In discussion I've had with a lot of the pastors out here, there was discussion about the second coming and the end times and when is Jesus coming back.

[23 : 10] Just as a side note, let's be reminded. Let's focus on Jesus' first coming, before we even focus on the second coming of Christ.

In other words, come to know the Lord first, before you even begin to focus on when he is returning. And in that discussion with these different pastors, it was just kind of a great reminder.

Sometimes we focus so much on when is Jesus coming as the second coming. Let's focus on the first coming, on when Jesus was born in that manger, when he grew up, when he performed these miracles, when he fulfilled all of these prophecies and the promises of the Lord.

Think of all of the teachings of Christ and you think of all of the miracles of Christ. Shouldn't that be our focus rather than when is Christ coming back? I just think it's a great reminder for us.

Let's focus on the first coming of Christ rather than the second coming. That's not to say don't ever focus on the second coming my friends, okay? But certainly seek first the Lord, seek first the kingdom of God.

[24 : 22] Our God is constant and he is everlasting to everlasting. God keeps his promises and we can see our God can be trusted.

The coming fourth of Jesus Christ was a fulfillment of prophecy. It's understanding that Christ is also a part of the triune God, that Christ has these divine attributes that are higher than the attributes of man.

For it is God who restores. I've said it once, maybe once or twice here at this church. There's that famous saying to err is human, right? You've probably heard that before, but to restore is God.

That's what God does. He restores, right? We err, right? Just like we sin, we miss the mark. But God is the one that restores us. Both of these passages, moral decline and external threats.

What do we do when we read or we hear about moral decline? What do we do when we hear about threats of wars or rumors of wars?

[25 : 32] You know, despite moral decline, threats from different countries, wars in different countries, these are tragic things that are happening and I don't want to discount that. In the midst of wars, famine, bad events that happen, where do you put your hope in?

Where do you turn to in bad events? That is the question to think of. It reminds me and we'll put this on the screen in Psalm 121.

It just all ties together. When we've gone over these Isaiah passage and the Micah passage, let's think for a moment out of the chute, right?

Out of the stump of Jesse came the chute. There is hope despite moral decay, despite threats. Well, there's hope for us in Jesus Christ, despite moral decline, despite things that are happening on the outside.

It's very discouraging to read of what is going on in the world. Very discouraging, very disheartening. The war that's going on with Israel, the war in Ukraine, or when we read about what's, let's bring it home for a little bit, those that are suffering in our community, those that are struggling, it seems that it's hopeless.

[26 : 55] Where do we place our hope? We place our hope in the Lord. And I want us to turn to page 612 in Psalm 121.

My hope comes from the Lord. Let's read this together. You can read it out loud or you can read it quietly. I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved.

He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper. The Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night.

[28 : 05] The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life. The Lord will keep you going out and you're coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

I want to put this image, it's this man who looks like he's going to go on a hike, right? It's just a great image.

I'm sure some of you have been hiking before and you've seen a good sunrise or a good view of the mountains, the rivers, of nature, the grandeur of creation.

I want you to imagine if you're down or you're depressed or you're sad or you're angry, or maybe you're hopeless, maybe you're discouraged.

Know that hope comes from the Lord and that should be encouragement to know the Lord, to come to believe in him as that saving grace.

[29 : 13] What a wonderful encouragement. The next time you go for a hike and you see the mountains or the hill, I want you to think about where your help comes from.

Whether you're going to see a sunrise or a sunset today or you're going to be in nature sometime, the next time that happens, I want you to think that your help, that your hope comes from the Lord.

And even in the days that we face today, with so much discouragement, when it seems like the stump of society is just there, when society seems dead, there is hope in Christ, the chute of Jesse.

And it's a great reminder for us that in this crazy world that we live in, there's hope in Christ. For the Word of God is living and active.

It is in Jesus Christ who is our living hope. And these passages speak of, they speak to those they were written to, but it can also be read from us today about encouragement in these crazy times.

[30 : 31] There is no greater opportunity today for you to believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. When the world is sinking, wouldn't you want to get on the lifeboat, the life raft?

Where do you build your foundation? Is it on the sinking sand or is it on the solid rock? For it is in Christ that we receive salvation and it is in Christ that we have hope and it is in Christ that we receive that peace that is beyond understanding.

Have you ever met someone who's really in tune with the Lord? There's that peace that comes from that. There's that joy, that unspeakable joy as some translations say, joy of the Lord.

Having knowledge and insight of Scripture, that's always an interesting one. But most importantly, life everlasting. And if you do not know the Lord, I invite you to believe in Him, to make a decision for Him and to receive that gift of salvation.

The world that we live in, it seems like it's just like a deadening tree, a tree that is beginning to die. But in that, we need that living hope.

[31 : 52] We need that solid rock. We need that firm foundation in our lives. And doesn't that encourage you to share in your faith, to share in your testimony and to let others know your friends, your family, your neighbor, who the Lord is?

Doesn't that encourage you to know that you are saved by grace through faith, to know that you're secure is a wonderful feeling. Now go and make disciples, right? Go and spread the good news of the Gospel.

So I want us to keep these things in mind as we conclude our time this morning. I remember, I want us to keep in mind, this is just the beginning of our sermon series, Journey to the Manger.

This next week, we're going to talk about preparation, repentance and readiness for the Prince of Peace. So we'll talk more about that next week and we'll be going into how can we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Messiah.

Let us allow for God to prepare our hearts for the wonderful gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Will you pray with me? And Father God, we thank you for this time and this opportunity to come together this morning as we're starting this new series, Journey to the Manger.

[33 : 12] And we ask that you're with us as we go forth from this place and we ask that you help us draw near to you. May we realize that that hope comes from you, that peace comes from you, that salvation comes through you, through us believing in you.

It is not about what we do, it is about what was done by your Son. And we are in awe and we're in wonder of that. We are thankful for that. We are in gratitude for that.

May we realize, God, that you keep your promises and that you will never leave us. You will never abandon us. You will never forsake us. You are that constant in this ever-changing world that we live in. We love you. We love you, God, and we thank you.

We glorify you and we honor you. We worship you and we adore you. It is in Jesus' mighty name that we pray and we all stay together. Amen.

Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast. For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org.

[34 : 27] May God's blessings be with you.