

ISAIAH 2:1-5 | Let's go see the King!

Sunday, November 30 – Advent 1

¹ This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

² In the last days

the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established
as the highest of the mountains;
it will be exalted above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.

³ Many peoples will come and say,

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.

He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths."

The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.

They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

⁵ Come, descendants of Jacob,
let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Do you feel the excitement this morning? Or are you still in a bit of a tryptophan hangover? Can you sense the anticipation today? Or are you silently dreading the coming chaos of another Christmas season? It's a tough time of year to begin to build excitement. In many of our lives tinsel and trimmings of a tree in our homes are taking precedence. At work some of us may be putting in more hours than we like as our society gears up for another holiday season. Kids are getting restless, the weather is driving us crazy, and some of us might be inwardly stressing about the checkbook balance and how many gifts will be placed under the tree this year.

But for a moment this morning let's take some time. Let's take some time to go see the king.

The prophet Isaiah lived about 700 years before the angels appeared to the shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem or the men from the east made their way to Bethlehem to present gifts to Jesus. But Isaiah this morning speaks as if the day isn't that far off. "In the last days..." In God's sight not much time has passed. A mere ten or so generations have passed before God finally put into action his plan of salvation using a humble virgin and simple carpenter.

And the prophet Isaiah speaks candidly about who Jesus would be. "He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths. The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."

That babe of Bethlehem would have an amazing impact on this world. He would change the hearts and minds of many. He would give people a reason to live.

And so Isaiah invites us this morning: "Come!" Let's go see the king! Let's prepare for his coming! Let's crowd around him as the people of Jerusalem did on Palm Sunday. Let's go see the king!

And we can do just that in 25 days. Then, on that candle-lit evening, we can prepare to meet our baby king Jesus again. We will hear the familiar words of comfort and joy. We will sing with the angels and rejoice with the shepherds. And once again, with Mary, we can ponder these things in our hearts.

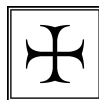
But are you really ready to see the king? Look how you're dressed? You've been sloppy, messy, dirty. And your clothes show it. Sure, you've tried to mask it by putting on some good clothes. You're dressed well today. You have plenty of wonderful outfits in the closet at home. But that's not what we're talking about. Your soul is wrapped in digesting clothes. Every word said in spite or hatred stains it even more. Every action you've done in revenge or greed rips a hole. The thoughts of lust and coveting tatter the edges. By the end of the day your clothes look a wreck. And you have no new ones to put on.

How will the king ever see you in that? How will the king ever let you even step foot into his perfect palace looking like you do? He won't. He can't. He shouldn't. And you know that. And so to add to the anxiety of an already stressful season, you have to come to a realization that no matter how good you are, how many gifts you give, how naughty or nice you are, there's no escaping how you're dressed. And you're in no shape to go see the king.

But that's the amazing thing about your king. He comes to you! When he entered Jerusalem there was no pomp and circumstance. There was no crown, no processional guard, no white steed on which he rode. No, "See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." (Zechariah 9:9) He comes righteous and victorious! He's won the fight. He's conquered sin. He's defeated the devil. Your king reigns! And he's coming...lowly and riding on a donkey. He's not lording his conquests over you. He's not forcing submission or obedience. He gently invites you to come...come to the table. Eat. Drink. Be refreshed. Come to the living springs of the word. Quench your thirst. Come to the house of the Lord. Rejoice! Praise the Lord with song and prayer.

So, dear Christian, let's go see the king. Let's go hear the message of sins forgiven and life eternal. Let's go see the king because we need him. Let's go hear his reassurance that all those who are lowly and burdened have rest in him. Let's go see him as he comes to you as a bundled babe in Bethlehem. Let's go see him.

Get excited, dear Christian. Let the anticipation build. Your king is coming, soon. Prepare your hearts to meet him. Take some time this holiday season to meet him. Come to the mid-week services. Have an Advent devotion at home. Don't lose sight of why we're come to the house of the Lord each week. Look, here he comes! Let's go see the king! Amen.



Soli Deo Gloria!

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