

Isaiah 9:2-7, Hope Filled Light

Advent is a

- time for anticipation
- cause for celebration
- time for self-examination

Micah 7:2-6 Faithful people have vanished from the land;

there is no one upright among the people. All of them wait in ambush to shed blood; they hunt each other with a net.

3 Both hands are good at accomplishing evil: the official and the judge demand a bribe; when the powerful man communicates his evil desire, they plot it together. **4** The best of them is like a brier; the most upright is worse than a hedge of thorns. The day of your watchmen, the day of your punishment, is coming; at this time their panic is here. **5** Do not rely on a friend; don't trust in a close companion. Seal your mouth from the woman who lies in your arms. **6** Surely a son considers his father a fool, a daughter opposes her mother, and a daughter-in-law is against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own household.

Background -> **Isaiah 7 & 8**

Ahaz - an evil and spineless king of Judah.

Isaiah 7:13 Isaiah said, "Listen, house of David! Is it not enough for you to try the patience of men? Will you also try the patience of my God?"

Ahaz made it a habit to ignore the things of God. Ahaz aligned himself with Assyria and King Tiglath-Pileser III.

- He trusted the strength of humanity over the strength and promises of God.
- Judah became a subject nation to Assyria.
- Ahaz was fascinated with Assyrian glamour, prestige, politics, and religion.
- He participated in sacrifices to Moloch

Isaiah 8:22 They will look toward the earth and see only distress, darkness, and the gloom of affliction, and they will be driven into thick darkness.

In our waiting darkness is a reminder.

Our world is broken.

Because of sin we are separated from our Creator.

This is the plight of humanity.

In the trenches of actual living we see the fractures and crumbling of our world.

Darkness is not something to ignore.

- It is something to press into.
- It is a reminder of the failure and heartbreak caused by people. People we know and people that are far away. No one is immune.
- This brokenness (darkness) must be acknowledged and grieved.
- Loss is, in fact, terrible. It can not be reversed.

It is in our pain and despair, our confusion and feelings of abandonment, that we will discover God is at work.

400 years -> complete silence - no prophet - darkness.

Read **Isaiah 9:2-7**

vs. 2, a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness

The dark moment will pass. There is hope!

vs. 4, you have shattered their oppressive yoke

vs. 5, the absolute end to all warlike occupation (it will be consumed)

vs. 6, A child will be born for us

A son will be given to us

The government will be on his shoulders. He will reign with pure justice and bring absolute unity. (Already / not Yet) -> This is the good news of the gospel!
In the already -> the kingdom of heaven is here, Jesus is exercising his authority through the power of the Spirit in healing and renewing human beings.

He calls his followers to be agents of change, people of light.
The task of the church is to create and participate in community which experiences a touch of heaven on earth.

Isaiah 22:22 I will place the key of the house of David on his shoulder; what he opens, no one can close; what he closes, no one can open.

Wonderful Counselor

Incomprehensible, full of wonder -> the very source of wisdom
He is completely trustworthy.
He knows humanity. He knows you.
He is working to accomplish God's will in you.

Colossians 2:3 In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. **16** Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

Mighty God

He is mighty to heal.
He is mighty over all of creation (he calms the waves).
He is mighty to raise the dead.
He is mighty to conquer death himself.
He is mighty to save. He alone is able to forgive sin.

Eternal Father

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of men. **5** That light shines in the darkness, and yet *the darkness did not overcome it*.

Prince of Peace (Ephesians 2:12-20)

He is our peace and tore down the dividing wall of hostility.
He has reconciled us to God.
He came and proclaimed peace to those who were far and near.
Through him we have access in one Spirit to the Father.
We are citizens with the saints, and members of God's household.
Jesus is the cornerstone.

Play Handel's Messiah, For Unto us a Child is Born

Micah 7:7 But I will look (watch in hope) to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me.

vs. 7, He will reign with justice and righteousness from now on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord will accomplish this.

Question: When completely overwhelmed where do you turn? Are you willing to allow your darkness to be exposed to the light? How can you trust Jesus in this season to be your wonderful counselor, mighty God, eternal Father, and Prince of Peace?

Does each step you take in this life create pockets of life? Do you live with the anticipation of hope?