



# *The Scent of Rain in a Time of Famine*

DECEMBER 8, 2019 | WONDERFUL MERCY CHURCH

# *The Message of Advent*

- Jude 1:2 THE MESSAGE TRANSLATION

“Relax, everything’s going to be all right; rest, everything’s coming together; open your hearts, love is on the way!”
- Violent, militaristic presentations of the Second Coming are a vivid way of portraying a damaged and dying creation being set right
- The message of the second advent and the first sing in harmony: people get ready—love is on the way, life is on the way, hope is on the way, help is on the way!

*Job 14:7-9* NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

At least there is hope for a tree:

If it is cut down, it will sprout again,  
and its new shoots will not fail.

<sup>8</sup> Its roots may grow old in the ground  
and its stump die in the soil,

<sup>9</sup> yet at the scent of water it will bud  
and put forth shoots like a plant.



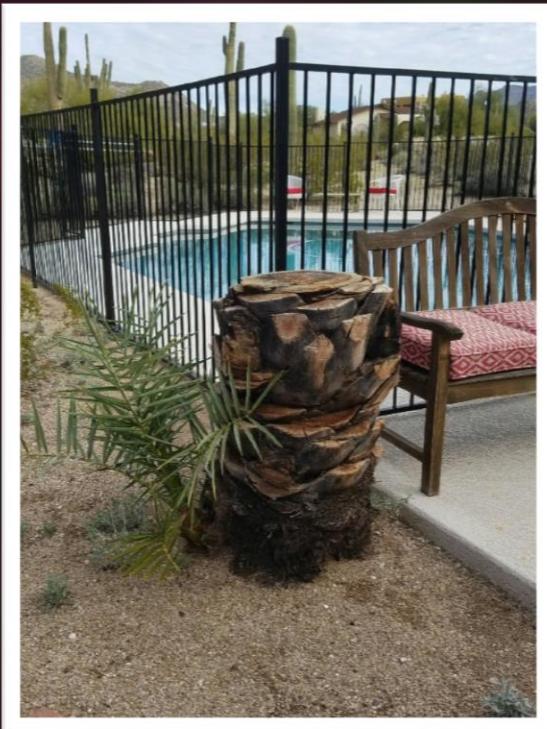
# *The Dead Places in Our Lives Will Be Revived*

- The One who has come and is coming—this is what he brings, this is what he does
- Romans 4:17b THE PASSION TRANSLATION  
“God can raise the dead and call into being things that don’t even exist yet.”

# *The Scent of Rain and Dead Stumps*

- Jesus is not only a carrier of the rain—he came from a dead stump
- Isaiah 11:1-10
- **Isaiah 11:1** NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION  
“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.”

# *The Scent of Rain and Dead Stumps*



“At the scent of water” the root, no matter how dead and dry, will bud and send forth shoots

# *The Scent of Rain in a Time of Famine*

- Israel hadn't caught the scent of rain for 400 years
- Amos 8:11 NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

“The days are coming,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “when I will send a famine through the land—not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.”
- In the period between the end of the Old Testament and the start of the New Testament lay 400-450 years of silence

# *The Scent of Rain in a Time of Famine*

- What Isaiah could have prophesied, what he should have written was that Messiah would come from David's line—but he doesn't
- David's name carries a certain cachet—he's a spiritual supernova
- But Jesse, who's he? A no one

# *The Scent of Rain in a Time of Famine*

- The house of David was reduced to poverty and obscurity at the time of Christ's birth
- The scent of rain comes to those in obscurity
- The scent of rain comes to those who are dead, dry, dying – a mere stump, a gnarled fist of brittle roots

# *What's Coming from the Stump of Jesse is Astounding*



# *The Scent of Rain and Dead Stumps*

**Isaiah 53:2** NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

“He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.”



# *The Scent of Rain*

- The problem with a famine existence is that over time it becomes our normal
- It did for Israel. They had Temple rituals and Torah law—what more did they need?
- This is how a famine can be extended, even though it's raining: we condition ourselves not to receive what God is bringing

# *The Scent of Rain*

- When we struggle to receive what God is bringing, it's not because we hate or are rejecting God; we simply don't have a frame of reference for what he's doing
- For those in a time of famine, who feel like a gnarled fist of brittle roots, for whom God is sending the scent of rain but you're struggling to believe, know this: God is starting to break through—love is on the way!



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