

Jesus has come to send things right! - Isaiah 11: 1-10

This morning we are going to meditate in the First reading of today: Isaiah 11:1-10, which was read before. Grace and peace to you from God our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit who has brought us together". Amen

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Dear Christian friends:

As you know Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton in the US presidential election. "The triumph for Mr. Trump, a real estate developer-turned-reality television star with no government experience, was a powerful rejection of the establishment forces that had assembled against him, from the world of business to government, and the consensus they had forged on everything from trade to immigration." "The results amounted to a repudiation, not only of Mrs. Clinton, but of President Obama, whose legacy is suddenly imperiled. And it was a decisive demonstration of power by a largely overlooked coalition of mostly blue-collar white and working-class voters who felt that the promise of the United States had slipped their grasp amid decades of globalization and multiculturalism."

Friends, when there is election in the US, or here in Canada or any other election in the world they hold different levels of interest and meaning for different people, but they all serve to bring our leaders before us in all their glory or with all their lack of glory. The reality is that no matter who our leaders are, things are far from perfect. I echo the feelings of many people who feel that the problems facing us today can be a bit overwhelming and that the leaders of the world have let us down through the things that they have, or have not done. Leaders promise many things when they are in the campaign and when they reach power they forgot those promises and consequently who brought them to power: the people.

Many people have lost that hope today, or at the very least, they are apathetic about what the future holds in store for us. Who knows how long it will be before we poison all our water and our land with toxic waste? Who knows how long it will be before someone starts a nuclear war? Who knows how long it will be until our justice system totally collapses? Is it any wonder that people lose hope? But we need not despair. The words of God set before us this day are among the most hopeful and encouraging words of all scripture. In the beautiful poetry and imagery of our text we are given every reason to hope for a good and blessed future, because a real leader is coming to set things right as He helps and saves His people.

As Paul said in the epistle lesson this morning: **The root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in Him.**" And we know who that root of Jesse is; it is Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, who comes to restore the glory of His kingdom. He is coming, and that gives us hope of a better day and what a day that will be.

When Isaiah spoke the words of prophecy that are our text today, he spoke them to a people who needed some hope for the future. The glorious days of the kingdom of Judah as it was in the days of great King David were long past. Many bad and evil rulers had led the people away from the one true God and in doing so had brought the kingdom to ruin. Now Isaiah proclaimed that God had judged the people of Judah, and for their sins they would be taken captive by the nation of Assyria. Their beautiful capital would be destroyed. The axe of God's judgment would cut the house of David down to a stump.

But God did not leave the people without hope. Even when it seemed that things were at their worst, God did not abandon His people. He promised them that a great king was coming: **Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And He will delight in the fear of the Lord, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor**

make a decision by what His ears hear; but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth.” The day is coming, God tells His people, when the perfect King shall come forth from the family of David. He will have perfect wisdom and understanding, perfect counsel and strength, perfect knowledge of God. He will act in fairness and righteousness and will bring glory to His people, as He sets everything right.

There have been many good rulers in this world, but we have always to keep in mind that none of those good leaders comes close to the greatness of this coming King. Only the messiah, the deliverer, has these abilities to make His Kingdom great for all people. Only He can bring about the golden age that people hope for and long to see. And do we not long for a king, for a leader like the one Isaiah mentions?

When we take look of the world that we live in we see the terrible effects of sin at work all around us. We see how the perfection of God's creation has been destroyed. We feel it in every pain and trouble that affects us in our own lives. We see it in the hatred and cruelty of people, of nation against nation. We see it in the dishonesty that so often shows itself in leaders, and government; we see it when the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer. Do we not long for someone who can set the world to rights? What God tells us through the prophet Isaiah is that this king is coming. And what a day it will be when this King comes in all His glory!

In the musical, Fiddler on the Roof, there is a song entitled “When Messiah Comes.” The song expresses the longings and hopes of the Jewish people, who are scattered all over the world, and persecuted by almost every nation. It expresses the hope and confidence of this prophecy of Isaiah. When Messiah comes, he will say to us, **“I apologize that I took so long, but I had a little trouble finding you, over here a few and over there a few. You were hard to reunite, but everything is going to be all right.”**

Friends, that is what we want; we want everything to be all right. But simply saying that everything is going to be all right does not even come close to the glory of that day. When He comes, things will be wonderful! Isaiah speaks of the glorious things that will happen under His rule: **the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox. And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, in God's kingdom, the whole of nature is changed. Every discordant note, every element of danger and disaster is removed. One time enemies live together in perfect harmony. He brings peace to all men, and even between men and animals. Even one of mankind's deadliest enemies, the snake is so changed that a child could put his hand in the den of a poisonous viper without fear. He takes us back to the way things were in the beginning, in the Garden of Eden. He takes us beyond that into the full glories of the kingdom as it was meant to be. And what a day it will be when He comes!

God has planned a great and glorious day for the people of the world. And this great day comes in a very different way than we might first expect. Isaiah spoke of the glories of that great day that lay ahead, and said: **a little boy will lead them.** All the glories of that day have their beginning in the event we shall celebrate so soon, namely the birth of Christ.

Jesus comes into our world to put an end to the damning effects of sin. He came to bring perfect peace to all creation. And He does that as He lives a sinless life and offers Himself as a perfect, holy sacrifice for sin. He dies and rises again so that we who are sinful people might be set free from sin. He brings the forgiveness we need, the forgiveness which brings peace between God and men. And in that forgiveness we have the sure and certain hope of a better day, a day when He will come again in glory to take those who trust in Him to the glories of His everlasting kingdom.

In every age there has been that longing for the good old days, the glorious days when everything was going fine. Since Adam and Eve first lost the joy and perfection of paradise, people have hoped and prayed for a better day. The people of Isaiah's day longed for the great days when David was king. So did the people of Mary and Joseph's day as they lived under the rule of the Romans. We too, with all our problems and cares, wars and all the imperfections of our world wait for something better day. God promises that day is coming.

It is coming through the child of Mary, who has set us free from sin, death and the devil. It is coming as He soon returns in glory to claim His rightful kingdom. As Isaiah said in our text: **it will come about in that day that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious.**” Soon, so very soon, this wonderful, perfect King will come to deliver His world and to set things right forever. He will come and bring perfect, everlasting peace. He will come and bring an end to fear and pain and worry. His day is coming. And what a day that will be! Amen.

“Lord God, give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us.” Amen