

Advent pt1 Hope

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Advent / Isaiah 61:1–4; Romans 5:5; Romans 8:19–23; Luke 4:21

Advent begins with Hope. That's the story of the promise that was made to the world when He called a childless Middle Eastern man to leave his home and his people and to form a nation dedicated to Yahweh.

That promise finds its fruition in a simple carpenter, his betrothed wife, and a stable in a small back water town called Bethlehem.

But it started with Hope.

Isaiah the prophet records many of the prophecies about the Messiah. And many of them center on hope. And the passage we look at today, as we start this season of Advent, is also the text of the first sermon Jesus ever preaches. And it is all about hope. Turn with me to [Isaiah 61:1-4](#).

Hope arrives with the arrival of the Lord's anointed on earth. When Jesus comes He brings hope...and that hope is a promise that things can change from the way they have been. And they have not been good.

Isaiah 40–66 God's Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

Although this paragraph is not structured like other call narratives (Isaiah 6; Jeremiah 1; Ezekiel 1–3), it does give a detailed description of the tasks God has assigned to this Anointed One. Essentially, his responsibilities overlap with and echo several of the tasks assigned to the Servant (42:7; 49:9–10; 50:4), although **the emphasis in this paragraph is focused much more on the proclamation and comfort provided through words rather than through acts** of bringing forth justice (42:1–4) or restoring Israel and the nations (42:6; 49:6, 8–9).

When you look at these verses you see that the world Jesus enters into is beset hardship:

- the poor
- the brokenhearted
- captives
- people in mourning
- ruins and devastations

Isaiah 40–66 God’s Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

The general assignment is to preach the good news. **The content of the good news is a message of hope proclaimed to people in Zion** (61:3a) who are presently “afflicted, poor,” “broken-hearted,” “captives,” or “prisoners” (61:1). Isaiah 61:3 indicates that some in the audience “mourn” or “grieve,” but these negative characteristics are so general that it is very difficult to tie them down to any specific historical setting

How does the world wind up in such an awful state?

I mean we know it is a result of sin- the Fall- but what leads to all of this. **A lack of hope breeds all of this.**

When people are not hopeful they tend to respond to situations in ways that make things worse rather than better. **Hopelessness leads to crime. It leads to poverty. It leads to relying on relationships to fix things, which ends in heartbreak.** And all sin leads to death...lives ending lead to mourning.

Isaiah 40–66 God’s Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

The picture of these individuals in 61:1–3 is quite imprecise and their condition does not point to a specific identifiable situation in the history of the nation. The overall content of chap. 61 suggests that it refers to a time shortly before the establishment of the kingdom of God.

And all of these actions, and so many others, devastate civilizations.

Civilization falls to ruin.

And creation groans.

Paul wrote about that groaning in [Romans 8:19-23](#).

Why was creation groaning? For relief...**the hope of relief that comes from creation being set free and returned to a state where it no longer suffers and dies.**

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

In punishment for his disobedience, Adam was to garner his food from ground cursed with thorns and thistles. But the curse was not permanent. The physical universe was frustrated by Adam's sin, yet there is hope. Verse 21 states the content of that hope. **The day is coming when the created order will be set free from its bondage to decay.** Freed from corruption, it will share in "the freedom of the glory of the children of God"

And along with creation, Paul says we long for that day as well. We hold on to hope.

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

Our salvation involves the hope that our mortal bodies will someday be liberated from the bondage of decay (v. 24). **We are not saved "by hope" (as the AV has it), but our salvation is characterized by hope.** Since salvation, viewed in its completeness, is necessarily future, we wait for it in hope (cf. 1 Thess 5:8; Titus 3:7). But hope that is seen is not hope at all. Why would we hope for that which is in plain view? **So since we are hoping for something that is still unseen (cf. 2 Cor 4:18), it falls to us to wait for it with patience (cf. 2 Cor 5:2, 4).**

What are we hoping for?

Redemption. Renewal. Restoration. Look at what Isaiah says:

The poor get good news

Isaiah 40–66 God’s Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

this Anointed One is “to proclaim good news” (the infinitive construct *lěbaśśēr*) by telling people that their past situations will change and that a new period of history is about to begin.

The brokenhearted are bound up

Isaiah 40–66 God’s Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

This seems to be related to 30:18–26, which describes God’s salvation as arriving and transforming this world. There will be no more adversity when the righteous see God with their own eyes, for he will defeat their enemies, bless their land, “bind up” the bruises, and heal the wounds that he inflicted on them

The captives are set free

Isaiah 40–66 God’s Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

At minimum, this could involve the proclamation of a metaphorical release from any past social or spiritual enslavement the people were under. In addition, one wonders if this task only involves proclaiming something to be so, or whether this person will do something to accomplish this release

The mourning are given reason to praise and be glad. They are lifted up.

Isaiah 40–66 God’s Anointed One Preaches Good News (61:1–7)

Isaiah 60:20 suggests that all mourning will end in God’s everlasting kingdom. Isaiah 57:18–19 provides more detail about God’s comforting of these mourners when it describes this comforting as healing the lowly and contrite, guiding them, bringing peace, and causing them to praise God. This will bring healing and peace to all

The ruins are repaired.

How is all of this going to happen? Thru Jesus.

When Jesus preaches this sermon in [Luke 4](#), in verse 21 He says ***“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”***

He is the fulfillment of this and all the other promises of Hope.

He is the very embodiment of hope!

And our job is to trust Him, to believe Him, and to follow Him.

And here is why- [Romans 5:5](#) tells us- ***Hope does not disappoint us.***

Romans (1) Peace and Hope (5:1–8)

Hope never disappoints (v. 5). It does not let the believer down. The reason is simple. God floods our hearts with his love through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. Hope is rewarded with a fresh awareness of the incomprehensible love of God. **God’s Holy Spirit, who enters our life in response to faith, is at work helping us grasp the reality of what it means to be encircled by the love of God.** In another place, after speaking of things that “no eye has seen” and “no ear has heard,” Paul pointed out that these very things have been revealed by the Spirit to those who love God and that we have received the Spirit so “that we may understand what God has freely given us”

Jesus will not fail.

So today, as the Christmas season begins, can we pause to think about our source of hope. What are you counting on to deliver you, to be there for you, to sustain you in the worst possible circumstances.

His Advent is here...Jesus is hope.