

**Advent Sunday ~ Sunday, November 29, 2015**

**“For Unto Us: The Advent Visions of Isaiah ~**

**Prepare the Way!”**

**Isaiah 40:1-11**

“All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet...” (Matthew 1:22)

“For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.” (Isaiah 60:2)

Through vision and prophecy, images and symbols—Isaiah eagerly awaited, and proclaimed, the coming of a great king—a \_\_\_\_\_—whose reign would bring justice, peace, and great joy.

This time, however, it wasn’t a message of judgement, but a message of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **4 ELEMENTS IN ISAIAH’S VISION TO HELP US PREPARE**

**#1.** \_\_\_\_\_.

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” (Isaiah 40:1-2)

**Comfort = ‘na-cham’ =**

Isaiah was called to comfort the people with God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

**God’s Word is =**

**Do you need to know God’s comfort and consolation  
as you prepare this Advent season?**

**#2.** \_\_\_\_\_.

“Listen! It’s the voice of someone shouting, ‘Clear the way through the wilderness for the Lord! Make a straight highway through the wasteland for our God! Fill in the valleys, and level the mountains and hills. Straighten the curves, and smooth out the rough places. Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. The Lord has spoken!’” (Isaiah 40:3-5)

**Wilderness/desert =**

Advent is all about preparing our \_\_\_\_\_ not just our \_\_\_\_\_, so that Jesus can enter in—so that God’s \_\_\_\_\_ can be revealed in and through us—anew this Christmas season.

#### **ISAIAH’S 4-STEP PROCESS TO PREPARE THE WAY**

**Step #1. “Every valley shall be \_\_\_\_\_.”**

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ process.

**Valley =**

**The valleys in our hearts =**

**What are your valleys?**

**Step #2. “Every mountain shall be made \_\_\_\_\_.”**

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ process. The removal of \_\_\_\_\_ And \_\_\_\_\_ that keep Jesus from entering in.

**What road blocks do you have in your heart  
that need to be cleared away?**

**Step #3. “The crooked shall be made \_\_\_\_\_.”**

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ process.

This represents those things in our lives that are out of \_\_\_\_\_, not straight, or bent away from God’s \_\_\_\_\_ intention.

**Is there anything crooked within you hat needs to be straightened out?**

**Step #4. “The rough places made \_\_\_\_\_.”**

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ process.

**Rough places =**

**What internal preparation do you need to do this Advent season?**

**#3.** \_\_\_\_\_.

“A voice said, ‘Shout!’ I asked, ‘What should I shout?’ ‘Shout that people are

like the grass. Their beauty fades as quickly as the flowers in a field. The grass withers and the flowers fade beneath the breath of the Lord. And so it is with people. The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.” (Isaiah 40:6-8)

This image reminds us that our lives are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

As a result, we should invest our lives, in \_\_\_\_\_ things—things that will last—that will stand the test of time. Things like God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

“Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

### **Where is your treasure?**

#### **Are you storing up treasure on earth or in heaven?**

The reality is, no matter how much we accumulate; how much we own; whether we have the newest this or the latest that—we’ll never be \_\_\_\_\_.

“Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” (Luke 12:15)

### **How might changing your view of the eternal vs. the temporary effect your Advent preparations this year?**

#4. \_\_\_\_\_.

“O Zion, messenger of good news, shout from the mountaintops! Shout it louder, O Jerusalem. Shout, and do not be afraid. Tell the towns of Judah, ‘Your God is coming!’” (Isaiah 40:9)

The announcement of God’s arrival is an announcement that needs to be \_\_\_\_\_.

The Good News of God in Christ lies at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Christmas season.

“When they had seen Him they spread the word concerning what they had been told about this child.” (Luke 2:17)

“God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets in the holy

Scriptures. The Good News is about his Son, Jesus...For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes...” (Romans 1:2-3; 16)

### **3 WAYS TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **it yourself.**

“I bring you good news of great joy.” (Luke 2:10)

Good news become great joy when it becomes \_\_\_\_\_.

“Be full of joy in the Lord always. I will say it again: Be full of joy.” (Phil 4:4)

If we want to experience daily joy, we need to connect with the \_\_\_\_\_ of that joy on a daily basis.

Happiness is dependent on \_\_\_\_\_ circumstances. Joy is based on a \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus.

“With joy they should tell what He has done.” (Psalm 107:22)

- \_\_\_\_\_ **the time.**

“When the right time came God sent His Son born of a woman.” (Gal 4:4)

“Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should.” (Psalm 90:12)

- \_\_\_\_\_ **God.**

“If we must keep trusting God for something that hasn’t happened yet, it teaches us to wait patiently and confidently.” (Romans 8:25)

**Our part =**

**God’s part =**

#### **What might you practically do to share the good news this Advent/Christmas season?**

“Yes, the Sovereign Lord is coming in power. He will rule with a powerful arm. See, he brings his reward with him as he comes. He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will carry the lambs in his arms, holding them close to his heart. He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young.” (Isaiah 40:10-11)

#### **How are you going to spend the next 27 days?**

#### **How are you going to prepare the way?**