

**Advent 2018: Hope, 12/2/18**  
**1 Peter 1:10-12, Isaiah 42:1-7**

(Mention Kids Ministry Partnership with advent- resource)

You may have noticed in our study of 1 Peter that we skipped 1:10-12, but we did so intentionally because this is going to be our transition passage to this season of Advent. Advent means a “long-awaited arrival.” Peter takes an aside in his letter to tell us something fascinating about the long-awaited arrival, the advent of the Messiah, Jesus.

**1 Peter 1:10-12**

*<sup>10</sup> Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup> trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.*

*<sup>12</sup> It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.*

Remember when you were a kid at Christmas? Do you remember the anticipation when you saw those glorious giftwrapped boxes under the tree? Every day of December seemed like an eternity... You maybe would try to sneak a peek, or you would pick it up and see if it was heavy or light, or if it rattled. This is the whole reason why the elf on the shelf was invented right? Keep kids from opening their presents! This was the kind of Christmas-like anticipation of the prophets. They were given these glorious gift-wrapped presents, these clues of prophecy about the Messiah, where he would be born, what he would accomplish, what he would be like...and they longed to open them and discover the mystery. Even the angels it says here were longing to see what was in them! But v.12 says, “it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you.” The spirit tapped them on the shoulder and said “the gift is not for you to open, but for you to give!” Friends, what Peter is saying here is that we are the recipients of the gift of the advent- the grace of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ for all people.

**All this is introduction for our 4-week advent series.** We want to transport ourselves back thousands of years, pre-advent to when the prophets received these glorious gifts, wrapped for us. And look with the eyes of a child at Christmastime right along with the prophets as we read the clues about the advent of Jesus Christ. Each week we will study a different theme of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. **Today we will look at the theme of Hope.** Let’s go about 700 years before the birth of Jesus to Isaiah 42:1-7

**Isaiah 42:1-7**

*“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. <sup>3</sup> A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In*

*faithfulness he will bring forth justice; <sup>4</sup> he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope."*

*<sup>5</sup> This is what God the Lord says—the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it:*

*<sup>6</sup> "I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup> to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.*

This is the first what are called the servant songs where Isaiah speaks of this mysterious figure called the "servant of the Lord." As these songs unfold over the next 10 chapters it becomes increasingly clear that this "servant" is more than a priest of Israel, one of the prophets or a king but is indeed THE priest, prophet and king of kings- The Messiah, Jesus. Over 30 times, New Testament identifies this servant as Jesus Christ. Many clues about the Messiah but we will observe three:

**He is the Agent of Universal Justice-** 3x this word Justice is used in this passage. And not merely justice for Israel, the whole world is in view here- "To the nations, whole earth." What is justice? We think rectifying justice- punishes those evil...sometimes it means that. But most times the word means something far bigger. It's referring to a kind of society where rectifying justice isn't necessary, because everything is in a right relationship with everything else. Synonym is Shalom. Absolute well-being. This about it like this: What is physical health? All your parts are working together properly, in right relationship with every other part. What is disease? Your parts are not working together and not in proper relationship with each other, they work against each other. You lose your physical shalom...The disease of sin all the way back in Eden has infected our relationship with God and therefore broke our relationship with everything and everyone else...its why the world has been at each other's throats since the beginning. And now you begin to see the kind of justice that this servant will bring. Restoring everything to full health-socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. At the first advent, Jesus established justice by judging sin and evil on the cross, and at the second advent he will restore ultimate justice. As Jesus says of himself in Revelation, behold I am making all things new. As one scholar put it- **"In short, the servant will come back to undue all the horrendous and degrading effects that sin has had on the human race."** We live in hopeful anticipation, awaiting the King to establish this Justice.

**He is the Hope of All Peoples -** v.4 **"In his teaching the islands will put their hope."** Islands-Scholars agree that this phrase meant that the hope of the gospel would reach to the most remote, savage, and hopeless of places on the earth. The point here is to say "If the islands can have hope, surely everyone can have hope." This is the promise of the full expansion of the covenant promise from the Jewish people to the whole world. Jesus came to give hope of salvation to all people groups. All have access! Black, white, primitive and advanced societies,

eastern and western cultures, conservative and liberal people, religious and secular people, the morally buttoned up and morally bankrupt. We all have people in our lives that we think...that person is hopeless, he's beyond God's reach. No he isn't!

**He is the Humble Healer** - There is a seeming contradiction in the description of the servant. He's going to bring universal justice...who could do that but a king and yet, **Isaiah 42:2 He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets.** He's a ruler and king...and he's unassuming, meek and mild. What king do you know in history who rules like this, no military force, no threats, no covert assassinations? What's going on here? The idea is that this king is going to have the results of a king, without his methods. You can imagine Isaiah trying to piece this together- He's a conquering king...and yet humble servant? Who is this messiah? Behold Jesus! Who Philippians 2 says, did not consider his equality with God something to use to his advantage but humbled himself like a what "servant." He's humble but he's also a healer. **Isaiah 42:3 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.**

The first image he uses is that of a bruised Reed...a stalk of grain, broken and crushed at the stalk it is never going to produce grain. Everyone would say it's useless, so break it off. Another image, smoldering wick. In those days, people would light little lanterns for their homes, when the oil would run out the wick would just smoke. So you'd say, just snuff it out. Pinch it, put water on it. But notice, this servant does NOT break the reed, he does NOT snuff the wick. This is the Hebrew way of emphasizing that he will surely do the positive thing. Kind of like saying and Shaq- He ain't Tiny! This servant will sure do what no one else can do...he will restore the broken, useless reed. He will replenish the oil and reignite the flame of the wick. This is humble healer will **v.<sup>7</sup> to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.** Do you see the kind of savior Jesus is? Look through the gospels. Is this not at the heart of the ministry of Jesus. Who came to for the sick and lost, not for the well? Who came for those on the margins, those who were used up and battered, discriminated against and left behind and forgotten? Jesus was attracted to hopeless cases. Behold, my servant: The one who will bring universal justice, and salvation for all people, who is the humble healer of the deepest of wounds and most marginalized of humanity.

What does all this mean for us?

2 Thoughts-

-**Go to the humble healer.** A good doctor prescribes just the right amount of medicine or just the right treatment according to the person's need. All of us are sin-sick and in need of the humble healer. Whatever you need, whatever your ailments...You struggle with doubt, you struggle with weakness and addiction, you struggle with fear? You struggle with sexuality? You struggle with pride and self-reliance? And probably our greatest struggle, our inability to carry out the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest command- to love. Go to the humble healer. Jesus will give you what you need. Jesus is for everyone. We try to be for everyone but we struggle to do that, but Jesus is for everyone! Or Maybe you feel like a smoldering wick. A life that maybe once burned bright for Jesus but all that is left is a smoking wick. You still believe but maybe that relationship feels gone, no fire. He replenishes the oil. Go to the humble healer. Jesus brings hope to the

remotest of islands. You feel hopeless and beyond his reach? You cannot outrun, out sin or out mess-up Jesus.

**-Follow the ways of the humble healer.**

Those who claim to be his disciples must walk as Jesus walked. We must be unbelievably loving and kind to the most bruised and snuffed out. We should not be an elitist church. Are you someone who see bruised reeds, and smoldering wicks with the eyes of Jesus and move toward them with love and his tender care? Do we see the marginalized and victimized and struggling and the washed up and burned out and forgotten? Or are we too caught up in our own orbit or set in our ways? Do we disarm not with force but with love and gentleness. The world is watching, the next generation is watching to see if we will do what we say we believe. Or will we deny Christ by our lifestyle?

**Communion Transition:**

In all of the servant songs with get an idea of the suffering that this servant will go through, but we get a hint of it here in **v. 4 He will not falter (snuff out) or be discouraged (bruised) until he establishes justice.** in Hebrew- The servant will experience the very same thing. He will be bruised, he will be snuffed out... And here's this means...he will be bruised, he will be snuffed out...but it will not stop him from accomplishing his mission. Isaiah 53- He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities but by his wounds we are healed...Jesus says, I was bruised so I can deal with your bruises. Jesus took the rectifying justice so he could establish ultimate justice for you!