

Isaiah 11:1—9
December 2, 2018

Christmas—or Advent—season is our annual reminder that we have reason to hope. The light of heaven has become the hope of earth. Jesus has come.

This Advent season we are joining the greatest OT prophet—Isaiah—as he describes the great Jesus Christ.

Last week we heard an announcement of the coming light. The light from an unlikely source—a baby.

“For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

[7] Of the increase of his government and of
peace there will be no end...” Isaiah 9:6-7

This is no ordinary son, no ordinary baby—He would be:

Wonderful Counselor
Mighty God

Everlasting Father Prince of Peace

Last week we saw that the child born in Bethlehem so long ago was no ordinary baby. This week Isaiah adds another wrinkle—we find that this baby would grow into a king.

And no ordinary king. But THE King.

The King who came from a place no one expected
The King who is different than anyone expected
The King who will do more than anyone expects

What is Isaiah going to show us this morning?

The King has come and we have great reason to hope. We need to watch, learn and follow this Jesus and reclaim the hope that we can only have in him.

This passage is going to challenge us to hope. One of the great problems with we Christians is that our expectations of the King is too low. Isaiah is going to challenge us to expect more.

We can protect ourselves by having chronically low expectations of Jesus. My goal this morning is to challenge us to hope more in him.

This King defies our expectations. Oh who we need to see a savior that defies our low expectations. It can be so very easy to give into the dark, dank, depressing power of hopelessness.

We need a strong and sturdy hope to hold onto.

That hope is not resident in you or me, but we have reason to hope in our king. Why?

The King who came from a place no one expected
The King who is different than anyone expected
The King who will do more than anyone expects

Christmas celebrates a Christ who defies our every expectation. You need to grab and hold the bright message of hope of Jesus Christ this Christmas.

Jesus defies low expectations.

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,

and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

- or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his
mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the
wicked.
- 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
- 6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young
goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf
together;
and a little child shall lead them.
- 7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the
cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the
adder's den.
- 9 They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the
LORD
as the waters cover the sea."

PRAY

The King who came from a place no one expected
The King who is different than anyone expected
The King who will do more than anyone expects

*1. The King who came from a place no one expected
(Isaiah 9:1)—*

Hope dawns from a most unlikely family.

Isaiah says it this way,

**“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of
Jesse...”**

The family line of Jesse was once the prominent family
in all of the land. The line of Jesse was where all the
kings came from.

But Isaiah is talking about a time when that line had
been cut down. That is what he means by stump.

To understand where Jesus comes from we need to
understand the phrase, “a shoot from the stump of
Jesse.”

When we hear stump we should think tree stump.
Through Isaiah, God said that he was going to lay

waste to the sinful nation and dethrone the royal line of David.

He was going to cut the mighty cedar of Israel down and only leave a stump. And that is exactly what happened. The Babylonians captured the last king, King Zedekiah.

And what did they do to him?

“But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him. [6] Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed sentence on him. [7] They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon.” 2 Kings 25:5–7

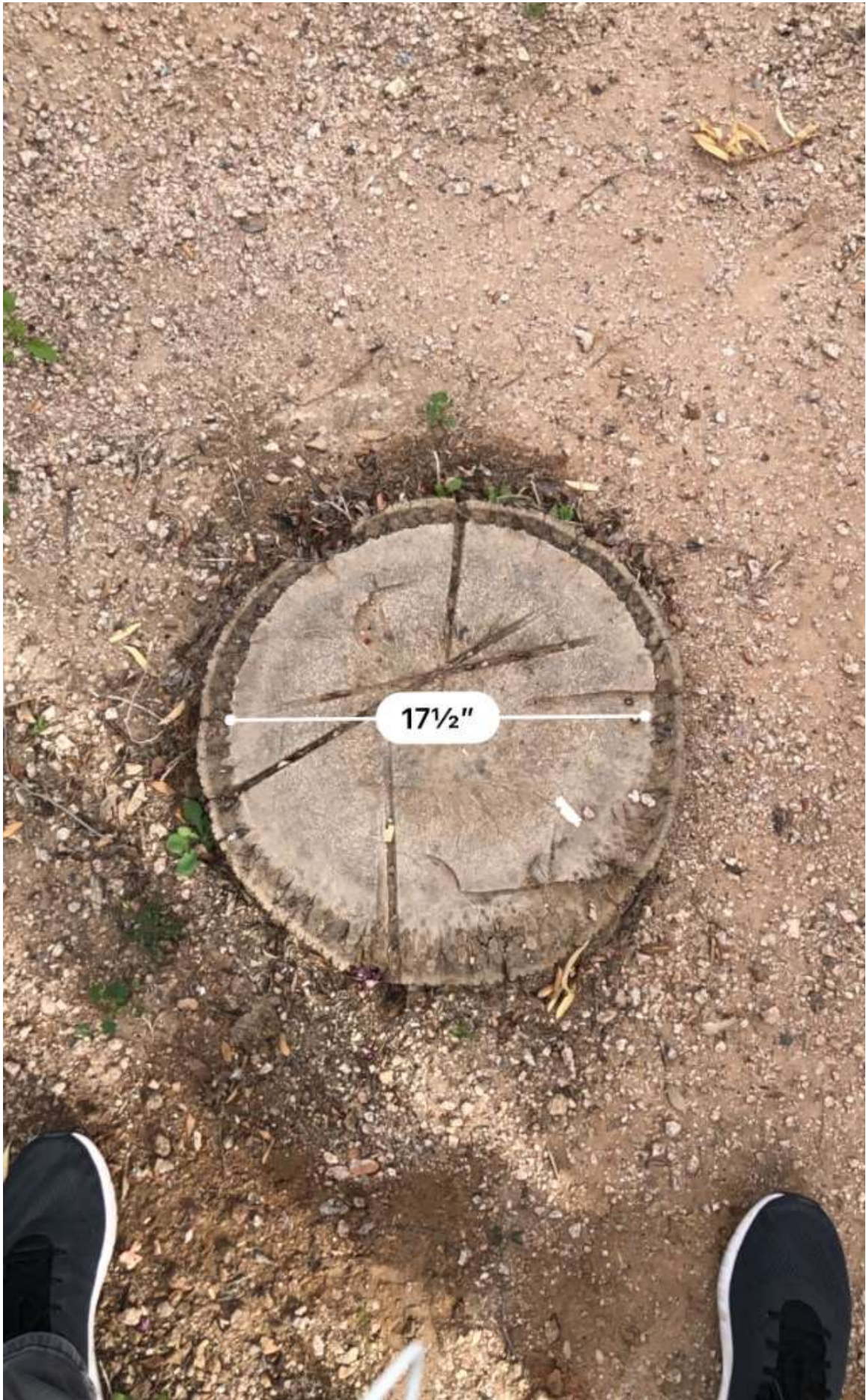
Their king was deposed and childless and Israel was cut down. Left as a stump. The former people of God were exiled to Babylon and hope seemed to be put out.

So it is surprising to read in Isaiah, that a shoot will spring from a stump. Who expects life to come from a cut down tree?

When our church purchased the parcel of land we are meeting on now, there was a massive Cottonwood tree right by where the dumpster is located. It was one of the biggest Cottonwood trees I had ever seen.

And when the construction began, the tree came down.

Here is a picture of the stump.



Near as I can tell, before the tree was cut down it had lived and flourished for anywhere from 40-50 years. It dated back to the 1940's or 50's.

And then the tree was cut down somewhere around Y2K and all that is left from the tree is this stump.

What expectations for the future do you have for this stump?

None. Right?

The tree flourished for decades and then it was cut down. It's time has passed. It's day is gone. There is no future for cut down trees.

And yet our future comes from a cut down tree. You see there were a few from the house of David that lived. Jeconiah lived.

But his descendants though they came from royalty became lowly peasants. The once glorious house of David was forgotten.

Though the king had his eyes put out and his children killed before him—Babylon could not kill all of the line of David. Jeconiah lived.

And his son Shealtiel went back to Jerusalem.

And the line of David was forgotten.

No more glory.

No more grandeur.

No more magnificence.

No more royalty.

And generation gave way to generation. Time passed and the once proud line was reduced to humble peasants. Somewhere down through the centuries this once royal house became carpenters.

Their brows were not covered with crowns, but sweat. Their hands were not adorned by rings, but calloused and worked over.

Their home was no palace but a non-descript hovel.

They commanded no armies but worked wood.

No one would look at the house of Jesse and say—I expect great things. Nope. They are a shell of what they used to be a stump cut down.

Jesus was born into a failed dynasty.

But God never works in ways that seem to be common sense and obvious. He uses the small and weak to shame the strong and powerful. He uses the

weak and overlooked of this world to do his most important work.

And so, as the baby born in Bethlehem cried out a shoot from the stump of Jesse was born. From the long forgotten house of David comes a new King.

That is where he came from.

Why is this a reason for hope for us?

If the king came from a family that the world forgot it shows us that God never sets aside his promises. The promise that we read about here in Isaiah took 7 centuries to come true.

700 years!

In dark times, it seems like the Lord is doing nothing, but that is NOT true. There are promises in the scriptures that we can build our life upon.

You might feel forgotten.

“You have kept count of my tossings;
put my tears in your bottle.

Are they not in your book?

[9] Then my enemies will turn back
in the day when I call.

This I know, that God is for me.
[10] In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I praise,
[11] in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?" Psalm 56:8–11

You might feel useless.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:8–10

God is always working but he always seems to work in ways we don't expect. Hope in Christ.

Isaiah has marked out where the king would come from, now he shows us what he would be like.

2. The King who is different than anyone expected (Isaiah 9:2-5)

To say that this king was different is the understatement of all times.

What was he like?

The best way to see how different he is might be to compare and contrast him with human leaders. There are good leaders and bad leaders in our world. And you might disagree with others about what makes a good leader or a bad leader—but there can be no mistake or disputing that this King is different.

He was like no one the world had ever seen—How so?

And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

This king would be empowered by the Spirit of the Lord himself. He will be born different. He will from the very beginning be endowed with the Spirit and—

Have all,

“wisdom and understanding”

He is a king who does not need help either gathering information or understanding the situation. He does not learn. This is a king who needs no advisors or advice. He has all wisdom and understanding.

He also has

'wisdom and understanding'
'counsel and might'

Meaning there is nothing to stop him from following through with his plans. He has all might and lacks for nothing. This is a king that needs no army—he can fight for himself. He has all counsel and might.

'wisdom and understanding'
'counsel and might'
'knowledge and the fear of the Lord'

Meaning he knows God. Really knows him. No one has to teach him about God most high. He knows. He does not give lip service to God, he fears God. He lives completely devoted to God the Father.

'wisdom and understanding'
'counsel and might'
'knowledge and the fear of the Lord'

That is good. But look at what makes him the happiest—

And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

His greatest joy is living to please his father, not himself. How different he is from our leaders!

No leader anywhere is like this.

Most leaders delight in the trappings of leadership—

- Respect
- Power
- Importance
- Prominence
- Weight

Not this king his greatest joy is pleasing his God.

That is unexpected. Look how else he is different,

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

In other words,

He knows all things.

Think about how different this is. If you are a parent and come into a room there is an uproar and a great gnashing of teeth amongst your kids and you have to say—What happened?

Then you get a breathless story from one child and the opposite from the other. You make a judgment on

what happened based on what your eyes see or what your ears hear.

You have to there is no other way.

But not this king.

He just knows. He doesn't have to ask what happened. He knows.

Understanding.

Most leaders want to be associated with the right people. The important people. The influential people. The people who will make campaign contributions. The people who will make them look good.

Not this king. Vs. 4,

but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;

He will look out for the poor and stand up for the meek. He will put things right for the poor. All of those overlooked and forgotten people will have a new champion.

He will fight for the poor.

He will be fair for the meek. There will be no more room for false charges just because someone can't afford legal representation. There will be no preferential treatment for the wealthy.

He will put all things right.

and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

He does not make deals with the wicked knowing that he has to win their votes. Nope. He will kill them. We live in a world where we can be used to massive injustice.

Not this king. He won't let the wicked get away with anything. There are no pressure groups or lobbyists that can twist his arm. He is not afraid to confront corruption or injustice, prejudice or fraud.

The wicked will pay.

What would he wear?

Not flowing regal robes of royalty.
Not perfectly tailored high dollar suits.
Not shiny or flashy 'look at me' attire.

Vs. 5,

Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

He will adorn himself with righteousness and faithfulness. Meaning that he will keep all his promises and will always be true.

Why is this a reason for hope?

He understands.

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:15–16

You don't have to explain anything. He gets it. He gets you.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

3. The King who will do more than anyone expects (Isaiah 9:6-9)

I remember when I was in college I went to get some help from one of my professors. Somehow we got to talking about politics—and she said something I will never forget.

She said,

“I had such great hopes for this president but everything is just like it ever was. What is the point?”

Exactly.

But Christmas celebrates a different kind of king. Now I’m going to warn you what I’m about to believe sounds so very amazing and beyond all belief.

But it is true.

Watch the effect of this king’s leadership—

⁶The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young
goat,

and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf
together;

and a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the
cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the
adder's den.

Um. I'm no husbandry expert but I know that you don't make a pen to hold both the wolves and the sheep.

I know that leopards (mountain lions) don't have sleepovers with goats. I know the calf and the lion don't hang out.

The cow and bear don't eat together. In our world the bear eats the cow. Calves and bear cubs don't have play dates.

And we don't let our children play by a rattlesnake den.

You will not understand this passage if you ask—when will this happen? The right question is: Who will make this happen?

And his name is Jesus.

They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the
LORD
as the waters cover the sea.”

The effect of the rule of this king is a complete and utter change. If the animal kingdom is changed so very radically by this Jesus—how much more will we be?

What makes all these things different? The knowledge of the LORD.

Christmas is just the beginning. And we read here about the ending. Christmas is the start of something bigger than you can imagine.

He has come and he will do these things.

Why does this give us a reason to hope?

