

**ZIONSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**REV. JIM CAPPS- DECEMBER 2, 2012**

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**"A NEW DAY COMING"**

**ISAIAH 11:1-9**

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How many of you remember the folk rock group from the 60's and 70's called the "Mama and the Papas"? One of their most famous hits was "Monday, Monday." But the one I remember the most seemed to embody the hopes and dreams of that season in our history with war protests and racial unrest. It was a song that Mama Cass Elliott would belt out with passion:

"There's a new world coming and it's just around the bend.

There's a new world coming, this one's coming to an end.

There's a new voice calling, you can hear it if you try.

And it's growing stronger with each day that's passing by.

There's a brand new morning rising clear and sweet and free.

There's a new day dawning that belongs to you and me.

Yes, a new world's coming. The one we've had visions of.

Coming in peace, coming in joy, coming in love."

Mama Cass expresses the hope that has always made human hearts beat faster. The real question is, "Who or what has the power to bring in such a new day?" Some looked for it in political revolutions. Some have hoped to bring it about through military might. Some have resorted to the bottom of a bottle or an hallucinogenic drug.

The great Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, thought we were getting better and that a new world was evolving until he heard the sounds of a world war off in the distance. All of the great scientific, technological advances have not brought about the new world the human spirit has hoped for.

Today, as we begin the season of Advent, we are going to be looking at words coming from the 8<sup>th</sup> Century B. C. Prophet, Isaiah, as he shares the news about a new day coming. He knows that only God, the Master Designer and Creator of all that is, can bring this world, "Coming in peace, coming in joy, coming in love."

Please follow along with me as I read **Isaiah 11:1-9**, wondrous words of anticipation.

Believe it or not, my words are going to be shorter today, because we want you to be able to go to the Alternative Christmas Market and help decorate the church for Christmas. With that said, Isaiah presents two new days coming in this passage.

**IN VERSES 1-5, ISAIAH WRITES ABOUT THE MESSIAH, WHO WILL BRING IN THIS NEW DAY.**

Isaiah concludes the previous chapter with the idea that the Lord will cut down the lofty trees. He is probably referring to the defeat of the Assyrian King Sennacherib. While Assyria seemed invincible, they were not able to defeat Jerusalem, which was a remnant of Israel.

Even though Assyria did not destroy Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah, the Babylonians defeated them in 586 B.C. As we begin chapter 11, it is out of the stump of the felled tree of Judah, King David's birthplace, that a green shoot sprouts forth and bears fruit. That Branch was none other than the Messiah, whom we believe was Jesus, the Son of David, God's Anointed One whose birth we prepare to celebrate.

It must be noted that Isaiah's prophecy is being heralded 700 years before Jesus is born. Isaiah says that the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon this Messiah bringing him wisdom and understanding, counsel and power, knowledge and great reverence for the Lord which he will take great delight in.

Using Eugene Peterson's paraphrase from *The Message*, "He won't judge by appearances" or "won't decide on the basis of hearsay." What a statement about this Messiah for every age, but especially our age. He is in stark contrast to our politicians who are always concerned about appearances and polls.

Instead of appearances and hearsay, righteousness will be His standard as He brings justice to the needy and the poor. As was true in creation, His words will be His tool for bringing about His judgments. Unlike so many of even the best leaders, righteousness and faithfulness will be the virtues which tie all His actions together.

Do you see how this Messiah predicted 700 years before His birth in a stable in Bethlehem, really is the One who can bring in this new day? Unlike anyone who has ever lived on this good planet earth, Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords has ushered in the new day dreamed about since the day Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden.

Time and time again, Jesus would talk about the Kingdom of God, which in essence is that new day. The Kingdom which He ushered in is only partial or incomplete; it is imperfect; it still has a future dimension to it. It will always be that way until Jesus returns. Until then, we will continue to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

### **IN VERSES 6-9, ISAIAH GIVE US A WONDER-FILLED GLIMPSE OF WHAT THAT NEW DAY WILL LOOK LIKE.**

When we look at that idyllic setting portrayed in these verses, we see a place of ultimate peace and harmony. In essence it is a restored Garden of Eden. It is a glorious picture of that complete, perfect kingdom which Jesus shall bring and over which He will reign in all of His glory.

When you stop to think about it, as David McKenna puts it, "Wolves, leopards, lions, bears, and cobras are deadly enemies of such defenseless creatures as lambs, goats, calves, cows, and infant children. Yet, in the reign of Christ, God promises not only righteous judgment for the needy in society but also peace for the helpless in creation. Such a radical reversal will come about when the earth is full of the 'knowledge of the Lord' (verse 9)."

That “knowledge of the Lord” has the idea of a future time when all will acknowledge and experience the full reality that the Lord is truly the one God of all time and seasons. It will be understood just as people understand that the “waters cover the sea.”

Because Jesus has come as the Messiah and that first new day has come, we have the complete assurance that that second, wonder-filled, euphoric new day will also come. Yes, someday it will be “coming in peace, coming in joy, coming in love.”

## APPLICATION

On this first Sunday in Advent, as we prepare to celebrate together Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper, we look back upon His life, His body broken and blood shed and also His triumphal resurrection. But in this holy meal we also look forward with great anticipation as we say, “For whenever you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death, **until He comes.**” I Corinthians 11:26

It would be fair for you say to me, “Jim, that’s all well and good, but what difference do these two “new days” from Isaiah make for me?”

Dear friends, these two pictures of a new day coming make all the difference in the world. In fact, believing that Isaiah’s Messiah is Jesus, is hugely impactful for our lives. When we place our trust in Him, knowing that He is the One prophesied by Isaiah and the One whom God sent, brings us forgiveness, peace and joy and hope.

Believing that Jesus is the One who was born as the “shoot from the stump of Jesse” and that He died to wash away my sins, has radically changed and transformed my life. He can do the same for you.

In addition, that glimpse of that future new day yet to come can bring us comfort and hope. You may feel broken and wounded. Praise God, there is a new day coming! You may be in despair about so many things in your life and world. Praise God, there is a new day coming! Possibly there are people who have disappointed and disillusioned you. Praise God, there is a new day coming! You may be filled with fear and anxiety as you experience the uncertainties of this life. Praise God, there is a new day coming! You could be feeling the pangs of separation and loss. Praise God, there is a new day coming! It’s “coming in peace, coming in joy, coming in love.”

One Sunday morning, a man woke up early with his wife and children still asleep. Glad to have time to himself, he went downstairs, brewed some coffee, and began to read the newspaper. Three sentences into an article he heard the shuffle of little feet as his wee daughter descended the stairs.

He said, “Honey, go back to bed.”

“But I’m not sleepy,” she insisted.

Determined to read his paper, he again urged her to go back to bed. Again, she told him she was not tired.

Looking down at the newspaper, he conceived a plan. In the paper was a large picture of the world, which he quickly cut into several pieces. Handing his daughter some Scotch tape, he instructed her, “Go sit in the dining room, and see if you can put the world back together.”

His daughter accepted the challenge, and he quickly returned to the kitchen to his coffee and paper. Again just a couple of sips of coffee and a few paragraphs of the paper later, his daughter came bounding into the kitchen. "Here, Daddy, I'm finished!" she said, showing him the picture of the world put back together.

Amazed, he asked, "Sweetie, how did you do that so fast?"

She replied, "It was easy, Daddy. On the back side of the page was a picture of a man. When you make the man right, you make the world right."

Oh, dear friends, in a similar way, only Jesus can bring order to this world. He is the man made right who can bring a new world. He can put your world back together.