

## Trinity Home Teams

Sermon Notes / Nov. 30, 2025

ADVENT: Part 1 / **The Light in Darkness**

**Isaiah 9:1-3**

1. Why is there such a strong impulse in the church to downplay spiritual battles and emphasize what's positive and uplifting?

2. Read **Matt. 4:12-17**. Why is Jesus quoting Isaiah?

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, a season of anticipation. The word 'advent' means 'coming.' We look back at the anticipation of the first coming of Christ and we look forward to the second coming.

NOW and NOT YET -- His kingdom has been inaugurated, yet it is has not reached full expression. We live in a continuing struggle that began in the Garden and will persist until we see all enemies put under the feet of Christ.

In the first advent, Christ struck a fatal blow against the serpent and his seed. The incarnate Son of God became a man to undo the effects of sin; it was a work of redemption both of man and of creation. With his death and resurrection, his kingdom was inaugurated.

*We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed -- 2 Corinthians 4:8-9*

We live with hope, peace, joy, and love, but these exist temporally in the midst of darkness, disorder, and despair. We wait in a paradox: content with Christ, yet in holy discontentment with the fallen world.

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." -- Revelation 21:4-5*

Light is revelatory; it reveals the truth of what is and gives greater and fuller understanding of it.

*He dwells in unapproachable light -- Timothy 6:16 / God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. -- 1 John 1:5 / Christ is "the true light, which gives light to everyone" -- John 1:9*

### The coming of darkness

Spiritual darkness has been a part of life since the fall. We "love darkness rather than the light." In Ch8, Isaiah prophesies that the choice of King Ahaz to seek help from the king of Assyria rather than trust the Lord will have disastrous consequences. Isaiah is warned 'not to walk in the way of this people' (v11) but to trust in the Lord. Isaiah leads a remnant of faithful (v17).

Ahaz rejects the word of the Lord ... calls Isaiah to "Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter," demonstrating their love for darkness. Judgment follows.

### The promise of light

Even in the greatest darkness, there is hope. As he looks forward, Isaiah prophesies that a day is coming where 'the gloom of anguish' will be no more. The first to experience Assyrian brutality were the first to witness the ministry of Messiah. (Review v2.)

This light was more than a reacquaintance with 'the testimony and the teaching' that was bound up in 8:16. This was the introduction of the 'Word made flesh,' prophesied in 9:6. Matthew makes this connection clear: **Matt. 4:12-17**. Jesus, 'the true light,' came to set the captives free (captive to sin, death).

Mankind thinks in temporal terms, but this Light – *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* – would establish an everlasting kingdom and would "uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore."

### The present darkness

We know that the light has come. We trust him in the midst of a world that still gropes in darkness. Ahaz led the nation of Israel to look to men rather than to God. Men today place their hope in earthly deliverance: peace, joy, love from earthly pursuits.

According to his plan, we who believe in Christ are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

### The hope of light

It should neither surprise nor discourage us that darkness persists. Paul reminds us that "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers ... against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." Consequently, we must walk wisely, waiting and hoping in the Lord and confronting evil and darkness. On the first day, He separated light from darkness; on the last day, he will do it again:

**Revelation 21:22-27** "And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup>And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup>By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, <sup>25</sup>and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. <sup>26</sup>They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. <sup>27</sup>But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life."