

✽ FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ✽

Words of Hope

Isaiah 2:1-5

In the time of Isaiah long, long before Jesus was born, God's people in Jerusalem needed to hear God's message of peace. *What could they hope for?* wondered the people. They knew war was coming to Jerusalem. How could they prepare for it?

King Ahaz wanted words from God's prophet, Isaiah. This is what Isaiah told the king and the people:

"In the days to come,

God's mountain will be higher than any other
mountain.

"People of many nations will say,

'Let's go up on God's mountain
where the God of Israel can teach us
so we can follow God's ways.

Then we can walk in God's paths.'

"God will be in charge.

God will settle arguments and fights.

"Then no one will need swords or other things for
fighting,

and all the swords can be made into peaceful
things,
like plows for the fields.
“Then one country will not fight any other country.
No one will be taught how to fight wars.
“Come, God’s people,
let’s walk in God’s light!”

These were good words for King Ahaz and for God’s people, don’t you think? God is in charge! An important message for us, too, as we begin the season of Advent.

Prayer: God of hope, we will try to remember not to worry, because we know you are in charge. Amen.

❧ SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT ❧

Words of Peace

Isaiah 11:1–10

The people of Judah were afraid. They worried that war would start any day. But Isaiah, God’s prophet who spoke of hope, had more words from God for them. Isaiah told them that it was true that their nation would be destroyed by another nation, a powerful nation. But God had good words for them too. Here is what Isaiah told them. Listen for words of peace.

“Wait for someone wise and strong,
who will come from the family of Jesse.
“This one will worship and serve God.
This one will be filled with God’s Spirit.
“This one will judge fairly.
Imagine how the world might be then.
“The lion and the lamb will live together.
So will the leopard and the young goat.
“The calf and the young lion will eat side by side,
and a child, a little child, will lead them.
“The cow and the bear will eat in the same field,
while their calves and cubs nap together.
Lions will eat straw like the oxen.

“A baby will play by a snake’s hole and not be hurt.

“No creature will damage anything on God’s holy mountain.

“The earth will be filled with the words and ways of God

as water covers the sea.

“On that day, the one from Jesse’s family will stand, a signal to all people. All nations will look for this one, whose place will be glorious.”

Imagine that! All these animals living together in peace. In Advent we remember these words from God as we wait for Jesus, who was from Jesse’s family, too.

Prayer: God of peace, your picture of peace fills our hearts and dreams as we wait for the one you sent into the world. Amen.