

December 4, 2016 The LORD is Coming!

Isaiah 35

Isaiah 35 is a word “out of place”—interrupting chapter 34’s narrative of despair and devastation. Isaiah dares to speak a word out of place. A word that refused to wait until things improved. As Walter Brueggemann has reminded us, “Israel’s doxologies are characteristically against the data.” We see and hear the data every night on the news and every morning on the front page of the paper. Add to that the data of our own lives: waiting for the test results from the doctor, mourning the death of a loved one, wondering if we’ll make it through the next round of lay-offs. We know the data all too well and we long for a word out of place.—Barbara Lundblad

O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel. (12th Century Hymn)

Don't you know anything? Haven't you been listening? God doesn't come and go. God *lasts*. He's Creator of all you can see or imagine. He doesn't get tired out, doesn't pause to catch His breath. And He knows *everything*, inside and out. He energizes those who get tired, gives fresh strength to dropouts. For even young people tire and drop out, young folk in their prime stumble and fall. But those who wait upon God get fresh strength. They spread their wings and soar like eagles, they run and don't get tired, they walk and don't lag behind. **Isaiah 40:28-31 (The Message)**

Next week: *The season of Advent continues...*
Children's Christmas Program, “The Manger on the Mantel”.

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THE STORY

FINDING YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

Even creation will rejoice in God's glory.

God cares for the dry and barren places.

The Lord cares for each and all of us!

God offers transformation of body and spirit.

Everything that is less than whole will be made new!

Advent Season rekindles hope for the way forward.

When Jesus returns, His every promise will be fulfilled.

Earth renewed, bodies remade, freedom conferred!

Great love and new joy is coming.

Sorrow and sighing will be banished.

Desolation, disability and grief will be gone forever.

Instead: liberation, health, strength and singing!

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