

Praying with Isaiah

The messages from the book of the prophet Isaiah are our guide for the first part of Advent. This page is meant to be a help for our letting these words console us and offer us hope. Though they were first meant to be God's word to a people who "walked in darkness," they are for us today quite alive with meaning. We can hear them personally. We can hear their prophetic hope in a future redemption that was fulfilled in Jesus. We can let these words challenge us to open our hearts. We can hear them helping us know and trust our God's love for us today. When we let them into our hearts - a phrase at a time - and chew them and let them nourish us, we can let these word feed an Advent hope and longing within us. Read them one at a time, or scan several. It is better to enjoy small bits of this message and to savor it, than to run through it, too quickly. Return to this page regularly during Advent. It is a wonderful practice to ask for a grace before we let these words touch our hearts. For example, we might ask something like this:

"Lord, open my heart to hear your word for me today. I ask that you console me, comfort me, strengthen my trust in your faithful love, and that you give me hope in the renewal of your coming in my life this Advent." Or, we might pray: "Lord, show me the desert, the wasteland, within me, and let me trust that you will bring new life and build a path to you, within me."

The quotations are taken from the readings of the first part of Advent. The links are to the full reading for that day.

The First Week of Advent



Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?

[Isaiah 63](#)

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down.

[Isaiah 63](#)

Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways!

[Isaiah 63](#)

"Come, let us climb the LORD's mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob, That he may instruct us in his ways, and we may walk in his paths."

[Isaiah 2](#)

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

[Isaiah 2](#)

Come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

[Isaiah 2](#)

On that day, A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him. ...

Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; The calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. The cow and the bear shall be neighbors, together their young shall rest; the lion shall eat hay like the ox. The baby shall play by the cobra's den, and the child lay his hand on the adder's lair. There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD, as water covers the sea.

[Isaiah 11](#)

Trust in the LORD forever! For the LORD is an eternal Rock. He humbles those in high places, and the lofty city he brings down; He tumbles it to the ground, levels it with the dust. It is trampled underfoot by the needy, by the footsteps of the poor.

[Isaiah 26](#)

On that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book; And out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see. The lowly will ever find joy in the LORD, and the poor rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. ...

Those who err in spirit shall acquire understanding, and those who find fault shall receive instruction.

[Isaiah 29](#)

He will be gracious to you when you cry out, as soon as he hears he will answer you. The Lord will give you the bread you need and the water for which you thirst. No longer will your Teacher hide himself, but with your own eyes you shall see your Teacher, While from behind, a voice shall sound in your ears: "This is the way; walk in it," when you would turn to the right or to the left.

The Second Week of Advent



Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins.

[Isaiah 40](#)

In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together.

[Isaiah 40](#)

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

[Isaiah 40](#)

The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; They will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

[Isaiah 35](#)

Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak, Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; With divine recompense he comes to save you.

[Isaiah 35](#)

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; Then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe. The burning sands will

become pools, and the thirsty ground, springs of water;
The abode where jackals lurk will be a marsh for the reed
and papyrus. A highway will be there, called the holy way;
No one unclean may pass over it, nor fools go astray on it.
No lion will be there, nor beast of prey go up to be met
upon it.

[Isaiah 35](#)

It is for those with a journey to make, and on it the
redeemed will walk. Those whom the LORD has ransomed
will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with
everlasting joy; They will meet with joy and gladness,
sorrow and mourning will flee.

[Isaiah 35](#)

Do you not know or have you not heard? The LORD is the
eternal God, creator of the ends of the earth. He does not
faint nor grow weary, and his knowledge is beyond
scrutiny. He gives strength to the fainting; for the weak he
makes vigor abound.

[Isaiah 40](#)

Though young men faint and grow weary, and youths
stagger and fall, They that hope in the LORD will renew
their strength, they will soar as with eagles' wings; They
will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.

[Isaiah 40](#)

I, the LORD, your God, teach you what is for your good,
and lead you on the way you should go.

[Isaiah 48](#)

The Third Week of Advent



The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God.

[Isaiah 61](#)

Let justice descend, O heavens, like dew from above, like gentle rain let the skies drop it down. Let the earth open and salvation bud forth; let justice also spring up! I, the LORD, have created this.

[Isaiah 45](#)

Turn to me and be safe, all you ends of the earth, for I am God; there is no other!

[Isaiah 45](#)

Raise a glad cry, you barren one who did not bear, Break forth in jubilant song, you who were not in labor, For more numerous are the children of the deserted wife than the children of her who has a husband, says the LORD.

Enlarge the space for your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly; lengthen your ropes and make firm your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your descendants shall dispossess the nations and shall people the desolate cities.

[Isaiah 54](#)

Fear not, you shall not be put to shame; you need not blush, for you shall not be disgraced. The shame of your youth you shall forget, the reproach of your widowhood no longer remember. For he who has become your husband is your Maker; his name is the LORD of hosts; Your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, called God of all the earth.

[Isaiah 54](#)

The LORD calls you back, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, A wife married in youth and then cast off, says your God. For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great tenderness I will take you back. In an outburst of wrath, for a moment I hid my face from you; But with enduring love I take pity on you, says the LORD, your

redeemer.

[Isaiah 54](#)

This is for me like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah should never again deluge the earth; So I have sworn not to be angry with you, or to rebuke you.

Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, My love shall never leave you nor my covenant of peace be shaken, says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

[Isaiah 54](#)

The Fourth Week of Advent



Observe what is right, do what is just; for my salvation is about to come, my justice, about to be revealed.

[Isaiah 56](#)

No more shall people call you "Forsaken," or your land "Desolate," but you shall be called "My Delight," and your land "Espoused." For the LORD delights in you and makes your land his spouse. As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you.

[Isaiah 62](#)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils.

[Isaiah 9](#)

For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. For every boot that tramped in battle, every cloak rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for flames.

[Isaiah 9](#)

For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

[Isaiah 9](#)

See, the LORD proclaims to the ends of the earth: say to daughter Zion, your savior comes! Here is his reward with him, his recompense before him. They shall be called the holy people, the redeemed of the LORD, and you shall be called "Frequented," a city that is not forsaken.

[Isaiah 62](#)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, "Your God is King!"

[Isaiah 52](#)