

30 Days Together
“Immanuel - God With Us”
#30daystogether

Day #5 – Nov. 30th

Text: Isaiah 11:1-3, 10

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. ² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, ¹⁰ In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

Devotion: Pastor Mark

This Wednesday evening, we will sing the beautiful Advent hymn *“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”* and also dig deeper into Isaiah’s prophecies. In verse 4 of this hymn, you may recall the words: ***“O come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree, Free them from Satan’s tyranny That trust Thy mighty power to save And give them victory o’er the grave! Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel!”*** This verse is based on Isaiah 11:1.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God clearly foretold the day when ***“there shall come*** a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit” (Is. 11:1). *“There shall come”* is what Advent is all about! Through His prophets, God gave many good promises of a *coming* Savior. And why was there a need for a Savior to come? What do we need to be saved from? Both Isaiah and our hymn verse speak of ***death*** and the ***grave***. *A dead, rotten stump was a strong visual aid that reminded God’s people of death and punishment.* Yes, Israel knew well that the stump had resulted because God had finally punished them for their blatant sins of rebellion. And Israel knew what a glorious, magnificent tree (a family tree that started with faithful Jesse, then humble David, then Solomon) had once stood in the place of that ugly stump. God warned His people many times that foreigners would come and cut down the tree of Israel ***if*** they persisted in running after other gods. Finally, it happened when Assyria and Babylon took Israel and Judah into exiles of horrible captivity. These brutal nations literally chopped down the people of Israel and their trees and crops; only a stark barrenness remained where once thrived a vast Kingdom of Israel. That’s just what sin does, still today. Our sin leads to barrenness, not fruitfulness, and to rot, decay, ugliness, and finally death.

The once glorious royal line of Jesse and the Kingdom of David was sadly brought to destruction – all because of greed, idolatry, immorality, and unfaithfulness to God. ***All hope was gone for the line of Jesse ... or was it?*** While it appeared as though the razed stump of Jesse was certainly as good as dead, and also, that the people were hopeless and as good as dead ... God’s promise was still alive! Deep beneath the dead stump-wood, God’s divine power kept a root alive. God had not abandoned His people nor His promise to send the Messiah through the line of Jesse and David, even though Israel and Judah had abandoned God. From that dead stump sprung new life! A shoot grew from out of the dead wood, and the shoot grew into a glorious, fruitful, and living Branch. God clearly foretold that out of a seemingly dead stump, He would do a miracle. Yes, from His oppressed, beaten-down remnant of people, a young virgin would conceive and bear a son and His Name would be Immanuel (another prophecy from Isaiah 7:14 & 9:6-7)! God Himself, yes Immanuel “God With Us” would ***come*** through Jesse and David’s line to be the promised Messiah! And another miracle is that after Jesus died on the cross and was laid in a tomb, he sprang forth with new life ... defeating death and the grave once and for all. He accomplished this ***for you!***

Please take time this Advent season to worship the Savior who came into the world for you to *free us from Satan’s tyranny* and to *give us victory o’er the grave!* Come grow in faith during our Wed Eve Advent services!

Closing Prayer: Dear Father God, thank You for keeping all of Your promises! Blessed Jesus, I praise You for coming to be my Savior and Lord! O Spirit, deepen my roots of faith as I serve the Branch of Jesse! Amen.