

November 30, 2022

[Isaiah 11:1-9](#)

In times of sorrow and despair, when I feel overwhelmed by the brokenness of the world, I try to remember a simple phrase: **“already but not yet.”** Despite the confusing, antithetical wording, this phrase is a great source of hope for me. This passage from Isaiah illustrates why.

The Jewish people were looking for a Messiah. Someone who would have the wisdom to know the right and true purposes and the power to carry them out. Someone who would be able to see beyond the surface and listen to the frequencies of the heart. Someone to bring about a new world where wrongs will be made right, peace and safety will reign, and little children will have nothing to fear. Someone to save them.

In our time, we understand that the shoot coming up from the stump of Jesse refers, of course, to the coming of Jesus. Jesus did come with great wisdom, understanding, and power. He judged not by what he saw and heard but by His knowledge and fear of the Lord. And his righteous death means that we can be redeemed and invite the Spirit of the Lord to rest on us.

**But** the world has **not yet** been made new. And so, we are exiles; already redeemed but not yet inhabiting the renewed world that this passage describes. If you read on in Isaiah, you will come to the promise of 65:17: “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered nor will they come to mind.” Isaiah chapters 56 through 66 (which I strongly encourage you to read) describe how we can live in this tension, holding fast to God’s promises and preparing for this coming glory. The Advent season provides an opportunity to reflect and act on what that means for you.

In what area(s) of your life do you need to remember that you are already redeemed despite living in a world that has not yet been made new? How might you live in this hope this Advent season?

Lord Jesus, thank you for redeeming us through your death on the cross. We look in hope towards a time when you will make all things new. Until then, give us the wisdom and strength to hold fast to your promises and model your love. Amen.

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