

Today's reading Isaiah is talking to King Ahaz, the king of Jerusalem at the time, obviously descended down from David, And King Ahaz, like every other king, fears that lineage up through this time, and he's not really listening. He's not listening to Isaiah trying to tell him, and obviously that's going to be frustrating for him, right. It's gonna be frustrating for anybody as much as we try to tell people about the graciousness and the wonders of God, people only hear what they want to hear. They only see what they want to see. Ahaz is no different. Where he does differ is that he lets Isaiah talk. He lets him tell him about these things and just kind of belittles him in a way. Isaiah recognizes this and is like, look, It's going to happen. One day God is going to come amongst us. He is going to send a son, Emmanuel, which means God is with us. He tells him everything's going to happen. He tells him that Jerusalem is going to be taken over again twice. That they're going to separate. That is going to come back one day, and they're going to be amongst their own people again.

As Isaiah is saying this, he's not really just telling it to Ahaz, he's telling it to everybody. He's telling everybody that one day you're going to have peace. We're going to have prosperity. We're going to quit living in times like this. It will get better. He's giving them hope. That's what this week is about. This is the first week of Advent. Advent means the anticipation of the coming of the lord. It's the season before Christmas. We decorate everything in blue because it's that time in the morning, the time right before dawn when the darkness starts to fade and the light starts to come in. You see the beauty and the wonders that are on the forefront. And with that comes hope. The hope of the new day; the hope of a new time. The hope of a better life, a better tomorrow, a better promise.

Hope is a wonderful thing. It is just simply fantastic. It's stronger and more beneficial than any other emotion that we can feel, because in it, there's no negativity. It is only the promise of what can happen. And it goes centuries and centuries back in our faith, because everything that's happened to these people has been traumatic and detrimental. But they still have hope. Even today, they still have hope. There's war going on constantly in their lives, especially back in the promised land. There is always death and destruction around them that they continue to have hope. So many people in our world, we recognize that their lives are struggling, so much harder than our own, and they continue to have hope. They continue to have that promise whether they recognize that it's from God or not. They know that it's built inside of them.

God wrote that hope on our hearts. He gave us that message through Isaiah through Jeremiah, The constant reminders that their love is all around us. And this season celebrates not just that we have it, but then we can continue to share it. We can share that hope with others. Everyone celebrates hope during this time of year.

Working at Greater Love these last few weeks, I've seen so many people come in and help share that gift because they hope for a better tomorrow. And they do what they can to bring that hope to somebody else. And that's what we really all need to do. We need to bring that hope to someone else. There's so many people out there that we don't know what is happening in their lives. We know what they present us with, and I hope each day that I can make a difference in some of those lives. That I can find a way to reach out and get them to feel better, to be better. And I hope that we all do that. I hope that we all get to share this love that we have for God ,for Jesus, for the Holy Spirit. That we share with others, we set aside our differences,

and we start today. We start sharing that hope today so that others can come out of the darkness. We can find that light, they can find that promise of tomorrow. Let us pray.