

Advent Reflections

December 6, 2019



What if cable news or social media existed in Isaiah's time? How would this world fraught with tyranny, arrogance, social unrest, false accusations, and condemnations appear? Would it be even darker than in his telling? In complete darkness, science verifies, the human eye cannot see. The faintest glint of light is all that is necessary. From our particular vantage point in time, we cannot help but read this passage *in light of* subsequently written Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. For Christians the light of the world, Christ Jesus, is coming. We remember this in a special way at Advent.

The word advent is rooted in the Latin verb *advenire*, which also means to develop, set in, arise. Scholars call today's Gospel reading the first in a 'doublet;' it is one of two similar accounts of Jesus' healing a pair of blind men. This first pair of men is directed to "See that no one knows about this;" but, there are no such conditions placed on the second pair and they immediately follow Jesus. The message of the first story as seen in light of the second may be that it simply was not yet time for the Messianic Secret to be revealed. Develop, set in, arise. These are gestational words. They hearken back to the first story, today's story, and can illuminate the unique gift that Jesus offered to those two men.

Develop, set in, arise. In his sermon, "What Mary was doing when the Angel Came," Meister Eckhart says Mary was "...sitting in time untimely." Sitting. Is there a more leisurely posture? She was surely prepared to stay a while. He continues, "...She sat in the cell of recollection and dispassion. She sat in the house of godly certitude. She sat in the school of the Trinity and heard what the schoolmaster of Truth was saying..." Isn't this what the first two healed men were—and of all of us this Advent are—called to do?

- ☆ Resist jumping so quickly to the end of a story and savor every word the author speaks to us along the way.
- ☆ Spend time untimely with someone in need of the light of our faith or with one whose faith might set in, develop and arise within us.
- ☆ Try for a moment, even in the darkest of spaces, to merely *be still* and *know*.

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Reading 1 [IS 29:17-24](#)

Thus says the Lord GOD:
 But a very little while,
 and Lebanon shall be changed into an orchard,
 and the orchard be regarded as a forest!
 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.
 For the tyrant will be no more
 and the arrogant will have gone;
 All who are alert to do evil will be cut off,
 those whose mere word condemns a man,
 Who ensnare his defender at the gate,
 and leave the just man with an empty claim.
 Therefore thus says the LORD,
 the God of the house of Jacob,
 who redeemed Abraham:
 Now Jacob shall have nothing to be ashamed of,
 nor shall his face grow pale.
 When his children see
 the work of my hands in his midst,
 They shall keep my name holy;
 they shall reverence the Holy One of Jacob,
 and be in awe of the God of Israel.
 Those who err in spirit shall acquire understanding,
 and those who find fault shall receive instruction.

Responsorial Psalm [PS 27:1, 4, 13-14](#)

R. (1a) **The Lord is my light and my salvation.**
 The LORD is my light and my salvation;
 whom should I fear?
 The LORD is my life's refuge;

of whom should I be afraid?

R. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

One thing I ask of the LORD;

this I seek:

To dwell in the house of the LORD

all the days of my life,

That I may gaze on the loveliness of the LORD

and contemplate his temple.

R. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

I believe that I shall see the bounty of the LORD

in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD with courage;

be stouthearted, and wait for the LORD.

R. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Alleluia **R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Behold, our Lord shall come with power;

he will enlighten the eyes of his servants.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel [MT 9:27-31](#)

As Jesus passed by, two blind men followed him, crying out,

"Son of David, have pity on us!"

When he entered the house,

the blind men approached him and Jesus said to them,

"Do you believe that I can do this?"

"Yes, Lord," they said to him.

Then he touched their eyes and said,

"Let it be done for you according to your faith."

And their eyes were opened.

Jesus warned them sternly,

"See that no one knows about this."

But they went out and spread word of him through all that land.