

Day 5

More than Just a Pardon

“The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: The Lord has sent this message to every land: “Tell the people of Israel, ‘Look, your Savior is coming. See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.” Isaiah 62:11

So what’s the big deal with Advent? The Bible passage above shows that the prophet Isaiah knew the answer long before Jesus came. “Look, your Savior is coming!” The coming of the Savior is a big deal. Imagine if you were imprisoned on death row. In that situation, the most important thing to you would be the arrival of a messenger bringing news of your pardon ... or not. The arrival of such a pardon would mean life. The absence would mean death. Because of the sin we live with every day, we face a death sentence unless we receive a pardon.

Advent anticipates the pardon. Christmas Day celebrates that our pardon has arrived. Good Friday remembers that our pardon was accomplished at the cost of Christ’s suffering and death in our place. Easter is the celebration that we have been set free and the threat of death no longer hangs over us. But Isaiah’s message is about more than just a pardon. The Lord promises that we will receive a reward when our Savior comes – the riches of His heavenly kingdom. It is no wonder that Christmas is such a joyous celebration preceded by a season of such expectation.

Prayer

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for the healing that you bring through the gift of your forgiveness. Your pardon takes away the burdens of my sin. Amen.

Ponder

How are you changed because of the pardon you have received? What does the pardon look like in your life?

Worship Video

Scandal of Grace

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cka7fYhWj2E>

Christmas Story

[Mark 1:1-3](#)

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way - a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’

[Luke 1:5-10](#)

The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old. Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

Bible Verse

[Mark 1:2-3](#)

I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way - a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’