

# Advent 2025: A King is Coming

## #2 – Prepare the Way for the Impossible – *Isaiah 40:3-8*

**Introduction** – Christmas is the glorious celebration of God doing the impossible, something He really enjoys doing. Advent is the season of preparation for God to do the impossible. When God does the impossible, it is a revelation of His glory and a revelation of His glory is a fearful and wonderful thing. Are you ready for God to do the impossible in this world? Are you ready for God to do the impossible in your life? Nothing is greater in one's life than to be caught up in the wonderful upheaval that this passage describes. But He is worth the disruption.

**An Impossible Man** – Each of the four gospels records that vv 3-4 were fulfilled in the preaching ministry of John the Baptist, but only Luke 1 tells us about the birth of this preacher. His parents were righteous before God (1:6) yet Elizabeth was barren and beyond the age of childbearing (v7, 18). Nevertheless, God did “the impossible” and another barren woman gave birth to a son. His father, full of the Holy Spirit at the birth of his son, prophesied concerning him (esp. vv76-79), reflecting the promises of the Isaiah passage.

**An Impossible Message** – The message is that nothing is going to get in God's way of accomplishing what He has planned. Every valley, every mountain, every obstacle turns out to be no obstacle at all for God. Christmas is the story of the invasion of humanity by God in the most impossible way: He took the form of a bondservant coming in the likeness of men (Phil 2:7). Jesus became a man so that He could die for men (Phil 2:8). Kings, rulers, and traitors of Jesus, moved by the devil, thought they could stop God's plans only to find that when they crucified that Man, they accomplished the very plan of God (Acts 4:27-28). Consider the birth of Jesus as well: God is constantly at work through the obedient (like Mary and Joseph) as well as the disobedient (like Caesar Augustus) to accomplish His perfect plan (Christ's birth in Bethlehem as prophesied).

**Prepared for a Revelation of the Glory of God** – Isaiah was preaching and John was fulfilling this same message of preparation for something – the revelation of the glory of God. The creation declares the glory of God (Psalm 19), and the mighty acts of God declare His glory (i.e. the flood, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the Shekinah cloud around the tabernacle). But ultimately the revelation of the glory of God was Jesus (John 1:14). Jesus was His name because He would save His people from their sins, and Isaiah 40:5 tells us that the glory of Jesus was that “*all flesh*” would see this glory/salvation. This is the revelation of the glory of God: the salvation of the world (Num 14:21, Psalm 86:9f, Hab 2:14). Glory is salvation. Saving the world is the glory God.

**Prepare The Way** (vv3-4) – In the first verse, we are commanded to do something. In the second verse, it is promised that it will be done. In the work of human history, we see this is exactly what happens. God has commanded that His people do a certain thing (repent, go and tell, be salt and light, etc), and we see that God is constantly at work through the obedient and disobedient, accomplishing His perfect plan.

**God's Hand of Preparation and Providence** – Nothing thwarts the plans of God. He declared a way to be prepared and it was. When it was time to move the great Sennacherib, God did just that (Isaiah 37:26-29, 33-37). When it was time, Alexander the Great established the Greek Empire (Dan 8:5-7, 20-21). How was this God's preparation? By his conquests, the knowledge of the Greek language became widespread and, soon after that, the Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek. When God was finished with Alexander, he was laid aside. Centuries later, in the days that the Son of God was born of Mary, the Roman Empire was at perhaps its greatest height. Incredibly diverse provinces had become connected to Rome and the opportunity for the widespread promulgation of the Gospel became available (Gal 4:4). In addition, Caesar Augustus saw to it that the prophecy of the very birthplace of Christ was fulfilled (Luke 2:1ff).

**The Preparation of Repentance** – As John the Baptist comes, the work of preparation continues. His was a message and a baptism of repentance. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, even now upon the earth. God had prepared a way, and the Israel of God had better be prepared.

**Every Valley Shall Be Exalted** (v4) – The coming of the kingdom of heaven looks like this: there is not a single sinner turned away who comes to the Lord in repentance and faith. There is not a valley too low. The sinful woman (Luke 7:37ff) and the thief on the cross knew this (Luke 23:42ff). The Samaritan woman was lifted up as well (John 4). Before, when something clean came into contact with something unclean, that which was clean was ruined. In Jesus Christ, the opposite was taking place.

**Every Mountain Brought Low** – At the same time, the kingdom of heaven came and poured out contempt on all human glory and conceit. Those who thought they could justify themselves were condemned (Luke 16:15).

**The Crooked and the Rough Places** – Isaiah and John were not referring to a physical road, but rather to the thoughts and intentions of men’s hearts. The message of God taking on the nature and flesh of a man, that flesh then being nailed to a cross in allegiance to other gods and kings, that message of sins forgiven through this work, is nonsense to those perishing (1 Cor 1:18-19). But it is those very ones to whom the message is coming. These crooked paths shall be made straight.

**The Glory of the Lord** (v5) – The glory of the Lord prophesied here, and proclaimed again by John, was beheld in the Lord Jesus Christ, by angels and shepherds at His birth, and by the apostles and disciples in His life, death, burial and resurrection (John 1:14). Glory was not in heaven alone. It came to the earth, and though Christ has risen to heaven, we now reflect that glory, though imperfectly, as His body by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18).

**All Flesh Shall See It Together** – Jew and Gentile both saw the glory of the Lord. The Christian church brought down that dividing wall, and the gospel goes to the ends of the earth. But it is not due to ourselves, our fancy tactics and plans. It is not in our excellence of speech or of wisdom, but in the power of God (1 Cor 2:1-5), for “the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

**Another Christmas, Another Advent** – And every year, just as every day, we are called to prepare the way of the Lord.

**Valleys** – This is a word of hope and grace. Our sins are forgiven in the Lord Jesus Christ. *Without Him* we are lost in a wilderness barren of any fruit worthy of the Lord. *In Him*, we are cleansed, freed, reborn, renewed, ingrafted, and Spirit-filled to bear the fruit of the Lord. God descended from above, became man, and hung out with the lowliest (Mark 2:15-16, Luke 7:34, 8:2). All sinners are welcome.

**Mountains** – This is the word of truth. Self-justifiers will be brought down low; they will be granted the gift of repentance (Acts 11:18). Kings will bow down to the Lord (Isaiah 49:7, Phil 2:10). This is as good a time as any to repent now of any “Phariseeism,” your good deeds are like dirty rags before this King. Upstanding members of the church are the most susceptible to this temptation. But if God grants this gift to you, the fruit of such repentance will show forth in homes, in marriages, in relationships with children, parents, employers and such. What a glorious Christmas gift to give.

**The Mouth of the Lord** – God has not become silent, nor has Christ abandoned the planet. His Spirit has been poured out and that Holy Spirit is among His people, preaching this gospel to the world. He is just as involved providentially in the rising and falling of kings and kingdoms – and all to accomplish this end: the revealing of His glory which is the salvation of the world. And so, in another sense, we, the church, are the messengers Isaiah foretold. “Prepare ye the way of the LORD,” and, “Merry Christmas, a King is Coming!”