

May the words of my mouth and the mediations of my heart be acceptable to you oh God, my strength and my joy... Amen

One of my favorite Christmas movies, is Elf. If you are not familiar with it, it is a family style Christmas comedy, starring Will Ferrell, Zooey Deschanel, and other wonderful actors.

The story follows Will Ferrell's character, Buddy who was raised in the North Pole by elves.

And throughout the movie we discover something unique about Santa's Sleigh, a Sleigh, that was originally designed to fly only from the power of Christmas Spirit...

However, over time, Christmas Spirit started to decline, so much so that the sleigh could no longer fly...

So, Santa came up with a solution, a turbine, which would help give the sleigh an extra boost when there was not enough Christmas Spirit to power it.

Which unfortunately for Santa, was turning out to be quite consistent.

But then, there is a beautiful scene where a boy sees the sleigh and Santa. The sleigh immediately lifts up off the ground and then comes crashing back down...

The boy asks Santa, "What happened?"

Santa replies, "You made my sleigh fly... Before the turbine days... this baby used to run solely on Christmas spirit. You believed in me. You made my sleigh fly."

To which he responds, "Hold it, if you're really Santa Claus, then we can get some news cameras in here... everyone will believe in you, then your sleigh will fly."

And Santa says, "Christmas spirit is about believing, not seeing. The whole world saw me, all would be lost.<sup>1</sup>"

**In this scene the magic of Christmas is revealed, showing how important it is to believe, because through believing we can bring about a different kind of reality.**

Now some of you may be wondering, why I am talking about Christmas on the first week of Advent...

After all, isn't advent about waiting, watching and preparing for the birth of Christ?

And if that is what you are thinking, you are definitely... correct...

However, we live in a society, that after Halloween, the Christmas décor is out and about available for consumption...

And now that Thanksgiving is over, all bets are off...

Let the Christmas music play, bring on the Christmas movies, the holiday parties, the baking of cookies, getting your tree, and all things Christmas.

So, why not then, as we embrace this season of Advent, acknowledge our culture, and the traditions that you have this time of year.

After all most of your days are spent living in a world where Christmas is being embraced.

And it just so happens, that what Isaiah has to say, actually ties in quite well with this time of year.

As the words from Isaiah relate to many of our yearnings, longings, and desires that are revealed through countless Christmas movies.

That being, the desire to find peace, hope, joy, love and miracles.

And these words from Isaiah are indeed filled with all of those yearnings.

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<sup>1</sup> Elf, 2003 film.

As Isaiah paints us a picture. A picture where life is radically different than anything we are used to.

A world where streams flow up into the mountains...

Where swords are transformed into plowshares... And where spears are transformed for pruning... Transforming tools used for war, into tools that can feed people and steward the earth...

A world where people and all of creation start acting completely different than they have in all of our history.

A world that brings about the peace of God... A place where all people, regardless of background come together as one.

Now that is a beautiful vision... But it is also, a vision that can seem a little too miraculous, and it can be hard to wrap our heads around it...

Especially when we live in a world with horrific shootings, violence, war, hatred, and division.

But... Isn't that the point of Christmas, to hope for something that is truly a miracle... that being, the birth of Christ...

So, while we wait for this miracle, I encourage you to wait with purpose.

And to start living as if the words from Isaiah are true.

Just think what we could create together...

Together with God... As God is always working towards the fulfilment of promises, which are revealed through God's Word.

And we are shown this right out of Genesis... Where God said, let there be light, and there was light...

Right from the get-go in the Bible we are shown the sheer power and transformative action that can be brought about through God's word.

And this time of year, is all about transformative action and hope...

As this is the time of year when we see humanity coming together for the goodwill for all...

This is the time of year when people come together to donate time and money. When people give gifts, food, and love.

This is the time of the year that we find the joy of Christmas all around us, where we watch movies filled with hope and Christmas miracles...

A time when anything seems possible...

So maybe Isaiah is asking you, to truly live into that hope.... That anything is possible.

Because with Christ all things are possible, in Christ we find the hope of the resurrection and of everlasting life...

And today, after all, is all about hope. Hope that burns in the flickering light of our first advent candle.

Hope that brings about faith.

Because when we believe in the Word of God... We can be transformed by the Word of God.

Showing us that we can live into the world Isaiah saw...

And just as Buddy the Elf said throughout the movie Elf, "the best way to spread Christmas cheer is to sing it loud for all to hear."

And if that is all it takes to spread Christmas cheer, just imagine what you can spread when you sing the song of God's heart,

when you live as though the words of Isaiah are true.

Believing you can truly bring about a different kind of reality.

A reality that lives into the Word of God. A reality that ushers in peace, unity, hope, and radical love...

So, this week, allow the words from Isaiah to live in you.

Allow God's Word to transform your reality while you wait this advent.

Because waiting is not always passive. And the season of advent calls us to be active while we wait... To wait with purpose...Amen