

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Dec 5th 2015

As I read Isaiah's first reading I cannot help but picture in my mind what the people of Jerusalem must have felt about his writings. What would it feel like to hear that someone was coming that would give you all your basic needs – comfort, food, water, and direction with life's decisions? Talk about the ultimate gift. I wonder what that anticipation was like? They must have asked questions like, "When will this person come? Who is he/she? How will I know? What will life be like after I receive these gifts?" For me, this sums up the season of Advent – the butterflies in the stomach feeling that something really awesome is about to happen.

I especially like the words that Isaiah uses because they represent our humanity in a way that transcends time so we can appreciate them, too. Isaiah uses our senses such as tasting, seeing, and hearing. I especially love the section that reads, "While from behind, a voice shall sound in your ears: 'This is the way; walk in it.' When you would turn to the right or to the left."

How do we hear that voice today – especially within the bounds of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season? Aside from the people who actually saw and listened to Jesus, how did the people of Jerusalem hear that voice? I suspect they did so in the same way we do today – by hearing the feeling – and trusting the feeling is God's communication with us. Was this any easier 2000 years ago? Likely not.

Hearing God through my feelings is one way that I believe God communicates with me. These feelings guide me in a way that Isaiah describes, "when you would turn to the right or to the left." The challenge is being mindful to actually hear what I feel. The anticipatory feelings during the Advent season always seem to be especially strong and I think this is God's way of saying, "something really awesome is about to happen!"

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