

What do we expect? (Isaiah 64:1-9)

During Advent, the cry of Isaiah should be our cry.

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When we go to church, do we expect anything? Do we expect God to show up in our staid worship services? Do we expect God to show up at church on Christmas Eve?

The writer of Isaiah longed for God to come crashing down, interrupting our world and making us pay attention. This writer wanted mountains to quake and nations to tremble because of the coming of the Lord.

The text was written around the time the first people came back to Jerusalem after years in exile. You can imagine that many of those returning were the children of those who left their homeland decades before. They probably grew up hearing stories of Judah and how wonderful it would be to restore the capital city to its former glory. The children traveled to this place, hoping that what their parents said would be true.

When they arrived, their hearts sank. Jerusalem was destroyed, and it would be a long time before it was restored—if it happened at all.

It's at this point, when the people feel miles away from God, that the writer of this passage asks to meet God—not for proof of God's existence, but because life is a mess and they need God, they desire God.

Advent is a time of expectation, of waiting for the coming of Jesus. We live in a time of uncertainty, where we are not sure of...well, anything. We want God to cut through the haze and make God's self known.

During Advent, the cry of Isaiah should be our cry: God, come and shape us, shape our community. Like Jerusalem, our world is a mess. Things are not well. We wait for God to come and shake things up and change us for the better. We hope for the one who makes mountains quake and nations shake in fear—that this God will come and form us as disciples and bearers of good news.