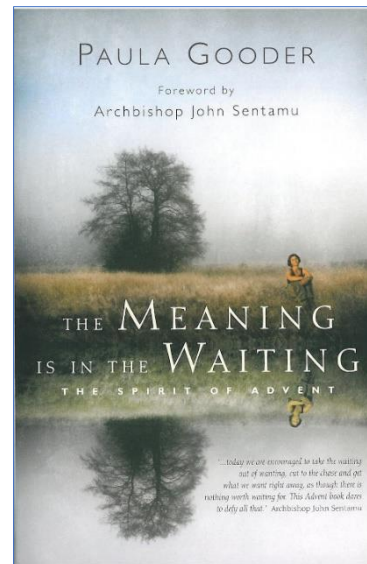


Advent 2023

# THE MEANING IS IN THE WAITING

2

## The Prophets – Waiting for the Day of the Lord



- The second Advent candle is associated with the prophets, those who spoke of 'one who is to come'. What future are we waiting for during Advent?

### Read Isaiah 11:6-9

- What is remarkable about the picture depicted in this passage? Does it remind you of any other Bible passages?
- What is the purpose of pictures of the 'end times', the new creation, such as this?
- How do you think 'the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord...'??
- What signs of the world as God wants it to be can we see around us now?

### Read Isaiah 40:1-11

- What messages does God want his people to hear in these verses?
- How is the message to be passed on? (v 9)
- How can prophecies from the eighth century BC, and applied in the first century, be relevant again in the twenty-first century?
- Discuss the quotation from page 62 of the book. In what practical ways can we do these things during Advent?
- You may like to end by revisiting the RS Thomas poem we looked at last week.

Chapters 1-39 of Isaiah contain mainly warnings of God's judgement coming to his rebellious people, which came via the Assyrians and Babylonians. But from chapter 40 of Isaiah onwards, Isaiah's message is more comfort than catastrophe. It looks beyond the exile to a time when God's people will be released from captivity in Babylon and sent home. God issues comfort to his people and prepares them, not only for their return, but for God's return too.

*'Advent invites us to inhabit a swirl of time that stretches forwards and backwards but by doing so anchors us in the present. It is by living in this collapsing, swirling time that God reminds us of what is important about our lives now. ... In our waiting we are called to pray for the coming of God's kingdom, to announce Jesus' presence in our midst and to seek to bring about more and more moments of end times' peace in our world now.'* (p 62)

Prompt me, God;  
But not yet. When I speak,  
Though it be you who speak  
Through me, something is lost.  
The meaning is in the waiting.