


Let's Worship God

4th - 9th March 2024

Isaiah



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Monday - Isaiah 29:1-4 - Hypocrites and the Faithful

These verses are talking about the destruction of those who claimed to be the people of God and who were resting in outward performance, but who were themselves hypocrites, who were idolaters, who were fake. But there's something as well there to which we must pay attention. For not all those who professed then, or profess now, to be the people of God are fake, are hypocrites. For in Isaiah's time there was a remnant, the true Israel of God. Those circumcised not only in body, but in heart. Even today, God preserves his people. He continues to do that as well. And for His people, who are truly His, there are promises in this chapter as well.

The first thing you must see is hypocritical Jerusalem laid low. Even though the city here is called Ariel, it is another name for Jerusalem. Ariel means lion of God, but it also means a burning altar. Jerusalem is in Judah, which is the tribe described as like a lion. Verse 1 tells us that this is the city where David dwelt, which was Jerusalem, which was also the home of the Temple and altars burning with sacrifices.

Now, we read that at this city as year by year goes by, and they go through the cycle of the religious feasts and ceremonies, it is as though they are just going through the motions. Their religion is a formality, for there is much idolatry going on, and there is no heart for true religion in most of the people. Therefore, God brings it under siege.

I would have you see several things in verses 3 and 4. First, it is God Himself who brings it under siege. Now, we're not talking about a literal siege here. It's looking forward to the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Romans. God fills the place with sadness and grief. Further, as we read here in verse 4, Jerusalem is laid low. Yet not utterly destroyed. Jerusalem at this point is a picture of the people of God.

Questions

1. What is Ariel another name for?
2. What kind of religion did the people have?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would not be merely going through the motions in your faith.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

Praise: Psalm 134 - See www.rppglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Tuesday - Isaiah 29:5-8 - A Bad Dream

Jerusalem is laid very low indeed, but not destroyed. For God raises his hand to work, and that which remains is delivered. We see this in verses 5-8. Jerusalem's enemies are destroyed. With the hypocrites removed, Jehovah rescues his remnant. At the very point of seeming complete triumph, the enemies of God are swept away and crushed.

When the Assyrians laid siege to Jerusalem and blasphemously assailed Jehovah, they were nearly all destroyed the next morning. Later on Babylon wrecked the Temple, destroyed the city, and carried off the people. But God destroyed Babylon in the proper time by the Persians, and God's people were restored to the land. Even when the Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70, God was building His people. Those who seek to assail God's people may triumph in a large way. But at the right time, God rescues.

This destruction of the wicked demonstrates that ultimately God is at work with power. We have a picture here of people dreaming. Those are the dreamers here who dream that they are carrying all before them. That they can shake the fist at God, that they can make up their own rules, and go their own way, and do what they will. But they're about to wake up, says God. He has this way of waking them. And for the godly, well, the wicked in their plots end up like a bad dream. Children, have you had a bad dream? Did it ever really harm you? No, it can't because it's just a dream. And that is the way the wicked are to us. They are scary. Just like a bad dream is scary. But God is basically saying, just like they'll wake up from their wonderful dream to find that everything is horrible, we shall wake up from our bad dream, in a manner of speaking, and everything shall be safe. We can be absolutely sure that there will be times that are very scary. We can be absolutely sure that there will be unfaithful ones and hypocrites. But all along, we can be absolutely sure that what seems scary shall end, and our deliverance shall come.

Questions

1. What will happen when the wicked wake up from their dream?
2. What can we be sure of as believers?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that what is scary will end.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

Praise: Psalm 135 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Wednesday - Isaiah 29:9-14 - Hypocrisy Laid Bare

In verses 9-12, the professing people of God have blinded themselves to spiritual reality, and they've become as if they are drunk. They go on unsteady in their beliefs, unsteady in their holding to Jehovah, unsteady in their conduct. They staggered over here with Hezekiah making an outward profession. They covenanted and everything. As soon as Hezekiah's out of the way, off they go with Manasseh into witchcraft. Then after a couple of generations God brings along a Josiah, and they lurch back over to an outward sort of godliness, but as soon as Josiah is killed in battle, off they go with his sons back into wickedness. Through the Babylonian captivity they lurch back again to God, to Ezra and Nehemiah, and there is an outward conformity of all of Israel. But when the Son of God comes in the flesh, they don't follow him.

God hardens them and blinds them further. He says here that even those who should be able to see, such as the prophets, are covered over with a thick blanket. And that's what happened. Prophecy ceased entirely for 400 years after Malachi. No word of prophecy happened again until John was raised up at the coming of Messiah.

The ungodly, no matter what their profession, cannot understand spiritual truth. It's like a sealed book to them. (Romans 8:5-8; 1 Corinthians 2:14) Since they cannot comprehend true spirituality, even though they profess to hold to it, they turn to falsehood. (Romans 1:18) In verses 13 and 14, God exposes this, lays bare the false and manmade religion of these hypocrites. They can't understand Scripture, you see, but they know deep down, because of creation around them and because of the remnants of the marred image of God within them, that they have some obligation to God. They must do something. The problem is this: They don't know Him whom they are supposed to worship. Because they don't know Him, they don't know how to worship Him. And they go along with things taught by men, not by God. That is never the proper basis for worship. We must worship God as He tells us to do so in His Word. These people called upon Jehovah. His name was on their lips. But they were easily led astray from proper worship since their hearts weren't with Him. In fact, their worship, even when it was outwardly okay, was fake because it wasn't from the heart.

Questions

1. How were the people acting spiritually drunk?
2. What was wrong with their worship?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that our worship would be pleasing to God.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

Praise: Psalm 136- See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Thursday - Isaiah 29:15-16 - God's People Are Foolish

The worst fools of all we see here in verses 15 and 16. Outwardly they were just as godly, just as pious, just as religious as anybody out there. They were the leaders of the people. Everyone looked up to them. But in the dark, in secret, they are scheming and plotting. They're the most foolish of all who seek to establish their own power against King Jesus. Such fools walked upon the earth in Isaiah's time, and they have in all time since. They continue today! They're fools who seek to defy Christ, who seek to destroy His people. These people are like a clay pot that's sitting there newly turned upon a potter's wheel. And let's pretend we can give it a mind. Let's pretend we can give it a mouth. Let's pretend we can give it a life. And the pot suddenly speaks up and says, see that guy there? He didn't make me. If a pot could say that, how stupid would that be? 'He didn't make me. I just kind of happened.' What a fool. Or if the pot should say, that potter made me this way, and he's got no idea what in the world he's doing. And we'd look at it and say, you don't get it, pot. The potter made you, and he made you for his purposes, not your own. His purposes are far higher and glorious than anything you might think of, because you're just a pot. Now, if that would be foolish, a pot talking back to a potter that way, how much more foolish to think of a creature saying that to the Creator. But that's what the fools of Israel in Isaiah's day were doing. That's what the fools within the professing church are doing even today. They plot and scheme, and the wicked outside plot and scheme against God and against Messiah. But God sits in the heaven and laughs. (Psalm 2)

You people of God, you the remnant, though the fools lurch on in their drunkenness, though the hypocrites try to devise their own ways of worshipping God, getting rid of the Bible, and though they scheme, and they plot, you are safe, you are preserved, and God shall bring you forth in Christ's victory. Hypocrisy will be laid bare, but you will be covered, even as Adam and Eve were long ago, by the blood -- not of an animal, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, who has died in the place of sinners and has been raised victorious to save sinners.

Questions

1. Why were these people so foolish?
2. What will happen to the remnant?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that Christ keeps His people safe.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

Praise: Psalm 137 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Friday - Isaiah 29:17-19 - The Faithful Exalted

Lebanon in verse 17 is not talking about the country. It is talking about a mountain range to the north of Israel in modern day Lebanon and Syria. Back then it was heavily forested with great oaks and its famous cedar trees. The Israelites normally thought of forested areas as being areas where no food could grow. What God is saying through Isaiah is that which is nearly barren, as far as providing food for man, is turned into rich grain fields. And that which had been the granary of God is turned to dark and forbidding forest. And what's this got to do with anything? Well, here is a picture of Israel being made useless by its own wickedness, and the nations becoming the place of rich reward.

To Israel had long been preached the gospel. They had been able to see the gospel by the symbols of the Temple, and the sacrifices, and the priests, their holy days, their holy times, and their holy procedures. All this was demonstrated to them. But they not only got to see, they got to hear, because God gave His Word to them through the patriarchs of old, through Moses, through the prophets, who explained the meaning of the symbols. They had opportunity to hear, they had opportunity to see. But they'd made themselves deaf and blind. (Isaiah 6:9-13).

But there will yet remain the true Israel of God, the remnant. And we go on to see that in verse 18 the deaf shall hear the words of the book. The eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The humble also in verse 19 shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the holy one of Israel. Though Israel had heard and rejected, others would, by the grace of God, see the Messiah of God. They would hear the joyful sound, as we sometimes sing from Psalm 89. And they would believe. And we first see this happening in the book of Acts as the gospel goes forth, not only in Jerusalem, not only in all the rest of Judea, it goes to Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. Will you remain blind? Will you remain deaf? Will you shut your eyes? Or will you hear the good news that God has come to save sinners?

Questions

1. How did Israel respond to the Gospel?
2. What does the book of Acts tell us about the spread of the Gospel?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that the Gospel would go out to all nations.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

Praise: Psalm 138 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Saturday - Isaiah 29:20-24 - The True Israel

When God speaks of the deliverance of His people, not only does He speak of what He's delivering them to, but what He is saving them from. That's what verses 20 and 21 are about. For the wicked here are overturned as well. What are these wicked people like? They are oppressive toward the weak and the vulnerable, toward the poor and the widows, the orphans, the refugees from other nations. They are also characterized as scorners. They make fun of that which is good, and right, and true, and beautiful. And particularly, they make fun of God's Word. They make fun of His threats of judgment. They would look for any way they could spin something, any way they could misconstrue something, in order to take things away from the godly. When we think of the time of our Lord Jesus Christ, these are exactly the things that the Jewish leaders did with the Lord. But it led to their complete and utter desolation. Friends, all this is a great promise from God. The wicked have been destroyed, and they shall continue to be more and more. For King Jesus reigns. He's bringing all things under His feet.

Most of Israel was Israel after the flesh. They were circumcised in body but not in heart. So Isaiah might have been worried or concerned. But God steps in here beginning at verse 22 and through verse 24 to say, don't fret, don't worry. As we see in most of the book of Acts, and as Paul says in Romans 11, blindness has come upon a large part of Israel. But Jacob shall not be ashamed, for as we see here in verses 22 through 24, God will provide the true children of Israel. Who are these children of Israel? Paul tells us in Galatians 3:7-9 that it is those who share Abraham's faith. Paul says in Galatians 3:29, if you are Christ's (and he is talking to people here who are of a Gentile background), then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Does this describe you? If that is the case, then happy are you now and forever! For you are in the true Israel of God. You are grafted into that glorious olive tree of Romans 11. You, by God's grace, have the same faith as Abraham himself. And you have the exact same promise to you, that the just shall live by faith. All the promises in the Scripture, in Christ, are yours. Does this not describe you? Are you weighed down by your sin? Do you fear that your sin shall sink you deeply into hell? Jesus calls you to come to Him, to believe on Him, to become part of His people.

Question

1. Who are the true people of God?
2. What promises are yours if you believe in Christ?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

Praise: Psalm 139 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced
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