

Let's Worship God

22nd-27th April 2024

Isaiah



Isaiah

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Monday - Isaiah 35:1-4 - The Living Desert

In chapter 34 we saw the destruction and judgment upon the nations. Now we see the deliverance that this brings about. We had seen how these countries, whether Assyria, Babylon, Rome, or the general unbelieving system in this world, seem to flourish and thrive. They look so powerful and bold. But we see the destruction visited upon them, and their area laid waste. But sadly hasn't the wasteland been in the heart of every unbeliever? Is it not a wasteland there? Before you were saved was it not so in your own heart? Your own life was barren. Your own life brought forth nothing.

Chapter 35 is a picture. What is this desert? Some godly men have thought that it refers to the Jews. They'd been laid waste by the Assyrians, destroyed in many ways by the Babylonians, but after that, things got better by God's grace. Some have thought that this is looking to the end of all things when Jesus comes back again. And as I've already mentioned, this could even speak to the dead heart, the barren life, brought to God. Any or all of these could fit in with this. But most likely, God is having us look forward to the gospel going forth into the world after Christ's coming.

And what happens? What does God do with this wilderness? What does God do with this desert? He turns barrenness to greenness. Things weren't merely just settling back like plants in our garden that get some rain. No, it was dead. And what fruit, what beauty, can the dead desert bring forth? There is none. And that has been our life, and that has been the cultures of the world. But God in grace is transforming the nations. God in grace, in our day, has been sending forth His Word. His Spirit moves. Instead of heaviness and weariness, there are joy and gladness. As far as the eye can see, there is the beautiful blossom. Instead of death and sterility, there is fragrant and lovely life and growth. Instead of dreariness and drabness, there is glory and splendor reflected from the glorious and gracious God through His son Jesus Christ. This is what is happening in this world. This is what must fill the world, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.

Questions

1. What is the desert a picture of?
2. What does God do with the wilderness?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that our nation would repent.
2. Use prayer points from In The Pew and pray for Stephen, Brenda, Zoe, Eloise, and Knox McCollum.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

Praise: Psalm 26 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Tuesday - Isaiah 35:1-4 - Strengthen the Weak Hands

Friends, do not be tempted to think that because in your place and your time, things are not going as happily or as well as you would like to see them, that somehow this is the normal way for the people of God or for their king, the Lord Jesus Christ. And do not think that this is the way it is all over the world, even in our day and time. For by His grace in South America, in Africa, in Asia, the gospel is winning. And where once there was death, there's now joy and life.

If any of you do not know Jesus Christ, the heaviness and weariness, the barren brownness, the death, the dreariness, well, it may not have impressed you yet, but it will get there. Turn to Jesus Christ, for there you shall find these things, the joy and gladness, the beauty and the blossoming which bring forth fruit. There is life and growth, glory and splendor, and it's only to be found in Jesus Christ. How does this come to be? It is the outpouring, the shedding forth of God's Holy Spirit. Jehovah comes and saves. That's what brings about this transformation.

God exhorts His people to take hold of this vision, to take hold of this picture, to be assured, reassured, encouraged by it, and then to do something practical. Because of their discouragement, they wouldn't do anything but let their hands hang slackly. But God says, 'I have promised I will transform things. So strengthen those hands as My Spirit comes to make you strong, get to work, and strengthen those knees. Get to work for my kingdom, get to work for my goals, get to work for my glory.' The earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea. God says so through Isaiah. And so there's much hope for us. And all around us are people who are still in darkness and in death. But God brings life to people like that. We can continue working with confidence. We have no need to be discouraged as a congregation. We have no need to be disheartened and to be sitting around as the church of Jesus Christ. In our land and culture today, God delights to turn death into life. God is glorified by taking dead societies and bringing forth blooms in the desert. We have this promise before us. Let us labour prayerfully. Let us encourage one another. And let us trust in the promise that the desert shall live.

Questions

1. What promises do we have in these verses?
2. What is God calling the church to do?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God can transform dead hearts and lives.
2. Use prayer points from In The Pew and pray for Morag McPheat.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

Praise: Psalm 27 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Wednesday - Isaiah 35:5-6 - Redemption: Healing

Should we look from Isaiah forward to the days of the gospel? We read here of the eyes of the blind opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame leaping like a deer, the tongue of the dumb singing. Think, for example, of John 9, with Jesus healing the man born blind. Think of Mark 7:31-37, with the man who is both deaf and mute being healed as Jesus put his fingers in his ears and said, 'be opened.' Think of His healing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda in John 5. And in fact, we remember that Jesus did far greater than this, for he raised some from the dead. This prophecy speaks of the time of the coming of Jesus Christ.

How we need such healing. We have problems, not just physical ones. We have some hearing problems, every one of us. We have some vision problems. Have you not used your eyes to gaze upon that which is desirable to you in a lustful or covetous way, making it an idol? And what about your ears? Have they not listened to the words of others telling you that something wrong is right? And your mouths, have they not uttered blasphemy at times? I spoke of Jesus raising others from the dead, and truly, spiritually, have you not been dead? We need this sort of healing.

You see, physical healing was done by Jesus, but physical healing alone was never Jesus' aim. Physical healing will only do you any good for a while, even when done by Jesus Christ Himself. Physical healing alone will do nothing for eternal purposes. However, God in grace saves sinners. He delivers them from their spiritual death and all the effects of it. And He has told people to come to Him. Our Lord Jesus Himself has said to those who are weak, who are weary, who are burdened and crushed, 'come to me.' For, those who find true deliverance in Jesus, find that their eyes are now bright indeed. They hear the joyful sound (Psalm 89). They walk and run with the gospel of peace (Romans 10:14-15). And their mouths utter praise to their deliverer. And though they die, yet shall they live (1 Corinthians 2:6-9). This is ultimately the healing and the deliverance that is being looked to here.

Questions

1. What does this prophecy point to?
2. What kind of healing do we need?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for the spiritual healing we have in Christ.
2. Use prayer points from In The Pew and pray for Cathie Miller.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

Praise: Psalm 28 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Thursday - Isaiah 35:6-7 - Redemption: Quenching

When we talk about quenching something, we usually talk about quenching a thirst. We talk about quenching a fire. How do we do that? We get buckets of water, and we pour them on. By the time we are done, it is quenched, it is drowned, it is out, and the fire cannot burn anymore.

What we have here is a picture of humanity and how it is affected by sin. We read here in the second half of verse 6 about wilderness and desert. We see ground that is parched. We see land that is thirsty. We see a place where only jackals, a kind of wild dog, lives. It's just empty. That is the way the sinful life is. This is the way a sinful society is. A sinful society, a sinful culture, a nation, a people characterized by the rejection of God, the rejection of Jesus Christ, may think that it is liberated, may think that it is enlightened, may think that it has developed wonderful patterns of living. But it is dead.

Imagine some guy who's out in the desert. He's run out of water, and he's parched, and thirsty, and dying. Imagine as he perhaps sees a mirage in the distance, and crawls slowly and painfully toward it, only to have it disappear before him. What he thought would give him life, what he thought would give him relief, was merely a cruel and hope-destroying mirage. There he is with the sun beating down upon him, just as the burning sun of the wrath of God bears down and brightly illuminates sins. That is how we all are, as individuals, as families, as nations, apart from God. We deserve to be left out there. There is no one who is righteous. No, not one. However, God, in the councils of eternity, has decided to redeem men. Jesus Christ is the one who in this dead, dry, dusty world gives the living water, the water of life (John 4:10; 7:38).

As the Spirit of God continues to work in your life, you see that which was dead and brown turn to green growth. Sin and guilt are giving way to holiness. Your folly is turning to wisdom, your failure to victory, and your shame to glory. And you see this in other saints as well. In all the Church of Jesus Christ. And truly, as the gospel goes forth into peoples, cultures, nations, they are transformed too.

Questions

1. What are these verses a picture of?
2. For those trusting in Christ, how does the Holy Spirit work in their life?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit would work more and more in your life.
2. Use prayer points from In The Pew and pray for Catherine Munro.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

Praise: Psalm 29 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Friday - Isaiah 35:8-10 - The Great Highway

In these last three verses of chapter 35, we have a picture of a great highway. It's looking ahead to a time when God's people are redeemed. The people of God, redeemed by Him, shall come to their true journey's end. They shall be able to go to their true home, to their Father's house.

This is all looking, of course, at things in the context of the coming Assyrian invasion. The Assyrians, by the power of God, would be driven off from the very gates of Jerusalem. And in a miraculous way, God would in several generations bring down an even mightier enemy, the Babylonians. God would destroy them and would return the people to their home. And that coming home was a joyous time in many ways. But this is also looking forward to the true and heavenly Zion of God. The highway that we're looking at leads there.

The wonderful thing about this highway is who travels it and who doesn't. We read here that the unclean shall not pass over. They may pass alongside. Have you ever been traveling down a highway, and you see somebody next to you on a side road, and they look like they are rather going the same way. But eventually that road turns off somewhere, and they're not on the road with you. So it is here, the unclean shall not pass over. Those who are made clean, those who have had the sickness of sin healed, those who have had the dry death of their iniquity quenched by the water of the Spirit, these different ones are the ones who will travel upon it.

We read here that whoever walks the road, although a fool, should not go astray. When you and I read that, what comfort there is, for what fools we are sometimes, either from our own misguided judgment or our ignorance. And the picture here is of someone who's veering a little bit down the highway. But there are built in guardrails, and we may get our scrapes, and we may get a little bit of damage, but we're kept in it. We go on the way.

We read here that no lion should be there, nor any ravenous beast go upon it. What lion might we be talking about? Peter calls Satan a roaring lion, who goes about to devour. If we're truly traveling upon this road, he cannot get to us.

Questions

1. What are some characteristics of this highway?
2. Where does this highway lead?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God preserves us and keeps us on the right path.
2. Use prayer points from In The Pew and pray for Bill & May Pettigrew.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

Praise: Psalm 30 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Saturday - Isaiah 35:8-10 - The Way of Holiness

This highway is the highway of holiness. We are justified, that is, declared to be innocent before God's law, because of what Christ did for us at the cross. We take hold of Christ and we take hold of his obeying the law in our place, by faith and by faith alone. But the Scripture says that we are dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). We need to be brought to life. And that is what God does for us. God makes us alive. He makes us to be born again. He makes us to be regenerated. This regeneration, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, gives us a new and living heart that has saving faith in Jesus, that has love toward God. And instead of a love for sin, it has a love for holiness and a desire for more and more of it. We do not travel this highway in order to be justified. But we do travel this highway because we have been justified and regenerated. Those who are not holy, the one who is not striving after holiness, the one who is not going down this road, never had the new heart.

This is a highway, not a path or a trail. The entrance to it, in a way, is tight and narrow, for it is only through Jesus Christ. But once you're on it, you cannot fail to see it. The king guides us on it. For after all, it is a highway made for the king. It is made for His reasons. It is made for His glory, and it is made for His people.

How do you get on it? There aren't many different entrances and exits. There is one entrance. Its beginning and its foundation are in Christ. By coming to Christ, we come to the highway. And how does one come to Christ? You can go to Him in prayer, and cry out to Him for forgiveness and deliverance. And all this He will give you, and you will begin traveling upon this highway.

We can think about what heaven will be like, but friends, we cannot fully comprehend how good it will be (1 Corinthians 2:9). You cannot begin to imagine the wonder, the splendor, the delight of living with your Father, of living with your Saviour forever and ever. All your desires after godliness shall come to pass. And all your tears and your frustration, your vexation over remaining sin, shall all be gone. You shall see Him, and everlastingly and perfectly commune with Him, who loved you and gave Himself for you, who is Himself the way.

Questions

1. What will a believer in Christ desire?
2. What do we have to look forward to in heaven?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from In The Pew and pray for Billy Redmond.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

Praise: Psalm 31 - 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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