

Let's Worship God

15th-20th July 2024

Isaiah



Isaiah

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Monday - Isaiah 40:1-4 - A Second Introduction

We are going back to Isaiah to look at the second half of this book again using taken from the sermon series preached by Rev. Phil Pockras. Much of the emphasis in the first 39 chapters had been leading up to the coming assault of Assyria. Now, in the second half of the book, God leads Isaiah to dwell on things far ahead for him. He is in many ways looking to our day, a day when Jesus Christ has come. Jesus is evident throughout all the book, but he's even more clear in chapters 40 through 66. There are several themes to look for through these chapters. Two Israels are spoken of, two ages are looked at, as well as one great servant of Jehovah.

There is the Israel after the flesh and the true Israel of God; that Israel which is circumcised in the flesh, and that Israel which is circumcised in heart (Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6); that which professes to be the people of God but is apostate, and the remnant. The false Israel in Isaiah's time and in our day, adds to God's Word. In Isaiah's day, they added on to the prescribed worship of Jehovah as laid down in His Word. There are professing Christians today who think that doing merely outward things will somehow make them right with God. This is being an Israel after the flesh. In contrast, the second Israel is the true Israel of all ages, the true Israel of God. They are those who are the true spiritual seed of Abraham, circumcised not merely in the flesh, but circumcised in the heart by the grace of God. Outward conformity to rights and rules, outward conformity to religion never was sufficient in all ages of the people of God. They've always needed to look to the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are two ages Isaiah speaks of. The first was the one in which Isaiah and all others were living in at this time. In fact, it continued until the coming of Jesus Christ. It was a time, in many ways, of bondage. It was a time of immaturity. It was a time of burdensome types and shadows. The second age that Isaiah sees here is when Christ has come. In Isaiah's day, what they knew was this One was coming, who will be sent by God, and He will deliver us from all our sin by His sacrifice of Himself somehow or another. And the peoples of the earth shall be gathered into the people of God. Through all ages, this one true people of God comes to pass because of the person and work of the one great Servant.

Questions

1. What are the two Israels?
2. To whom did the true Israel of God always look?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would always be looking to Christ and not ourselves.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Isaiah 40:8

Praise: Psalm 98 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Tuesday - Isaiah 40:1-5 - Glorious Deliverance

After all the passages on judgment, after all the danger, then deliverance, from the Assyrians, God gives gracious comfort for the faithful remnant. In the first verse we have the command from God to give that comfort. It is repeated to give it emphasis. God calls the people "my people". They are His, and He lovingly acknowledges and blesses them. He is their God, and they are His people. Specifically here He declares, "says your God". This is not merely a fond hope, this is not merely an optimistic conjecture, this is not a mere deduction of fallible man, this is Jehovah Himself who orders the comfort. We see the basis and substance of the comfort in verse 2. Her warfare is accomplished. That is, war against sin within, war against idolatry, war against unfaithfulness is accomplished by the working upon them of the Holy Spirit. Further, as they have looked to the prophesied and pictured Saviour who would come, they have justification and peace with God (Romans 5:1). This is why God says that their iniquity, their sin, is pardoned. They have received double, or hard discipline, for their sin, and now God has used it to wean them, the true Israel of God, from their manifold sins.

These verses, especially verse 3, speak of the calling and work of John the Baptist. John called from the desert, preparing the way by declaring Christ's coming, and calling the people to faith and repentance. Dead hearts like a desert were cried to, and entrance for the King was made. In verse 4 we see the great "highway project" that the Gospel has brought about. Every obstacle in the sinner's heart is removed by sovereign grace; every impediment to the reign of the King of kings and Lord of lords throughout all of life is "bulldozed".

Verse 5 must, first, be about the Messiah, whose way is prepared -- John 1:14. His person is glorious. His ministry is glorious. His work is glorious. His present reign is glorious, and His final coming is glorious. His work is the restoration of all things, including the salvation of the elect, and the transformation of the world (Romans 8:18-23). This is not just for Israel, but for the nations, for all flesh shall see it together. And how is it that we know that this shall be? Again -- the mouth of the Lord has spoken it!

Questions

1. What is the comfort that is spoken of here?
2. What do these verses say about John the Baptist?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for the glorious work of Christ.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Isaiah 40:8

Praise: Psalm 99 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Wednesday - Isaiah 40:6-8 - What Truly Abides

First, notice here that God sends prophets to cry out. They must not quietly keep God's Word to themselves, but give it out to God's people, and to the nations as well, in faithfulness. The prophet asks, 'What shall I cry?' It's not up to the prophet. It is not up to the preacher to give forth his own ideas, his own teaching, his own doctrine. Some "prophets" did that, but they were false prophets.

Man's power is like the grass and the flower, but it all dies away before the breath of God, before the Word of God. Man may call upon false gods and prosper for a time, but all will fade out. There are other gods that men and nations may try to depend upon even now. Nations may seek to depend upon a strong military, what they think is a robust economy, or an intrepid culture to set themselves on high against God's Messiah. But such things always, always fail. Churches may try to add to God's Word to gain numbers or respectability. But though they may gain in the short term, just like the grass grows and the flower blossoms, they always fall. We see that today with churches closing all around us. Persecutors may think that they shall carry all before them. Why does God allow them to prosper? It is so that they can be mowed down all the easier and more spectacularly. There are many who, when they are young, think that they shall carry all before them. They think nothing can happen to them. 'Everything should be fine. I've a long life ahead of me.' And so they put off seeking God. They want their power, they want their fame, they want their pleasure. They think these are the things that will make life meaningful, that will give a good life. But these are things of this world that cannot last. They slip through the fingers.

What lasts? What truly abides? Well, we see here in the last part of verse eight - the word of our God stands forever." It is the standard of what is true and false, what is good and evil, what is right and wrong. The high and the mighty attack it. But despite that, God's Word stands. The good news is that His promise of salvation stands. The good news that He will receive anyone who comes to Him, who cries out to Him for forgiveness and new life; that good news is established in the written Word of God. The Word of God, the promises and the explanation of grace therein, that is what truly abides. Put your faith in it.

Questions

1. What things can be like grass and flowers?
2. What truly abides?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for the precious Word of God.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Isaiah 40:8

Praise: Psalm 100 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Thursday - Isaiah 40:9 - Behold Your God

Zion is Jerusalem. It was where the Temple was, it was where the priests offered sacrifices, it was where God's king ruled, it was where the prophets preached. All of these things were pictures of the coming Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. God would have us look beyond the Temple, beyond the priests, beyond Hezekiah the king. He would have us look to the New Testament Zion, which is the people of God, to its Temple, with the cornerstone that is the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Temple is gradually coming toward completion, as it is built with you and with me and with every believer who has lived and will live. God would have Jerusalem to cry out good news and glad tidings all around.

Not only are Zion and Jerusalem told to give good tidings, they are told what the content of those tidings are, and that is, 'Behold your God.' The Assyrians praised their own gods and said, 'none can stand before us.' God says, 'But they were nothing to me. I destroyed 185,000 overnight. But don't only look to that. Look to Me.'

The godly in the times of Isaiah, the godly in all the days leading up to the coming of Christ were waiting. Think of the joy when Christ came. Think of the joy for Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, Simeon, Anna, John the Baptist, and so many others. They beheld their God. Do you remember when the gospel first came to your heart with power? Perhaps you had been feeling more and more burdened by your sin. Perhaps you had been pushed to seek some way to be right with God. And perhaps even you had heard the gospel, but it had bounced off a hard heart. But now the Spirit came with power, and as the minister preached, or as perhaps you read some Christian book or the very Bible itself, suddenly where you had only heard words before, now, by God's grace, you beheld your God. Do you remember the blessing of beholding your God? But far greater is coming. One day Jesus shall take us to Himself. And the joy that shall be in our hearts shall be, in a way, nothing compared to the Saviour's joy. He willingly came to rescue you from your sin and a curse and death. He willingly underwent all those for you. We say to people all over the world, and right in our own neighbourhoods, and in our families, and among our friends, look to Jesus. Behold your God! Call upon Him to save you from your sin.

Questions

1. Who is the Temple today?
2. What brings great joy?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the salvation of family and friends.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Isaiah 40:8

Praise: Psalm 101 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Friday - Isaiah 40:10-11 - Strong Deliverer

The Lord God is a strong deliverer. This strong deliverer is, first, strong to smite. God is powerful, and the picture of Him here is sweeping everything before Him. Much of this is looking immediately at His work with the Assyrians and their invasion, and looking a little farther along toward the Babylonians, and the Romans. But we are also seeing that all this looks forward to our own day in which Christ has come. He has come, and He has done His work of redemption through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension. God swept aside everything that would keep the gospel from coming to pass.

Jesus willingly came, and He received upon Himself, at the cross, the reward that we deserved. We deserved the wrath of God. We deserved His curse for our sin. We receive a reward as well -- not of our own works, but of His. We receive the reward of His faithfulness -- life, everlasting life, and all things which are good for us in this life as well. But what about those who are not in Jesus Christ? Well, they have great reason to fear, for He comes in wrath with their reward and with His work of judgment, condemnation, and fury. Whatever the enemy, God comes to smite it, and He comes to deliver us.

He is not only strong to smite, He is also strong to save, to allude to the "Scottish Paraphrase" of Hosea 6:1-4. As we consider our own remaining sin, it can make us tremble! Jesus is the good shepherd. When the sheep are afraid of the enemy, He knows how to calm them. He knows how to protect them. He loves them. He knows each one by name. He carries us when we can go no farther, and when we have been fools. When we wander off, He goes after us. He goes before us and always is with us. This same one who is the good shepherd has said, 'In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. And I go to prepare a place for you.' And there we will be safe forevermore from all our enemies, even the greatest enemy, sin, and the last enemy, death. Our great Saviour delivers from them all.

Questions

1. What did Jesus take on at the cross?
2. How is Jesus a good shepherd?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that Christ is our good shepherd.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Isaiah 40:8

Praise: Psalm 102 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Saturday - Isaiah 40:12-17 - God is Great!

God is great in power as we see in verse 12. Because the people, were in such difficulty and such hardship, it would be difficult, perhaps, for them to really imagine that God could or would save them. But God can do so. Even though many of the problems before Israel and Judah were caused by their own sin, God was able to deal with them. God was able to deliver them. All those things that we think of as huge and overwhelming tempt us to think to ourselves, 'It's no use. Not even God can help us.' These things that are huge and overwhelming to us are nothing to God. And they in no way block His holy will, His holy and loving purposes toward His people. Because our God is great in power.

God is great in wisdom as we see in verses 13-14. Something that has much power without any wisdom is dangerous. But our God, who has all power, also has all wisdom. God has all knowledge. He knows all things. But God also knows best how to bring about His holy and everlasting will in all things. He didn't need to learn wisdom. He didn't have to gain knowledge. He is the source of all wisdom. He is the source of all knowledge, and He wisely and powerfully works all things to glorify Himself. God wisely knows how to take and use all sorts of difficult circumstances that He has planned, and to use them to work together for our good. And because God is good and loves each one of us in Jesus, He guarantees that all this will work for our good. God knows best. And He who is great in wisdom knows how best to work in your life to make you more like Jesus, to make you to dwell happily with Him forever.

We see in verses 15-17 that God is great over man. Is God afraid? Of course not. Is God's plan somehow stopped by the might and the cleverness of man? Or of many men working together? The nations, the great and powerful nations who claim that nobody can stop them, they are as powerful and mighty as a little drop of water in a big bucket. That's all they are. All the efforts of the nations to be right with God can do nothing. It is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that sacrifice alone, which makes anyone right with God. God is strong to save in every single way. What folly it is to try and fight this great God!

Questions

1. In what ways is God great?
2. Why do we not need to be worried?

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 grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever. Isaiah 40:8

Praise: Psalm 103 - 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!**

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