

August 11

Scriptures: Read Isaiah 32-35

Key Verse: "... Be strong, do not fear! ...He will come and save you." (Isaiah 35:4)

Overview

The Lord's victory over the Assyrian army typifies His victory in the final world conflict, which will usher in the new and glorious millennial age of the righteous reign of the Perfect King Jesus the Messiah. Christ's Kingdom will be administered with perfect justice and all people will be safe from harm, for Jesus is the Rock, the Hiding Place, the Cover, and the Living Water (32:2). At that time, all believers will be spiritually alive and have understanding of the Lord's Word and His will, and the earth will be wholly governed by God's standards.

Once again, Isaiah warns the worldly, proud, and complacent women, for if they do not humble themselves before the Lord, they will never see the glorious coming kingdom but only devastation (32:9-11; 3:16-24). Indeed, the people of Judah did mourn from the devastation when Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded, plundered, and burned all the towns and cities of Judah (701 B.C.), with the exception of Jerusalem.

After his prediction of doom, Isaiah gave a message of hope for a brighter future: the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon God's people, which was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost when many of those whose souls were like a wilderness became a fruitful field (32:15; Joel 2:28; Acts 21:9). They were empowered to become witnesses for Jesus Christ and to live according to God's Word: with justice and righteousness. Even though the hailstorms may afflict God's people, because they trust in Him, they will find peace, security, and rest in Jesus (32:16-19).

In chapter 33, Isaiah prophesies that just as Assyria had plundered and dealt treacherously with Judah, so the same would happen to Assyria. With the threat of the Assyrian siege against Jerusalem, the believing inhabitants threw themselves onto the mercy of God and were comforted by Isaiah's prophetic words concerning God's forthcoming deliverance for Jerusalem (33:2-4). The other cities of Judah, however, would suffer at the treachery of the king of Assyria, who broke the treaty Judah had made with them (33:8). But God's indignation would rise and the fire of His wrath would consume the Assyrian enemy. News of God's mighty intervention would be heard both far and near, causing the sinful to be afraid of God's judgments and bringing honour to the righteous who dwell in safety and receive sustenance by God's bread and water (33:14-16). Jesus is the Bread of life and the Living Water from God. He is the King whom the righteous will see in all His beauty, and they will also see His vast Kingdom and the New Jerusalem which will never be removed (33:20; 33:17; Rev. 21:16-17). In His Millennial reign, Jesus our Saviour will be the Judge, Lawgiver, and King (33:22).

The prophecies of chapters 34 and 35 will surely be fulfilled in the end-times, yet they also served to warn the rebellious (ch. 34) and encourage the faithful (ch. 35) of Isaiah's day; and these prophecies do the same for us today. With much imagery and many poetic expressions, Isaiah describes the greatness of God's judgments and the greatness of His blessings. These chapters testify to God's justice and righteous judgments, the truthfulness of His Word, and His

might in fulfilling His purposes. We learn of the seriousness of sin, for the Lord will surely punish unrepentant sin. He hates sin, and so must we. We must forsake sin or else suffer the terrible consequences, “for the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). God is the Sovereign, Holy, and Just Judge over all His creation and has the right to sentence men to death or life. God is not pleased to destroy people, so He has mercifully extended the age of His grace that more would repent and make peace with Him in their souls. Yet the wrath of God will certainly come one day; it will be poured out upon all the unconverted rebellious nations (symbolized by Edom) who will join with Satan and his host against the Lord in the last great battle (34:4). We already know the outcome; the Lord will be victorious over the enemy and their land will be soaked with blood and lie desolate in a perpetual burning pitch, inhabited only by wilderness animals and birds.

In sharp contrast, God’s faithful remnant will be saved from the disasters and wars when the Lord comes in His vengeance (35:4). He will heal all those who suffer with infirmities and handicaps (35:5-6), and they will become joyous inhabitants of the Messiah’s beautiful and peaceful Kingdom in the coming age. No person defiled with sin may enter it or walk upon the “Highway of Holiness” (35:8), for the way to the presence of God is by holiness in the lives of those who have been “redeemed” and “ransomed of the Lord” (bought back from the penalty of death with the precious blood of Jesus, 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Heb. 12:12-14).

Prayer

Thank You, O Lord, for that wonderful day when we called upon You and trusted Your promise that we would be saved from that which destroys our lives and damns our souls. May we live with a fresh consciousness of that “call” every day. With Your help, may we share this good news with someone today.