

All Men are as Grass, God's Word is Eternal

Isa 40:6-11 ⁶ The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." ⁹ O Zion, you who bring good tidings, get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, you who bring good tidings, lift up your voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.

I find myself intrigued by the contrasts that are often found in Holy Scripture. And here in this passage we find a contrast between man and his glory and God's Word. We read, all flesh is grass and the grass quickly withers, but the word of our God stands forever.

I think I am correct in saying that we live in a most narcissistic age, amongst a self-absorbed people that abound with a feeling of self-importance. I say that because we had the "ME" generation in the 70's who have raised a generation to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. That is, a nation where, in our schools we did not grade our youth for fear that if they receive a grade less than an "A" they would think too lowly of themselves. Where everyone had to win a trophy for just being in the game but not for how well you played lest those who did not play as well as others would end up with a low self-esteem. Yes, even a generation of young people that could not play tag on the school ground lest they would be tagged and called out. You see, everyone had to win or be right because everyone is very special. But God has a different view of man.

And it is God's view of man that one needs to hear even though it is not what man wants to hear. We have here in this passage God instructing His messenger as to what he is to proclaim. By way of introduction I would simply point out that the messenger here in Isaiah's day would be the prophets of God, but in our day it is the church to whom the message of the prophets has been given. We, the church have been entrusted with the oracles of God. Paul instructs us that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, therefore it is truth that we are to proclaim to mankind.

We find in this passage God's instruction to His messenger as to what is to be the content of their message. And since it is the church that God has ordained to proclaim His message I want to consider this passage under the following questions. 1. What must the faithful church say to man about man? 2. What is the good news the church has to proclaim to a fallen mankind? 3. And why is it important to heed the message of the faithful church?

A. What must the faithful church say to man about man? - *A voice said "cry out". And he said "what shall I cry?"*

1. The voice is the voice of God speaking to the messengers of God
 - a. His command is for His messenger to cry out.
 - b. To be bold in the truth
 - c. Cry out, speak clearly and boldly
 - d. Lift up our voice, we have a most important message for those around us
2. The messenger responds what shall I cry
 - a. This is a good and proper question
 - b. God, what message do you want me to proclaim.
 - c. If we are not faithful in proclaiming God's word, we really have nothing to say
3. The message "All flesh is grass"
 - a. Desert area, grass quickly dies when the east wind blows, and it quickly wilts and dies
 - b. God compares man to grass in a desert region
4. And the glory of flesh, of man, is as the flower of the grass".
 - a. Note not just the frailty of human life, but the very glory of man is but short lived.
 - b. Whether it be the glory of nations, or of common man, all their accomplishments are like the fading flower of short lived beauty.
 - c. The glory of ancient Babylon, Greece and Rome are but ruins today.
 - d. Even here in the USA the glory of yesteryears wealth is often found in crumbling buildings.

James 1:11 For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and **its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.**

- e. Indeed we may be beholding the death throes of this great nation.
- f. All things human, however fine and glorious are passing.
- g. Thus the message of the church is to be proclaim loud and clear, God's promises alone are steadfast and sure

5. The message of Christ must be our message to a dying mankind.

Matt 16:26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

6. Get up on a high mountain, let your voice be heard.

7. Let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God. - The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

B. What is the good news the church has to proclaim to a fallen mankind? - *O Zion, you who bring good tidings, get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, you who bring good tidings, lift up your voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"*

1. With John the Baptist we need to point men to Christ and proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

2. The message of the church is not therapeutic guidelines for daily living.

3. The world needs to hear that there is an eternal almighty God before whom they will one day stand.

4. Behold your God -

- a. He alone is God He is their Creator
- b. They are therefore subject to Him

5. And with the warning they need to hear the good news that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

6. Our message before the world is singular - Christ Jesus and Him crucified.

C. And why is it important to heed the message of the faithful church? - *Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.*

1. Because He is coming again with a strong arm.

2. The ungodly need to hear the warning for He will come with an arm to judge rewarding them according to their deeds

Matt 13:41-43 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

3. The church needs to hear the word of comfort for He will come with an arm to receive and reward according to His mercy and grace, the work which He has accomplished in our behalf.

Matt 24:31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

CONCLUSION: I close with these words of comfort to you who by faith are trusting in the finished work of Christ in your behalf.

He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.

With the words by which Paul comforted himself, "*And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!*" (2 Tim 4:18)

Because the word of the Lord endures forever with assurance I can proclaim to you who are by faith trusting in Christ saving grace this blessing.

Indeed your God will come with a strong hand and will deliver you from every evil work and preserve you for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever Amen.