

## A Message of Healing

Isa 35:4-7 Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

We read here that God Himself will come to save His people and when He comes, the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped and the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. We are told here that such marvelous miracles would be accomplished by this coming one and without question all this happened during the ministry of our Lord and Savior, the Messiah of Israel. Calvin writes that this is clear evidence that Isaiah here is writing about the Christ. But this is not so much about the physical miracles but is about something of a much greater depth. It is about enlightening the sinner that he might hear, gain an understanding and thereby be saved and respond with thankful praise.

When we think of the miracles our Lord performed it is common to think of them as a means to convince the people that He was the Messiah. Nothing could be further from the truth. The miracles of our Lord did not convince anyone that Jesus was the Christ. It is true Nicodemus said that it was evident that Jesus could not do such miracles unless God was with Him, but Jesus simply responded, and said to Nicodemus, "you must be born again to understand the things of the kingdom of God." In fact, when the rulers of the Jews heard that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, which was a most amazing miracle what was their reaction? Faith? On the contrary when they heard we read that the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and asked, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs, that is, many miracles." And what was their response? Was it a response of faith? Not at all their answer was "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." And thus we read that from that day on they plotted to kill Him. (John 11:47-53)

What then can we learn from this passage before us this morning? Certainly it is not the value of miracles in convincing people, rather we shall learn these two great truths. First, The necessity of conversion and secondly the result of conversion.

### A. The necessity of conversion

1. As long as we are alienated from Christ we are deaf, blind and lame.
2. When Isaiah here speaks of blindness, deafness and lameness he is speaking of all the faculties of the soul of man before ones conversion
  - a. We cannot hear the things of God because we are deaf
  - b. We cannot understand the things of God because we are blind
  - c. And we cannot respond to the things of God because we are crippled
  - d. The reason is this; the things of God are foolishness to the ungodly

*1 Cor 2:11 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

3. Conversion is not the act of man coming to God, because man is not capable of coming to God on his own

*John 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;*

- a. The unconverted are blind, they could not find God if they wanted to
- b. The unconverted are deaf, they cannot hear God speaking to them in His word
- c. The unconverted are crippled, they cannot come to God

4. What we see here in this passage is the necessity of Christ

- a. The law given in the Old Testament could not save
- b. The Old Testament sacrifices only revealed ones sinfulness

*Heb 10:1,3 "... can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. . . . But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.*

- c. The Old Testament sacrifices only pointed to the necessity of a Redeemer because the blood of bulls and goats was insufficient to save

Heb 10:2 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

- d. By the law one can only learn of his sinfulness
- e. Scripture is quite clear - by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified *Gal 2:16*

5. Thus when we speak of the necessity of conversion we are speaking of the necessity of Christ. - *Your God will come - when He is come He will save you*
6. Prior to the coming of Christ this world was a wilderness of sin without a remedy.
7. The people of Abraham had a hope, but the rest of the world was without God and without hope
8. This then is the message of hope, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners
9. And the wilderness that covers the whole world would at the coming of Christ and the preaching of the gospel to all nations burst forth with a stream of water in the desert
10. This is what the Book of Isaiah is all about

B. The necessity of the coming Christ and the result of His converting grace?

1. We who were dead in trespasses and sins have been quickened by the power of God

Eph 2:4-5 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

2. Our blind eyes have been opened

Eph 1:18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saint.

3. We now hear God speaking to us in His word and thus respond with faith as Paul writes in Romans 10:17 - *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

4. Now that we hear the word of God it effectually works in us

*1 Thess 2:13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*

- a. We receive the Bible as it is the very word of God
- b. We receive it as truth, not as the words of men
- c. Thus it effectively works in us who have been granted faith to believe

5. Our tongues have been loosed and we respond with praise

Eph 5:18-20 But be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

6. Our lameness has been cured and we now walk in obedience

Eph 5:15-16 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

CONCLUSION - The gospel coming to the nations is the meaning of these words we read here in Isaiah - *For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.*

This glorious Kingdom of God now covers the whole world and because of that our hearts have been made the good ground and because of God's grace and mercy we who once were not a people are now the people of God

Hearing the Word - Receiving the Word - Understanding the promises of God

By grace coming to God in repentance and faith

Now no longer lame but leaping for joy like the man at the gate beautiful

Rejoicing - - For it is God who works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure. (Phil 2:12-13)