

Audacious Hope

Isa 51:9-16

Understanding the Future in Spite of the Present



Historical Context

- King Zedekiah hopes in Egypt for safety ... to no avail
- Nebuchadnezzar builds siege works around Jerusalem and waits
- Famine breaks out in Jerusalem, the city is stormed
- King Zedekiah is captured, brought before Nebuchadnezzar
- Zedekiah's children slain in front of him before his eyes put out
- Jerusalem palace and Solomon's temple burnt, city walls are torn down, treasures stolen, people carried off into captivity in Babylon

Awake, Awake

9 Awake, awake, put on strength,
O arm of the Lord!

Awake, as in days of old,
the generations of long ago!

Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces,
who pierced the dragon?

10 Was it not you who dried up the sea,
the waters of the great deep;
who made the depths of the sea a way
for the redeemed to cross over?

11 So the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

“Audacious promises that God’s justice would be established among the nations and that persecution of the faithful would be ended were no doubt met with considerable skepticism. Doubt is answered in the fourth section (51:9-16) with a reply that bristles with the raw power of mythopoeic imagery. It is hard to imagine a more poignant reminder to a wavering people that neither the cause of world justice nor their own safety rested upon human self-help projects but solely upon the power that created the universe by repelling the forces of chaos, called Israel forth from bondage to peoplehood, and even now was preparing to return the exiled community to Zion.” Hanson

Everlasting Joy ?

11 So the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.



You have Forgotten

12 I, I am he who comforts you;
why then are you afraid of a mere mortal who must die,
a human being who fades like grass?

13 You have forgotten the Lord, your Maker,
who stretched out the heavens
and laid the foundations of the earth.
You fear continually all day long
because of the fury of the oppressor,
who is bent on destruction.

But where is the fury of the oppressor?

14 The oppressed shall speedily be released;
they shall not die and go down to the Pit,
nor shall they lack bread.

15 For I am the Lord your God,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
the Lord of hosts is his name.

16 I have put my words in your mouth,
and hidden you in the shadow of my hand,
stretching out the heavens
and laying the foundations of the earth,
and saying to Zion, “You are my people.”

Why Do We Forget ?

- Is it a Just Criticism -when we are as grass
- Human Condition ?
- Rebellion ?
- Self- Sufficiency ?
- God as Invisible Friend ?



God's Comfort

- Remember mortals fade like grass
- Remember your Maker - power
- Trust in a Speedy deliverance
- Trust in the Character of God -
who gives bread, speaks words,
hides you in shadow of hand



The living God always calls
to life, whether we are
born or whether we die,
whether we can begin or
whether we have come to
the end. His nearness
makes us living, always and
everywhere.

– Jurgen Moltmann



GOD IS NOT FINISHED
CREATING...AND THEREFORE
LIFE IS NOT BEHIND US,
IT IS AHEAD OF US.
ILIA DELIO

You are My People

Nothing is more practical than finding God
than

falling in love in a quite absolute, final way.

What you are in love with, what seizes your
imagination,
will affect everything.

It will decide what will get you out of bed in
the morning,

what you do with your evenings,

how you spend your weekends,

what you read, whom you know,

what breaks your heart, and

what amazes you with joy and gratitude.

Fall in love, stay in love,

and it will decide everything.

Pedro Arrupe