

Awake! Awake!

Easter Sunrise Svc., Apr. 4, 2021

Direction of the Message

From Isaiah 51-55, God calls out to us and the redeemed of Israel, "Listen to me, Awake, Awake!" Following are the things He wants us to wake up and hear.

Sinners, Wake Up from the Deadness of Sin

After the Flood of Noah's day, the human race eventually divided into two categories; one declined into a state of spiritual deadness, while the other entered into a state of spiritual life.

Abraham's line entered into spiritual life when he believed and trusted God by faith, for which God declared him righteous. Four hundred years later, Abraham's descendants received from God the Law, which guided them into spiritual life. All other peoples on the earth were dead in their trespasses and sin.

Eventually, Israel's religious leaders corrupted God's Law and they entered into spiritual death as well. But God in His mercy sent Jesus to awaken people to spiritual life; first to Israel and then to all others. As when Jesus commanded Lazarus to come to life, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to say to every soul, "Listen to me, awake and come forth!" Sadly, Jesus reported that few will listen and transform to a newborn creation in Christ.

Ephesians 2:1 And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

Remnant of Israel, Wake Up from Deadness in Sin

In Isa. 51:22, God announces that a day is coming when He will remove the cup of His wrath against their sin. In Isa. 52:1, 6, 9 God calls the Remnant of Israel to wake up and rejoice; He is going to restore them to a glorious relationship of righteousness with Him.

In Isa. 52:11-12, God reveals the time of this awakening of the righteous Remnant of Israel. Jesus referred to it also in Matt. 24:15-21. Israel will dwell in their land and Jerusalem at that time. The Temple will be defiled by the Antichrist and Israel will reject him as their Messiah or their God. He will become enraged and seek to kill them. God says in Isaiah 52:12, as you flee Jerusalem, the Lord (Jesus) will protect you in front and God will protect you in back.

Rev. 12:13-17 adds to this event. Satan (the dragon) will persecute Israel (the woman). God helps Israel escape to the wilderness, but Satan casts a flood after him. God opens the earth to swallow the flood. Defeated, Satan returns to make war with and persecute the rest of the Remnant that could not escape in time. He hates them for their adherence to the commandments of God, and their testimony of following Jesus Christ.

At the end of Satan's reign in the seven-year Tribulation, Jesus will return in might with the armies of the saints and angels in heaven to imprison Satan, subdue evil men, and restore Israel to a thousand years of peace in Jerusalem. This is what God wants Israel to wake up and realize. cf. Isa. 54.

Wake Up to the Way God Will Redeem Us Back to Himself

From Isaiah 52:13 through chp. 53, we see detailed descriptions of Jesus as our Redeemer.

1. He will deal with His enemies wisely. Jesus confounded the Elders of Israel over and over.
2. God will exalt and extoll Jesus to the very highest place.
3. During Christ's thousand-year reign, kings will be astonished at the reality and truth of Christ, just as people were astonished at how beaten and marred Jesus was during His trip to Calvary.
4. He will give and do everything for a people who will shun and reject Him. He will be smitten with sorrow and grief.
5. Jesus will be wounded, bruised, chastised, and lashed, as if He was taking the vehement hatred and anger Satan has for all mankind upon Himself in our place.
6. God will put the sin of all mankind on Jesus, so it can be paid for by Him and Him alone.
7. He will not fight in His own defense. He will quietly submit to the extreme cost of providing salvation.
8. He will be abandoned and alone while He suffers.
9. Even in death He will be accorded no concessions befitting the great thing He has done. His grave will be amongst the wicked and the rich, though He spent His life among the good and the poor.
10. Everything He does will be in peace and open honesty. Yet He will be accused of the opposite.
11. God will make His Son's soul an offering for sin. No other payment for sin will be accepted. All who would be justified before God must apply through the sacrifice of Jesus.
12. God will highly exalt Jesus before all creation for all He done to save others.

The High Cost of Salvation

Easter 4-4-21

Introduction

Many have criticized the movie, "The Passion of the Christ" for its graphic representation of the suffering of Christ before His death. Many will not or cannot watch it for reasons that are too much for them to bear. Others criticize the film as a gratuitous, sensationalizing for intrigue and profit. But after careful comparison between Scripture and the film's graphic rendition of our Lord's suffering, I find much substantiation.

However, I prefer the Bible's account of the painful and high cost of my salvation. Each time I delve into it, the Holy Spirit breaks my heart to the point of crying out, "Oh Jesus, I should have been crucified; I should have suffered and died; I should have hung on the cross in disgrace; but Jesus my Lord, You took my place."

The graphic account of our Lord's sinless, selfless, costly sacrifice for our salvation should be embraced by us for its potential to deepen our devotion to Him, and cause us to cast our "crowns" at His feet and proclaim, "You are worthy Lord, to receive all glory, power, and honor, forever and ever, Amen!"

Psalm 22

v. 1, 2 The silence, separation, and distance our sin caused between Jesus and His Father.

v. 4-8 The unfairness of help from God for all others, but none for His Son.

v. 11-13 The fear of facing strong and hateful enemies alone.

v. 14-15 The assault of pain and suffering on Christ's body.

v. 16 The vulnerability to evil and cruel (Roman Gentile) strangers.

v. 17 The humiliation and inability to avoid those making a spectacle of you.

v. 18 The inequity and injustice of people caring more about your garments than your life.

v. 20 The dread of the moment when the (Roman Gentile) sword will separate your body from your soul.

v. 21 The dread of facing destruction by powers with no defense.

Isaiah 52:14

As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

This verse speaks to the treatment our Lord endured before the cross. His face was

marred more than any man's had ever been, and His body no doubt swelled beyond recognition from lashings and beatings.

Isaiah 53

v. 2 Jesus forfeited the brightness and splendor of His glorious heavenly appearance to humbly become an average one like us.

v. 3-4 How is it that one so giving, loving, compassionate, and kind, can be so falsely accused and hated? How it grieved His spirit. He also suffered much grief and sorrow for our plight and pain in life, as well as our hopeless resignation to it all.

v. 5-11 One might give all he can for those who appreciate it. But how does one give all he can for those who don't? Part of the high cost of our salvation was that we deserved none of what God would pay through His Son Jesus. Yet He place on Christ the iniquity of us all, the most innocent for the most guilty, the best for the worst, the highest for the lowest. How do we accept such an unfair exchange? We can only reconcile it by confessing, "There's nothing we can do about a God who loves us so!", and then just thank Him with a pledge to love others and He has loved us, and gave Himself for us.

Philippians 2:8

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Christ was ever eternal with God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, and all the Holy Angels. He was revered by all and loved with an everlasting love by His Father. He was superior to all but His Father in heaven. And all this He forfeited, humbling Himself to be clothed with all the inferiority of humanity.

Jesus also submitted Himself to one of the most degrading and devious modes of execution known to man, to save us.

Hebrews 12:2

...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Here we see that our Lord suffered for our salvation a human emotion that was completely foreign to Him...shame. One might be able to endure execution if there are those around us weeping over our departure. How cruel to add shame and humiliation to the injustice of false accusation and execution. But our Lord endured this too as part of the high cost of our salvation.