

Isaiah – Seeing God
Sunday 7th February

From Stumps to Springs

The shoot from the stump of Jesse

In Chapter 11, Isaiah looks ahead to the reign of the Messiah, the “shoot from the stump of Jesse”, and what this will look like (read Chapter 11). The shoot or stump are recurring images in Isaiah as he pictures the promised Messiah (Isaiah 4:2, 6:13, 11:1, 53:2).

Following on from this, Chapter 12 also looks forward to the fulfilment of this promise and the benefits for God’s people. We now live “In that day” (verse 1).

Living waters

Not only does the shoot from the stump of Jesse in Chapter 11 point towards the promised Messiah, but so does the water to be drawn from the wells of salvation in verse 3.

The promise of joy for all who draw this water is personal and it is for all God’s people. In John’s gospel Jesus identifies himself as this living water, and he invites us all to come to him:

‘On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”’ John 7:37-38 (see also John 4:13)

Through Jeremiah God charged the people of Israel with having stopped seeking him, the true source of living water, and looking for satisfaction and purpose elsewhere (in idols).

“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.” (Jeremiah 2:13)

Q. Have you stopped drawing from our spring of living water, Jesus? Are there any ways you have “dug your own wells”?

Drawing with joy from the wells of salvation

We draw from the well so as to drink and thereby we can “taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8). When we “taste”, or experience, Jesus we find joy (Isaiah 12:3, 1 Peter 1:8).

If we are to fully experience and enjoy God, we need to do this both with our *hearts* and with our *heads*:

...by experiencing and enjoying
real relationship with the Father

...by being disciplined in our
pursuit of the means of grace

When we lose our joy it’s because we have lost our vision of God.

Q. Is joy part of your current experience in your Christian walk? How has the sermon helped you see how you might experience greater joy?