

Part II, Lesson 34

Isaiah

The Lord is Salvation

Worship,
Three

Isaiah

58:8-10

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex
Curriculum*

Isaiah Part II, Lesson 34

Worship, Three

Isaiah 58:8-10

We are continuing our study on worship. Today we have two verses of a wonderful song. If the people will just do what God has said, then great things will happen. Read Isaiah 58:8, 9a. That's the first verse.

God said that their light would "break forth." Have you ever been in the dark and suddenly everything lit up? Maybe it was walking into a dark room and someone turned on the light. Maybe it was outside somewhere and lightening filled the sky and everything became like the daytime. Well, that is the picture here. The people had felt like God wasn't seeing them. They were hidden from Him, but God said there would be an explosion of light.

The people felt that all their acts of worship were ignored, but God said whatever is wrong with you is going to be quickly healed. What we are looking at here is most likely God's reference to the difficulties of those returning to Judah from Babylon and finding things in a mess...darkness. They needed to repair and organize things which were destroyed by neglect since they had been gone. The Father said that there was going to be an explosion of light and healing.

The good that they do, their righteousness, would lead the way. They could see what they needed to do and by doing good things well and from the heart, they would get ahead. And God was going to guard the rear. Think about a cattle drive you might have seen in a movie. There are cowboys who ride behind, keeping the cows together and seeing that the strays are gathered and driven back into the herd. God promised that He would be the one keeping all the people together and on task. They would see God's glory in what He did.

The song said that they would call on God and He would answer them. Remember back in verse three the people were complaining that God was not even aware of their situation...of their attempts to worship. Now, God says that things are going to be different. If they cry for help, He will say, "Here I am." God will not be unreachable like the idols. He will not be far off, instead he will be near enough for them to hear His voice.

This reminds of us of the child who wakes up from a bad dream in the middle of the night. Almost before she can call her mom, she feels her mother's hand on her brow and hears her mom's quiet voice say, "I'm right here, honey." God is always right there. Though the New International Version translates it, "Here am I," most other translations say, "Here I am."

We could spend a lot of time on those three words. When God says, "I am" we are reminded of what He said to Moses when Moses was about to go to Egypt and lead the Hebrews out of captivity. Moses asked God who he should say sent him as their deliverer. God said, "Tell them 'I am' sent you." There is only one being who can say "I am." All the other beings, including all humans, must say, "I am because..." Only God has no reason for being other than that He wants it that way. The rest of us have parents, air to breath, food to eat, and many other things that are the reasons we exist. So, when God says that He is "here," that means that we have His full attention, His total love, His true protection.

Wow, what a great promise. These folks who had been at the mercy of Babylonian slave masters for many years were now free, and could freely serve God. All their cries for help would be answered by God who would say, "I'm right here, child."

Isaiah Part II, Lesson 34

Worship, Three

The next verse of the song just adds to the joy of knowing God is near. Read Isaiah 58:9b, 10. God repeats His instructions about taking away the yoke of oppression, feeding the hungry and helping the oppressed. This time He adds that they needed to quit pointing their fingers at the oppressed and hurting them with their “malicious talk.” We could probably say that they were “bad-mouthing” them. It is a terrible thing for someone who is in trouble already to be made fun of and to be pointed out as someone to be pitied. These cruel people were having a good time “enjoying” other people’s difficulties.

The “oppressed” are people who find life to be a burden. They have nothing but “bad luck,” as some would say. They are overwhelmed by what life requires of them. It’s just too much.

Previously God had said that they should share their food with the hungry. Now He says that they are to “spend themselves on behalf of the hungry.” This meant that they were to do whatever it took to provide food for those who were hungry. It is not enough to give what we have left over to those who have needs. Sometimes we must dig deeper to help out. Some translate this, “draw out your soul” for the hungry. That makes it really serious.

The words, “satisfy the needs of the oppressed,” can be understood as taking away every form of human bondage. Bondage here means the things that would keep people from doing good, healthy things. It means freedom to be all you can be.

In the last words of this song, the idea of contrasting light and darkness comes back. God said that their light would take over from the darkness and their darkness will suddenly become like noon on a bright sunny day.

This is the summary of what He has said before. We have read about all the difference that they could make if they would live as they should live. We have read about all the good they could do if only they would live like God made them to live. And if they do that, all the darkness will be chased away.

We must be clear about one thing. God was not telling them that the light, the glory of God following them, and God’s willingness to hear them and help them was some kind of reward for just doing good things. God wasn’t buying their good work with promise of reward, He was telling them what would happen when they took their mind off themselves and began to help others. They would shine. They would be glorifying God. Their righteousness would make a way for a very good life, blessed by God as they served Him.

We can see the obvious lessons for our time. People who get focused on themselves and on their way of doing things often get too wrapped up in putting on a show and neglect helping those they can help.

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

Page Three

Scripture Memory: “Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say: ‘Here I am.’” Isaiah 58:9a

Lesson Goal: To guide students to a better understanding of what God calls worship.

Isaiah Part II, Lesson 34

Worship, Three—Isaiah 58:8-10

Student Worksheet

Listen during the lesson for this information:

1. The people had felt like God wasn't _____ them.
2. They needed to _____ and organize things which were _____ by neglect since they had been gone. The Father said that there was going to be an _____ of light and _____.
3. What picture of cowboys did we see and, how does that tell us something about God?
4. What picture of a mom did we see, and how does that tell us something about God?
5. These folks who had been at the mercy of _____ slave masters for many years, now were _____, and could _____ serve God.
6. It is a terrible thing for someone who is in trouble already to be made _____ and to be _____ as someone to be _____.
7. Bondage here means things that would keep people from doing _____, _____ things. It means _____ to be all you can be.
8. People who get focused on _____ and on their way of doing things often get too wrapped up in putting on a _____ and _____ helping those they can help.

Page Four

Scripture Memory: “Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say: ‘Here I am.’” Isaiah 58:9a

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.