

STREAMS IN DRY PLACES

Isaiah 35:6b-7

The book of Isaiah tells the story of how God's people forfeited His protection and blessings when they spurned His direction and went their own way. As Israel struggled in the midst of His discipline, God's desire and ultimate plan to restore His people back to Himself never diminished. Seven-hundred years before Christ was born, Isaiah prophesied the arrival of a Messiah who would make a way in the wilderness and bring a dry, barren, and desolate land back to life again. Jesus, of course, is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies about the coming Messiah; and, because we have placed our hope and trust in Jesus, He transforms our wilderness into a lush garden overflowing with abundance. There are four benefits that the Messiah brings with Him in order to provide us this way in the wilderness: strength, signs, streams, and streets. This message focuses on the third of these four benefits, which we will simply label as STREAMS. You don't have to live in a dry wilderness once you receive the Messiah. Into your wilderness, God brings the RIVER of the Holy Spirit. He is that mighty strength rushing in and through your Spirit to refresh, revive, and empower you in the dry places of your life!

NATURAL FULFILLMENT CONCERNING WATER IN THE DESERT

Isaiah 35:1-7; 41:17-20; 43:18-19

When you look at Israel today, it's a garden in the middle of a desert. Every nation around it (Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia) is basically a desert. Seth Siegel, the author of "Let There Be Water," writes concerning the way Israel became a water superpower. In it, he shares the following: "What people want to learn is how a country that is 60% desert and whose population has increased 10-fold since 1948, not only has enough water for itself, but, in fact, has such a surplus that it exports water to its neighbors." In addition, Siegel points out that Israel also provides large amounts of water from its own supplies to both the Palestinians and the Jordanians and exports billions of dollars each year of peppers, tomatoes, melons, and other water intensive produce." How did this happen? Well, we know, don't we? Isaiah tells us all about these days when the Messiah comes! This is the natural fulfillment of this prophecy.

SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT CONCERNING WATER IN OUR DRY PLACES

Isaiah 35:1-7; 41:17-20; 43:18-19; 58:11; John 7:37-39

1. The Holy Spirit is a river of living water that flows in and out of you.

Jesus came in order for you to have a dynamic powerful river flowing in, through, and out of you. The river has a name. His name is the Holy Spirit, and He's like a spring of water gushing up inside of you! One of the reasons Israel has so much water is due to the springs in the north. There are three springs that water the entire land. They are like large fire hydrants and have been gushing for many years. As a result, they create huge pools of water right there in the desert. The springs just gush out 24/7. No one knows how they got there. We know, don't we? Just like the Holy Spirit when we trust Christ; God just put them there!

2. The Holy Spirit is not weird.

I want to campaign for the fact that the Holy Spirit is not weird. His work may be a little mysterious, but it's not weird. In my 49 years with the Lord, I have seen some weird people do some weird things and say the Holy Spirit led them to do it. I have learned the hard way to be very skeptical about these reportings. Don't judge the work of the Holy Spirit based on questionable evidence. Some people are just weird! They would be weird without the Holy Spirit. There have been all kinds of movements, anointings, revivals, and blessings supposedly involving the work of the Holy Spirit on this earth. Some of these events have produced promising initial results only to become increasingly more bizarre and outlandish as true revival subsided. True work of God's Spirit transforms lives and endures forever!