

Easter Wonderings – Hallelujah !

Scripture: Isaiah 40: 9-11 // Psalm 100 // John 20: 24-29
Date: April 4, 2021

MYSTERY

LENT

Lent is a six week journey of growing awareness of who we are in this broken / hurting world and who God is as redeemer saviour and what that means to us. Our journey has looked at the uncertainty – the mystery – of our lives and we've looked at our wants in life and in faith. The journey recognized that there was a waiting for these wants to happen and that sometimes we worried if they were ever going to happen. That worry often can make us weary and that weariness can cause us to waver in our belief. A wavering that can make us wonder if all this is even true.

TEXT

We used Isaiah 40 – and other texts – to dive into this uncertainty. We recognized that Israel is in captivity and away from their normal for an increasingly long time and away from their familiar of work and church. We've gleaned into their struggles of where was God in their lives and their complaint that God had forgotten them.

Last week we looked at the story of doubting Thomas where Jesus appeared after His resurrection but because Thomas wasn't at the scene - he demanded proof of the other disciples' claims.

MYSTERY APPLICATION – I WONDER HUH?

This need for proof is not new – then or now. There are many who are confused by the mystery of God. Many in our world like a mystery in movies, books or puzzles. But there are times when the mystery gets too deep and they want to turn to the back pages of the book for the answer or read the last chapter or scan PVR forward to see who did it.

Yet - in our lives we can't skip forward to see how things will turn out. We can't see any answer cheat sheet to know what happens. In our faith lives we can't know the mind of God and the uncertainty of not knowing everything – it bugs us!

Like Israel we want to know that we are not alone and are not forgotten. Like Thomas - we want a sign or a symbol of faith to give us hope, to give us light – to give us faith.

MERCY

GOD WALKS ALONGSIDE

In the story of Thomas Jesus meets him where he is at. If Thomas needs proof then Jesus will give definitive proof – Himself! Reassuring Thomas – not just with words but with deeds

Psalm 100: 3 speaks of a shepherd with His sheep and God uses that metaphor to remind Israel – and us – of God’s covenantal relationship with His people. Not only does a shepherd not forget the sheep they also take care of them as well. Isaiah 40: 11 takes on this metaphor as well. Reminding us of God’s intimacy with His sheep where He gathers the young lambs in his arms, He carries them close to His heart and He gently leads them forward.

MAJESTY

GOD REVEALS

Our efforts to produce a flame (of faith) fail but God’s creation flourishes. The Christ Candle reminds us of the gospel of John where it declares that the darkness has come into the world but the darkness has not put it out! God triumphs in majesty as the mystery of God in this world – in this creation – is unveiled and God’s goodness and glory are revealed.

God is revealed in and through Creation. God is revealed through an Incarnation where God walks alongside of us. God is revealed through a Revelation of His word in the law and His word (Jesus) in life. God is revealed through the Crucifixion where God forgives us and God is revealed through the Resurrection - God frees us to have a new start on life and a new power in life.

TEXT

In Isaiah 40: 10 we read that God’s power is evident – to all – and that God’s reward – for all - goes with Him. In Psalm 100: 5 we read that The Lord is good forever! And in John 20: 28 we read that Thomas’s answers are a confession of truth & a declaration of faith - My LORD & My GOD

MAJESTY APPLICATION – I WONDER HUH!

Our journey of questions through Lent are now fully responded to by Easter even as God spoke into them in the journey itself. God walked (walks) with us revealing Himself and revealing His calling to us.

Our wants are given God’s plans
 Our waiting is given God’s patience
 Our worrying is given God’s peace
 Our wavering is given God’s power
 Our wonder is given praise to God !

I wonder moves from Huh as a question to Hallelujah as a statement – a declaration

MESSAGE***EASTER DECLARED***

In John we read that Jesus declares that there will be a greater blessing to those who believe by faith more than by proof. An assumption that the truth is for more than the disciples and an assumption that others are to hear – and believe in Him.

Psalm 100 tells us to sing praise – even to shout praise. An effort of all we are and all we doing through all our words and deeds. Isaiah 40: 9 speaks of how the people of God are to - when their redemption / resurrection happens - praise God. They are to bring good news to Zion – the people of God. They are to not be afraid and go on a mountaintop and lift up their voices and shout out to everyone - Here is your God!

EASTER SHARED

The mystery of God remains – after all HE IS the great I AM. The One who walks in the mystery of our (HIS) world. The One who reveals HIS majesty to the (HIS) world.

So that we might know the message of His truth and triumph.
 So that we might know the message of His glory and grace
 So that we might know the message of His forgiveness and freedom
 So that we might know the message of His Kingdom and calling
 So that we might know HIM – and ourselves for Him
 So that we might know Jesus !

An know of Him and for us life !

A majestic mystery that offers us a new life found in the forgiveness by God.
 An abundant life found in the restored freedom from God.
 A shared life that serves God's kingdom calling and that share God's kingdom news
 A forever life with Jesus – in this world and in the one to come.

AMEN