

Pentecost 2016

Isaiah 32:12- 20

Until at Last the Spirit is Poured Out

Sermon

Campbell Town

May 15th, 2016

Isaiah 32:

¹² Beat your breasts in sorrow for your bountiful farms
and your fruitful grapevines.

¹³ For your land will be overgrown with thorns and briars.
Your joyful homes and happy towns will be gone.

¹⁴ The palace and the city will be deserted,
and busy towns will be empty.

Wild donkeys will frolic and flocks will graze
in the empty forts* and watchtowers

¹⁵ until at last the Spirit is poured out
on us from heaven.

Then the wilderness will become a fertile field,
and the fertile field will yield bountiful crops.

¹⁶ Justice will rule in the wilderness
and righteousness in the fertile field.

¹⁷ And this righteousness will bring peace.
Yes, it will bring quietness and confidence forever.

¹⁸ My people will live in safety, quietly at home.
They will be at rest.

¹⁹ Even if the forest should be destroyed
and the city torn down,

²⁰ the LORD will greatly bless his people.
Wherever they plant seed, bountiful crops will spring up.
Their cattle and donkeys will graze freely. ¹

* **32:14** Hebrew *the Ophel*.

¹ Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Is 32:12–20). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

John 14:23-27

²³ Jesus replied, "All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them. ²⁴ Anyone who doesn't love me will not obey me. And remember, my words are not my own. What I am telling you is from the Father who sent me. ²⁵ I am telling you these things now while I am still with you.

²⁶ But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

²⁷ "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.²

² Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Jn 14:23–27). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

INTRODUCTION:

I. PENTECOST

A. CELEBRATION

1. There is much to celebrate at Pentecost
2. Our being together is one of the more tangible and relevant reasons, and that fellowship and joyful togetherness is central to what Pentecost is all about

B. THE ORIGINAL PENTECOST WAS A PIVOTAL EVENT

1. It was the time when what Jesus had accomplished began to be manifested and enacted
2. When God's plan to rescue, redeem and restore his creation, and in particular mankind, swung into action in a new and profound way
3. Pentecost was the new beginning for mankind, the beginning of the new life, the restoration of all things
 - a) The new life, that is the life God intended for his creation from the beginning

C. TODAY WE ARE GOING TO VIEW THIS NEW BEGINNING THROUGH ISAIAH 32

1. The passage we are focusing on has some informative and inspiring insights for us, as we gather to celebrate what Pentecost really signifies

D. PRAYER

BODY:

E. ISAIAH IS WRITING IN A TIME OF SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL TROUBLE

1. Not unlike our world today
2. The northern kingdom had gone downhill and eventually was invaded by Assyria in 722BC.
3. Isaiah wrote to Judah during that time, when Judah was also struggling inwardly and outwardly
 - a) As the Bible Knowledge Commentary tells us;

In this political struggle and spiritual decline Isaiah rose to deliver a message to the people in Judah. His message was that they should trust in the God who had promised them a glorious kingdom through Moses and David. Isaiah urged the nation not to rely on Egypt or any other foreign power to protect them for the Lord was the only protection they would need.³

F. ISAIAH 32:9-14

1. Isaiah is warning the nation of the consequences of their trusting in others, rather than God.
 - a) Even the women, who were usually the more upright, were now neglecting God and his ways

⁹ Listen, you women who lie around in ease.

Listen to me, you who are so smug.

¹⁰ In a short time—just a little more than a year—

you careless ones will suddenly begin to care.

For your fruit crops will fail,

and the harvest will never take place.

¹¹ Tremble, you women of ease;

throw off your complacency.

Strip off your pretty clothes,

³ Martin, J. A. (1985). Isaiah. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, pp. 1027–1030). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

and put on burlap to show your grief.

G. THEY HAD BECOME COMPLACENT, AND SELF-FOCUSED

1. They were living life without regard to God, without caring for him or valuing what he had done for them, or trusting his promises
 - a) Their focus was just on themselves and their pleasures
2. As a prophet, Isaiah warns them and tells them what will happen as a result of their turning away from God

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and your fruitful grapevines.

¹³ For your land will be overgrown with thorns and briars.
Your joyful homes and happy towns will be gone.

¹⁴ The palace and the city will be deserted,
and busy towns will be empty.

Wild donkeys will frolic and flocks will graze
in the empty forts* and watchtowers

3.v 14, the Hebrew says this desolation would last “forever”

Isaiah 32:14 NIV The fortress will be abandoned,
the noisy city deserted;
citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland forever,
the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks, ⁴

BKC: The desolation (whether by Assyria or Babylon) would come on the land **forever** (*ôlām*). This Hebrew word does not always carry the same force as the English word “forever.” From verse 15 it is obvious that Isaiah

* 32:14 Hebrew *the Ophel*.

⁴ *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. (1984). (Is 32:14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

saw a day when the desolation would cease. So it is better to understand ‘*ôlām* here as meaning “for a long indeterminable time.”⁵

4. “*olam*” means a “distant or concealed time ranging from a lifespan to the furthest time imaginable.”⁶

a) Jeff A. Benner;

The Hebrew word *olam* literally means "beyond the horizon." When looking off in the far distance it is difficult to make out any details and what is beyond that horizon cannot be seen. This concept is the *olam*. The word *olam* is also used for time for the distant past or the distant future as a time that is difficult to know or perceive. ...In the Hebrew mind it is simply what is at or beyond the horizon, a very distant time.⁷

5. As Dr. Fruchtenbaum defines it;

olam. The word itself simply means "long duration," "antiquity," "futurity," "until the end of a period of time." That period of time is determined by the context. Sometimes it is the length of a man's life, sometimes it is an age, and sometimes it is a dispensation.⁸

6. This desolation would last until a new age, until a new dispensation

H. THAT NEW AGE BEGAN AT PENTECOST

1. The time when all things would be restored as Isaiah now explains.

14 The fortress will be abandoned,
the noisy city deserted;
citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland forever,
the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks,

⁵ Martin, J. A. (1985). Isaiah. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1082). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁶ The Lexham Bible Dictionary. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press. Old Testament

The term *עולם* (*olam*) (meaning “forever,” “always,” “everlasting,” “eternal,” “ancient,” “perpetual,” etc.) essentially means distant or concealed time ranging from a lifespan (Exod 21:6; Deut 15:17) to the furthest time imaginable (e.g., Psa 90:2; Verhoef, “Time and Eternity,” 1254). Typically used with the prepositions “from” (מִן, *min*), “until” (עַד, *ad*), or “to” (עַד, *l*), ‘*ôlām* can refer to the past (e.g., Jer 5:15, “ancient nation”) or future (e.g., 2 Sam 7:16, “established forever”). Its sense can be infinite (e.g., Psa 45:6) or simply indefinite (e.g., Gen 9:16; Num 25:13).

The Hebrew concept of eternity is linked to God, who is everlasting and whose reign is forever (see Gen 21:33; Exod 15:18; Pss 45:6; 90:2; 93:2; 145:13; Dan 7:9, 13, 22). Like other Hebrew words for time, ‘*ôlām* is usually event-filled time, particularly in terms of a life in relation to God.

⁷ Jeff A. Benner, Hebrew Word Definitions, Eternity, Ancient Hebrew Research Center, http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/27_eternity.html

⁸ Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum,

¹⁵ until at last the Spirit is poured out
on us from heaven.
Then the wilderness will become a fertile field,
and the fertile field will yield bountiful crops.

2. This is the pivotal verse

3. “at last” is a term that holds within it a sense of great relief,

(1) “at last I have arrived”, “at last the pain has subsided”,
“at last the job is finished”, etc.

4. In this prophecy, “at last” that which has been so desolate will be fertile and bountiful

a) “At last” there will be enough food again, and “at last” life will be good again

I. WHAT WAS THE MOST CRUCIAL THING THAT NEEDED RESTORING?

1. People’s relationship with God
2. The Holy Spirit brings us into the relationship Jesus has with the Father
3. The Holy Spirit includes us in the life of God
4. The Holy Spirit restores us to being God’s people
5. The Holy Spirit leads us and empowers us to live with Christ, and brings Christ into our hearts and minds

¹⁵ until at last the Spirit is poured out
on us from heaven.
Then the wilderness will become a fertile field,
and the fertile field will yield bountiful crops.

J. THE POURING OUT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WHAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

1. Evil, suffering, pain, hunger and injustice will not go on forever

- a) “At last” all that is wrong will be righted, all that is suffering will be healed, all that is broken will be restored
2. With Jesus’ incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension to God’s right hand—all is finally set right
 - a) And at Pentecost, Jesus’ promise not to leave his disciples alone is fulfilled when he comes to them through the Holy Spirit
 - b) And through the Spirit our hearts and minds, and our lives are atoned, made at-one; reconciled with God
3. And when at last, at Pentecost, the Spirit was poured out on us from heaven, “the wilderness” of our hearts and minds, and of our lives becomes “a fertile field and the fertile field will yield bountiful crops.”

K. JUSTICE

¹⁶ Justice will rule in the wilderness
and righteousness in the fertile field.

1. The Hebrew says, justice will “dwell” or “abide” or “settle down” and remain
 - a) As J.J. Jowett comments on this verse;
Judgment and righteousness shall dwell among them as abiding guests. Righteousness shall “dwell” there! It shall not be an occasional visitor, a spasmodic impulse, an inconstant and irregular desire. It shall dwell there as a permanent disposition.⁹
2. A foundational part of setting things right, is justice and righteousness

The establishment of justice is a theme in the first division of the book (9:7; 11:4; 16:5; 28:6; 32:16; 33:5) and in the second division (42:1, 3–4; 51:5). And “peace” is mentioned 11 times in chapters 1–39 and 15 times in chapters 40–66.¹⁰
3. The Hebrew word here for justice is “mishpat”

⁹ J.J. Jowett, Results of the Outpouring of the Spirit, Isaiah 32:15-17, http://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/jowett/results_of_the_outpouring_of_the_spirit.htm

¹⁰ Martin, J. A. (1985). Isaiah. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1030). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

a) Lexham Bible Dictionary;

Mishpa. Divinely righteous action, whether taken by humanity or God, that promotes equality among humanity. Used in relation to uplifting the righteous and oppressed and debasing the unrighteous and oppressors.¹¹

4. Justice means *setting things right*, particularly in relationships

a) Relationships between God and man first of all, and as a result then, relationships between us

b) When we all try to do our own thing without love or care for others, injustice, trouble and strife result

5. Social justice is a vital part of the new life that the coming of the Spirit brings about

a) It is part of the new life that Jesus lived, and wants us to be involved with

6. As F. James points out from this verse;

There is to be a social betterment for all. Wherever Christianity goes it uplifts the races. Unbelief may sneer at Christianity, but it still remains the greatest civilising force in the world.¹²

a) Helping the mistreated, the poor, the ostracised, the lonely and the sick is a vital part of the work of the Holy Spirit, and of the body of Christ that began at Pentecost

b) We see early in Acts how all the new Christians helped out those who lacked the daily necessities of life

7. Righteousness is clearly related to justice

L. PEACE

¹⁷ And this righteousness will bring peace.

Yes, it will bring quietness and confidence forever.

1. Peace, or “shalom” means everything is whole and complete

¹¹ Garrett, J. K. (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015). Justice. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

¹² F. James, A National Pentecost, http://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/james/a_national_pentecost.htm

2. All is at last as it should be, God and man are at-one through Jesus and the Holy Spirit
3. Jesus promised that even though the disciples were going to scatter at his crucifixion, and even deny him, that they would be given the Spirit and the blessing of peace

John 14:25-27

²⁵ I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. ²⁶ But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

²⁷ “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.

- a) We see in Acts the profound difference the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost made to their lives, and the peace of mind and heart they received as a result

M. THESE RESULTS, OR FRUITS OF THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE DESCRIBED BY ISAIAH (V17-20)

Isaiah 32:17 NIV

¹⁷ The fruit of righteousness will be peace;
the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.

1. Peace is the fruit of righteousness
 - a) The fruit of all things being made right
 - b) And all things are made right in and through Jesus and the Spirit
2. Jesus sent the Spirit to teach us and remind us of who Jesus is, and the new relationship he gives to us
 - a) Through the Spirit we live with Jesus his life with God
 - b) His life of holy love and worship
3. As a result, we have the assurance that God is with us, and nothing can separate us from his love
 - a) This enables us to experience Jesus’ peace, and to live with quietness and confidence forever

¹⁸ My people will live in safety, quietly at home.

They will be at rest.

¹⁹ Even if the forest should be destroyed and the city torn down,

²⁰ the LORD will greatly bless his people.

Wherever they plant seed, bountiful crops will spring up.

Their cattle and donkeys will graze freely. ¹³

4. Our lives and relationships, and the life and relationships of all people need the effect of God, his blessings, his righteousness, his generous and gracious gifts

5. We need our lives re-joined to God who is faithful to lead us to lives lived safely in quietness and confidence, quietly at home with God, at rest in him forever

N. WHAT IS BEING DESCRIBED HERE ARE THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

1. The results of God dwelling with his people and his people trusting in his faithfulness, no longer looking elsewhere for peace and prosperity

20b Wherever they plant seed, bountiful crops will spring up.

2. This is what Pentecost led to with those who received the Holy Spirit, and put their lives in Jesus’ hands

3. The receivers of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 formed a living communion of saints and

⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity*—⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Acts 9:31

¹³ Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Is 32:12–20). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

* **2:46** Or *and sincere hearts*.

³¹ The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers.

O. IF WE TOOK TIME TO READ THROUGH THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT IN GALATIANS 6, WE WOULD FIND THE SAME QUALITIES

1. Of love, joy, peace, goodness and faithfulness
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II. FINAL THOUGHTS

A. WHY DOES THIS OUTPOURING TAKE PLACE?

1. It is often thought that the solution to mankind's problems, and that of individuals is for them to repent and start living rightly in order to change our lives and our world
2. But, as Clarence Bouwman makes clear from Isaiah 32, the salvation of mankind and the coming of the Spirit don't come through our righteousness or even our repentance.

But listen now...to the surprise of our text! For the prophet Isaiah does not say that the harvest will fail and the fields remain overgrown with weeds and the cities remain deserted *until repentance comes*; he says instead that the harvest will fail and the cities will remain deserted "until a spirit is poured upon us from on high." The point is that *God* will act, and the result of *His* sovereign work will be that "the wilderness becomes a fruitful field," becomes so fruitful as to be comparable to a forest.

More, the result of God's pouring out a spirit from on high will be that justice and righteousness will abound, and the effect of justice and righteousness will in turn be the existence of peace and quietness. Says the Lord: "My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, In secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (vs 18). Truly, how different from Israel's current troubling circumstances, how desirable! And all that not because Israel would be so repentant, but rather because the Lord would graciously send a Spirit from on high.

In the years following this prophecy, the Lord did as He promised. He sent a Spirit from on high who in turn caused an end to the exile, and even repentance in Israel. The fulfilment of this promise, though, has come in Jesus Christ. For Christ on the day of Pentecost poured out *the* Spirit from on high, with as blessed result that the Church of Acts 2 knew no trying traumas; the saints of Acts 2 formed a living communion of saints so that "they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with the people" (vs 46f).

And why was it that the Christ had now poured out His Holy Spirit, gave this gift of peace and quietness? It was not, beloved, because the people of Israel had become so repentant and so earned God's forgiveness. It was rather because Jesus Christ had given Himself to the curse of Calvary. *He* paid for sin, with as result that the Holy Spirit *could* be poured out on sinful people, and these sinful people receive the peace and quietness which God in His covenant had promised to His children.¹⁴

3. God acted in Christ, through the Spirit at Pentecost, because of who he is

a) It is his loving nature to forgive and to restore

4. Our part is to humbly and gratefully accept what he offers

a) We repent because of who God is, and what he has done, not in order to get God to act

B. FINAL FULFILMENT

1. A question many might ask after reading this and other similar scriptures, is;

a) Why don't we see this righteousness, peace and rest more completely in our lives, and that of the world around us?

2. How would you answer that question?

a) As Jesus described the kingdom in the parables of the mustard tree, and the yeast

Luke 13:18-21

Parable of the Mustard Seed

¹⁴ Clarence Bouwman, Sermon on Isaiah 32:15a, 17 June 2001, <http://kite.ois.net.au/~jvd/Sermons/Is32.15a.htm>

¹⁸ Then Jesus said, "What is the Kingdom of God like? How can I illustrate it? ¹⁹ It is like a tiny mustard seed that a man planted in a garden; it grows and becomes a tree, and the birds make nests in its branches."

Parable of the Yeast

²⁰ He also asked, "What else is the Kingdom of God like? ²¹ It is like the yeast a woman used in making bread. Even though she put only a little yeast in three measures of flour, it permeated every part of the dough."

CONCLUSION:

C. PENTECOST IS THE BEGINNING, NOT THE END OF THE FULFILMENT OF WHAT ISAIAH PROPHESED

1. We are the *firstfruits* of God's intervention through his sending of Jesus and the Holy Spirit
2. We are the *firstfruits* of a great harvest yet to come
3. But we aren't to be just sitting and waiting
4. We are to be planting the mustard seeds, leavening the world around us with the fruits of the Spirit, the life and light of Jesus Christ
5. Our lives lived righteously in Christ, lived in peace, quietness and confidence, are to be like mustard seed, and lights, like salt, like light, like fresh water to the parched, complacent, unhappy world around us
6. As Clarence Bouwman sums our passage up

In the strifes and strains of this life, I *believe* that God graciously gives this peace even to me. Tomorrow, when the Saviour returns, we shall see that peace in all its blessedness and perfection.¹⁵

D. PRAYER

¹⁵ Clarence Bouwman