

Great Expectations
Matthew 4:12-25

Review:

1. Jesus did not promise His followers social standing or respect in the eyes of the world
2. Jesus did not promise His followers worldly health and wealth, but calls us to radical dependence on Him
3. Jesus did not call us to use force, but to persuade others of His claims with truth and love.

Go Further: Read Isaiah 9:1-7; 35:1-10

1. In Isaiah 9:1, what areas of the country are said to be distressed and oppressed? Since these parts of the land were in the far north, they were the first to be invaded by the Assyrian army in 732 BC. How would that fact fit with Isaiah's prophecy?
2. Who did God say would be living in Galilee? Why is this important to us?
3. What did God promise in verse 2 to those living in such a dark and deadly place? How did Jesus' ministry in Galilee fulfill this prophecy?
4. How does God describe the joy of His appearing in verse 3? Why might this verse have caused the people who saw Jesus in Galilee to expect Him to give them lots of material blessings?
5. What blessings did God promise to give His people in verses 4 and 5? What might these promises have caused the people who were invaded by the Assyrians or the Romans to expect?
6. How does verse 6 say the Messiah will be revealed to His people?
7. What titles does verse 6 use for the Messiah? What do each of these titles reveal about the Person and Work of Christ?
8. What promise does verse 7 make about the length of Jesus' reign? How does verse 7 describe His kingdom? How might these promises have shaped the expectations of the people who witnessed His earthly ministry?
9. Why does verse 7 say that God will grant all these blessings to His people?
10. What does God promise will happen to the deserts in Isaiah 35 verses 1 and 2?
11. What does God say that the land will see?
12. Who does Isaiah promise will come in verse 4? What effect does he expect this good news to have on people in verses 3 and 4?
13. In verse 4, what does Isaiah promise God will do for His people? How might these promises have informed the expectations of the people who experienced Jesus' earthly ministry?
14. How do verses 5 and 6 describe Jesus' ministry of healing? Based on this passage, why did His healing miracles prove that He is the Son of God?
15. How do verses 6 and 7 say that the coming of God will bless the land? Did this happen during Jesus' earthly ministry?
16. Who does God say will travel on His highway in verses 8 and 9? Who will be forbidden from its use? What do you think the image of the highway means for us?
17. What promise does God make in verse 8 for those who walk on this road?
18. What promise does God make in verse 9 for those who walk on His road?
19. Where does God promise this road will lead in verse 10? Why would this have been such good news for the people in Isaiah's time? Why is this good news for you?
20. How does verse 10 say God's people will respond to the good news of God's coming? Is this true for you?

Apply:

1. Which of the promises we find in Isaiah 9 and 35 have already been fulfilled in your life? How does remembering how God has kept His promises build your faith?
2. For which of these promises are you still waiting? How does waiting for God to keep His promises test your faith? How does it build your faith?
3. Isaiah says that the coming of Christ should cast out all our fears. Is this true for you? How do you feel about the second coming of Christ?