

G'day Church Family

It would be great to have your Bibles open at Isaiah 42:1-9 and then Luke 2:22-40.

There are Bibles in front of you - if you want to follow where we're going - and there's a sermon outline - if you're a person who likes to take notes.

Let me ask God - to help our understanding - before we begin

Intro/Darkness versus Light

- Are you **afraid** of the **dark**?

[PowerPoint 1-Dark?]

- **Why** are people **afraid** of the **dark**?

(pause)

- Because they **can't see** what's around them
- It's like they're **blind**

- In our OT reading in the **time** of **Isaiah**
- **People** were in **darkness** - but not **physical** darkness
- **Spiritual** darkness

[PowerPoint 2-Spiritual darkness]

- **Spiritual darkness** is the **opposite** to the **light** of **God's love** for people
- The **Bible** often **uses** the **picture** of **darkness** and **light** - to **contrast** what is **bad** with what is **good**
 - For example - At the beginning of time, **God created light** to **dismiss** the **darkness** and **chaos** that was over all the earth

(Genesis 1:1-5). Then **God** created the **lights** in the sky, the **sun, moon, and stars** (Genesis 1:14-16). As light itself and the source of light, **God** had only to **speak** and **light came** into being.

- The Bible describes the **wicked** as in **darkness** - Proverbs 2:13 says - **those who have left the straight paths are walking in dark ways**
- The Bible describes **judgment** as **darkness** - **Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness spreads over Egypt--darkness that can be felt."** (Exodus 10:21)
- The Bible describes **death** as **darkness** (Psalm 88:12)
- The **light** that is **God** is the **opposite** of the **darkness** that is **evil**. The **light** of **God** is His **holiness, righteousness, and goodness**, which is in **contrast** to the **darkness** of **evil** and **sin**. **Light** is part of the **essence** of **God**. He is completely, unreservedly, absolutely **holy**, with **no sin**, and **no hint of injustice**.
- **Light** is often **associated** with **good things** about **God**
 - Like His **Word** - **Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.** (Psalm 119:105),
 - Like **salvation** (Isaiah 9:2) [people walking in darkness have seen a light],
 - Like **goodness** (Genesis 1:4) [God saw light was good]
 - Like His **commandments** (Proverbs 6:23) [your command is a lamp, your teaching a light]
 - Like **life** (Psalm 56:13) [God is the light of life].

- In Psalm 27:1 David declares God to be his **light and salvation**. God was the **light** that **guided** and led **David** through **dark** and difficult times of **persecution**. **Darkness** is the **emblem** of **distress, trouble, perplexity, and sorrow**. **Light** is the **opposite** of these. **God showered David** with such **light** that he was filled with **confidence** and his **fears** were **removed**.
- Whereas - as Proverbs 4:19 says: the way of the **wicked** is like deep **darkness**
- This contrast between darkness and light leads the Apostle John to declare in John 3:19-20: ¹⁹This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.
- **Spiritual darkness** is a problem today
- People are **blind** to the **truth about God** - **blind** to the **truth** in the Bible - **blind** to **God's rules** - and **blind** to the **truth** about why **God's** sent His Son **Jesus**
- And this is **because** as the **Apostle Paul** says in **2 Cor 4:4** - **Satan has blinded** the **minds** of **unbelievers**, so that they **cannot see** the **light** of God

The Light of the World Promised (Isaiah 42:1-9)

- In our OT reading from **Isaiah 42:1-9** [**Which you can turn to now**]
- **God** promises a solution to **this** spiritual darkness
- **God** promises a **Light** to combat this spiritual darkness

[PowerPoint 3-Servant]

- See V1 - God through Isaiah **promises His Servant**
- He will be filled with God's Spirit
- He will be **God's Chosen One**
- And this of course - **points to** none other than **Jesus**
- God's **Messiah** - The **Christ**
- And Jesus the Servant, will bring **justice** to the whole **world** - not just to the Jewish people - but non-Jews - **Gentiles as well**
- V2 - He will **not shout** or **cry** out - this doesn't mean Jesus won't speak loudly - but it refers to His **gentleness** - Jesus didn't make His way by bluster and being loud and shouting people down into submission - but He taught with an amazing spirit filled **authority** and by **example**
- V3 - A **bruised reed** He will **not break** and **smoldering wick** he will **not snuff out** - This is another reference to Jesus' **gentle character**. A reed is a fragile plant - yet if a reed is bruised - **Jesus** the Servant will **handle** it so **gently** that He will **not break** it. And if a **wick** is **smoldering** - it just has smoke coming out of it - **Jesus** the servant will **gently blow** the smoking wick until it **fans into a flame** again. The idea is that **Jesus deals** with people ever so **gently** and **tenderly** - **helping** people along - until the **bruised reed is strong** - and the **smoldering wick is a full flame**
- Just because **someone** might **appear broken** and **beyond repair** to us - doesn't mean they are broken and **beyond repair** for **Jesus** to fix
(pause)

- **Jesus wants us to have His heart towards the lowly, the broken and the hurting - it's easy to pass people like that by - like the priest on the road to Jericho passed by the man who had been robbed and beaten (Luke 10)**
- Still v3 - This **Servant Jesus** will be **faithful** to His **mission** and bring about true justice - **without faltering** or **being discouraged**
- V4 - This justice will be throughout the **whole Earth** - not just Israel -
- **People everywhere** have the **opportunity** to put their **hope in Him**

How will this happen?

[PowerPoint 4-Light]

- See V6 - God will make this servant Jesus - a **covenant** - a **new agreement** with people - Jesus will be a **shining light** - not just to Israel but to the **Gentiles**
- And His **job** will be to **open** the **eyes** of those who are spiritually blind
- He will **bring people** out of the **prison** and **dark dungeon** of their **sinful lives**
- And bring them **into His glorious light** - so they can see **God's truth**
- **How can** the people of **Isaiah's day** be **sure** this will happen?
- See V8
- Because **God is the Lord** - YHWH - by His Holy Name - it has to happen as He promises - because He is the **one true God** - and the **only one full of glory** - and who **always keeps His promises**
- And because V9 - **All those things** He promised in the past have **happened** - so **we can be sure** **future things** He promises **will take place** too

Which brings us to our NT reading from Luke 2:22-40 [\[Please turn there now\]](#)

And the **fulfilment of the promise** that God made through Isaiah

The Light of the World Comes (Luke 2:22-40)

- Jesus this **Promised Servant** has been **born of a virgin- Mary** - through the power of the HS - as we learnt on **Christmas Day**
- And we pick up the story where Jesus' earthly parents - Mary and Joseph - follow the **purification rules of the OT law** - and take the baby to the **Temple**

[\[PowerPoint 5-Temple\]](#)

- **Lev 12** - says a **woman** who gives birth to a baby is **ceremonially unclean** for **7 days** (like she is during her **monthly period**)
- Then on **8th day** - a baby boy born must be **circumcised** - as per v21
- Then the **woman** must **wait 33 days** to be purified from her bleeding (Lev 12:4)
- After this purification time (33 days) - see v22 of Luke 2
- The woman must make a **sacrifice** at the temple of a **lamb** and a **young pigeon or dove**
- If she **can't afford a lamb** - she is to bring **2 doves or 2 young pigeons**
- Mary and Joseph - v24 - brought a **pair of pigeons or doves** - showing that they were not rich at all - and that **Jesus** had been **born** into a **poor** and **humble** home - not a palace fit for a king - showing Jesus is available to everyone
- Just because Mary and Joseph were the **earthly parents** of the Son of God -**doesn't mean God's Law doesn't apply** to them

[PowerPoint 6-Simeon]

- When they were at the **temple** they came across a **righteous** and **devout man** named **Simeon** - v25
- He was waiting for the **consolation of Israel** - meaning he was waiting for a time when Israel would be **comforted** or **encouraged** - **means waiting for the promised Messiah**
- He had the HS spirit with Him and v26 - the **HS promised Simeon** he **would not die before He saw the Messiah**
- This promised Servant - **God's Chosen One** - the one promised back in Isaiah - 600 years earlier - is **finally here**
- So, with the **help of the HS** - v27 - **Simeon** happened to be in the **temple** at the **same time** as **Mary** and **Joseph** and the **baby**
- And v28 - Simeon took that **baby** in his **arms**
- V29 - Simeon confirms **God's promise has been fulfilled** and **Simeon** can now **die in peace**
- Because V30 - He has seen **God's salvation** in his **arms** - he is actually **holding** the **salvation** of the **world**
- Simeon goes onto to say v32 - This baby will not only be Saviour for Israel but a **light to the non-Jews** - the **Gentiles**
- This baby will **enable people** to come out of the **spiritual darkness** of their sin - and into His glorious **light**
- This baby will enable people to have their **sins forgiven** and be **reconciled to God**
- Simeon goes on to say in v34
- This child is destined to **cause the falling and rising of many** in Israel

- This will be shown later - in the **way** that men like - **Peter** and **Paul repented** - and men like **Judas betrayed**. And in the way that **one thief** next to Jesus on the cross - **blasphemed** and the **other thief** next to Jesus on the cross **believed**. **Jesus** is like a **magnet** that is **attractive** to **some** but **others** are **repelled** from Him
- And that's still the **same today** - some **people accept Jesus** - **others reject Him**
- Still v34 - Jesus will be a **sign spoken against** - basically a **target** that **people shoot at**. That happened in Jesus' life on Earth - he was the **target** for the **Scribes** and **Pharisees** and the **Romans** - and He is **still a target** for **people** to shoot at **today**
- And **because** He is a **target** - **open** for **criticism** and rejection - as well as **acceptance** - **Jesus** also **exposes peoples' true colours** - He **reveals** what's in people's **hearts** - and in their **thoughts** - v35
- His rejection in His lifetime will also cause a **sword to pierce his own mother's soul** - v35. It was important for Mary to know that mothering the Messiah would **not all** be sweetness and light. It was both a **great privilege** and a **great burden** for her.
- There was someone else in the temple - that day

[PowerPoint 7-Anna]

- **Anna** - a prophet - a **widow** - V37
- She was a **woman of worship** and **prayer** and **never left the temple** - such a **close walk with God**
- She also **came up to Mary and Joseph** that day - v38
- And she spoke about how **Jesus** would **redeem God's people**

- **Redeem** means to **buy back** something
- Jesus will grow up to **buy people back to God**
- To **buy back** something back **costs** something
- It **costs Jesus His life** - on a **cross** - He **took sin off us** - and **put** it on Himself
- And gave us a **new life of forgiveness** - and then through his **resurrection** - a gift of **eternal life**
- If we should **choose** to **accept** this **gift**

The bottom line is, **Jesus is the Light of the World**

[PowerPoint 8-Darkness to Light]

who enables people to come **out** of the **darkness** of **sin** - into the **Light** of **God**.

How will **we** **respond** to the Light of the World?

[PowerPoint 9-Heading]

Our Response to the Light of the World

1. **First**, we must **believe** that Jesus is the **Light of the World** - & come & walk in His Light all the days of our life and keep away from the darkness of sin.

[PowerPoint 9a-Believe]

As the Apostle John says in John 1:5-6 ⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. (1 John 1:5-6)

2. Second, we must understand - as the Apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 5:8 - that we were once in darkness but now we are in the Light of the Lord and we must live as **children of light**.

[PowerPoint 9b-children of light]

And Jesus defines what it means to be children of light - in Matthew 5:14-16: **14** "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

What will it look like for us to be lights of the world?

It will look like: **doing to others what you would have them do to you (Matt 7:12 - Golden rule)**

- Would you like to be **left** in the **darkness** of your **sin**? Then **don't leave** others in the **darkness** of their **sin**?
- Do you like it when people get **in your face** and try to tell you what to believe? If you don't - then don't do it to others. Be **gentle** in how you **share Jesus** with them?
- Do you appreciate it when people say one thing and do the complete opposite and act like a **hypocrite**? Then you **don't** do it.
- Do you like it when someone is **kind** to you? Then you **be kind**?
- If you were **hungry**, how would you want someone to treat you?
- If you want to be **fed**, then **feed others**.
- If you **appreciate being loved**, then **love others**.
- If you **appreciate being helped**, then **help others**.

As Jesus says **whatever** you do to the **least** - **you do it for me** (Matt 25:40)

Friends, let us **imitate Jesus** - the **Light of the World** - and bring His light of love to our community

Let's pray...

Benediction (Rev 21:22-27)

Let me leave us with a picture of Heaven - and true Light

²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.