

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places...(Quality: very good)

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[0 : 00] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the book of Isaiah, chapter 52, and verse 9.

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

Chapter 52, the book of Isaiah, and the ninth verse. I am sure that a word like this, and it is the word of God, must be attractive to all of you who are sinners born again.

It sets forth the experience you would like to be found in more often than you are. How glad you would be if you could break forth into joy and sing in your soul's experience, and feel a real, living, heartfelt interest in the things of God, and know beyond all questioning that you had a part and lot with his dear people.

Break forth into joy. And now I will approach the subject, as the Lord shall help me, from three viewpoints, but in approaching those three viewpoints, I will ask you a question.

[2 : 10] I do like, as grace is given, to preach and to teach. I have long been trying to preach, and I do desire in preaching to teach.

And now this word enjoins upon you, sinners who were born again, people taught of God, break forth into joy.

And now what is there to hinder you doing it? Let your consciences ponder that question. Here is the injunction.

Break forth into joy. Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem. You may say, Oh, but my soul is indeed a waste place as regards my present experience.

Marks of grace I cannot show. All polluted is my breast. Yet I weary am I know, and the weary long for rest. And the question of breaking forth into joy, Oh, it is so high.

[3 : 29] I cannot attend to it. Eh, but what you must remember is this. It is attainable. Do remember that.

I thought as I pondered this subject, and it was laid on my mind with some weight, I hope, to bring before you, hoping it might be a word in season, I really try to think of it as a kind of subject to do with harvest time.

And when you come to view the matter aright, it does remind us of harvest time, because the harvest fields now are just waste places.

The fields are just fields of stubble. Waste places. And the passerby can look upon them, and if he is one who is taught of God, he could break forth into joy, that when another harvest time comes around, as God shall order it, those fields will sing with that which is growing thereon.

The goodness of God made known, as I read to you. And you must not overlook the wording of the word of God, and think it is just something fanciful.

[5 : 12] You must never forget it is inspired of God, and it speaks about the little hills rejoice on every side, the pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys also were covered over with corn, they shout for joy, they also sing.

So that while at the present time before your mind's eye there are just waste places, yet you know the harvest has been gathered in, and you know this, if all is well, there will be yet another harvest to be gathered in, in the year to come.

All who live will see it. The faithfulness of God will bring it to pass. But, this is the point I want to emphasize.

I said, what was there to hinder you breaking forth into joy? The Savior said, when he dwelt on earth, and you will not question what the Savior said, will you?

You might sometimes wonder what preachers say, and think twice about it, but you must never do that with what the Savior said. And the Savior said, come, for all things are now ready.

[6 : 43] Come. But they made light of it. The invitation was not acceptable. One went to his farm, another to his merchandise, and they would have none of it.

And yet, what the Savior said was a sweet, blessed reality, and it remains just the same this Sabbath afternoon.

Come! For all things are now ready. Jesus ready stands to save you. The Holy Spirit is ready to help you if you ask his divine aid to lead you into the truth of which he is the glorious author.

God the Father is ready to make you welcome as a poor sinner seeking salvation.

The throne of grace is open still. And the fountain is open for sin and for uncleanness.

[7 : 59] And the gospel is still preached to you. And the table is spread. And God has his servants everywhere to spread it as it were.

Preach the gospel. The poor have the gospel preached unto them. And there is still the righteousness of God which avails for poor sinners who have none of their own.

All things essential to our soul's eternal welfare. All things are now ready. And everything hinges on this.

come for all things are now ready. And now dear friends you will see what the preacher is aiming at.

The onus of you and I not knowing much about breaking in joy is on our own heads. when prayer is a burden and task no wonder I little receive.

[9 : 12] O Lord make me willing to ask since thou art so ready to give. And now that is the approach to our subject.

And now I just look at the setting of it for it is very striking. And now Isaiah dear godly prophet that he was one who was outstanding so that his prophecy which he was inspired of God to record is often styled the gospel according to Isaiah.

And there is oh so much gospel to be found in it. And yet he lived over 700 years before Jesus Christ was born a baby in Bethlehem.

And when he was inspired to record the chapter where our subject is found it was about a hundred years or so before Israel were to go into Babylonian captivity.

And Isaiah knew he would never live to see that day dawn and when they would be delivered after being there for 70 years long.

[10 : 32] But God inspired them to record this word and when they wept by the rivers of Babylon they pondered this word in their hearts and they knew that there was a day to dawn the time set by God after 70 years I will visit you and God was pleased to do it and when they returned to the land of promise all they could see whichever way they looked were waste places the cities were just in ruins Jerusalem had her walls all broken down and Solomon's temple a thing of beauty and joy in the building of it no longer existed and there were only just odd stones here and there to show where it had stood waste places and yet you find this dear godly

Isaiah I feel a great unity of spirit to him as a prophet of the Lord because he did proclaim tidings of great joy and now he says here to these Babylonish captives as he viewed them a hundred odd years later when all that was mortal of him would be laid in the grave O Zion that bring this good tidings get thee up into the high mountain O Jerusalem that bring this good tidings lift up thy voice with strength lift it up be not afraid say unto the cities of Judah behold your God and now when those who returned and there were those whose hearts were stirred up by God to do so when the seventy years ended when they arrived as I said they saw all the cities in ruins and now says

Isaiah behold your God not the cities in the ruins in which they are before your eyes do not look around at what is to be seen and which can only distress you and make you cast down look up behold your God and if you help to do that you will break forth into joy ye waste places of Jerusalem because he who is your God who can limit his power is there anything too hard for the Lord and if you are helped to behold your God these cities will rise again and they did so did Jerusalem and another temple wherein

God was worshipped a right and many of Israel's hosts did again people the land of promise you may say oh but then all that is to do with Israel what is that to do with us it is a great thing to do with us the word of God says whatsoever things were written for our time were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort in the scriptures might have hope you might go around and you do and you hear what people have to say about our causes of truth how they are going down many of them dying and many alas are dead in my lifetime in the ministry I can number up between 60 and 70 causes of truth that were living when I began in my ministry and in many of them

I was helped to preach to good congregations to do these things

[16 : 02] I am sure this is the way dear friends God helped you and the preacher too to walk in it this is the way in which God will return to Zion as you look to him alone and not seek by any man made machinery or organisations however good they may be however well intentioned they may be and depend on them for what they do to bring about a better state in Zion no no you have to learn in every aspect of truth none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good you must learn to stand alongside Isaiah behold your God and plead with him as the church's living head revive thy work in the midst of the years in the midst of the years make known in wrath remember mercy and now

I want to look at this word as it affects you and the preacher too I mean from an individual view point break forth into joy sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem for the Lord hath comforted his people he hath redeemed Jerusalem and now it might be I'm not fitting any caps on I'm just preaching to you what is given to me as I'm helped to meditate and as out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks and so I say it might be I'm drawing a bow at a venture I should be glad if it was otherwise but I'm very much afraid I shall hit the mark with some of you it might be that if you told the truth as to how you are in your soul's experience you you are you are in a waste place you have known better days in your soul than you know at the present time you can go back it may be and remember good days when the things of

God were precious to you but alas according to your feelings at the present time your soul is a waste place you look within and you have to lament if I turn my eyes within all is dark and vain and wild full of unbelief and sin can I deem myself a child and as for thinking of breaking forth into joy in the state that you feel to be in it seems to you impossible yes but then you must not forget what the word of God tells you it is not what you think about it the things which are impossible with men are possible with

God and God has given some wonderful words in the word of his grace to help you to take courage to go to him with your case your waste places in your soul's experience what has he said he has promised to pour water upon him that is thirsty listen and floods upon the dry ground and you know how Ezekiel was taught a lesson which he never forgot as long as he was a prophet onwards son of man can these dry bones live Ezekiel could not tell if they were dead or alive as he viewed them the valley of dry bones oh lord thou knowest yes but then god enabled them to live and ultimately they stood upon their feet an exceeding great army and that which seemed to be so hopeless in the outlook was brought to pass a beautiful picture of what god is able to do according to his will yes much might be said under that heading break forth into joy sin together ye waste places of

Jerusalem here Jerusalem you must remember sets forth the church of Christ and all who belong to her down through the ages and I hope that includes quite a goodly number of you whether you are in our churches yet or no and now I want to work this out from this viewpoint there are three things here I want to say just a little on one is the experience of being in a waste place in our soul and the other is the exhortation even then to break forth into joy and look at the encouragement there is encouragement if you help to break forth into joy you will have something to joy about and it will be this for the Lord hath comforted his people he hath redeemed

[22 : 23] Jerusalem and now regarding you poor sinner in your waste place how has it come about that your soul is a waste place what have you been doing have you been doing something which the word of God does not allow have you become slack in the things of God oh you consume find your soul become a waste place I've said sometimes that you can go down from Jerusalem to Jericho although it was 15 miles to go you can do it in a couple of minutes yes it is only to fall a prey to what you are by nature and become irritable fretful murmuring or your temper to rise up and get the better of you and down you go and that is what you are before man and when you try to appear before

God you are a waste place in your soul a sorrowful soul and you have that which you desire to tell him all the truth about it I have erred and strayed like a lost sheep and you can go on but I do not forget thy commandments Lord I know I have not behaved aright I have fallen a prey to what I am by nature I have done mischief to others hurt them Lord I come to thee to sort matters out and put them right between them and me and me and thee and you need all that to be done and God will be pleased to do it if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and when he is pleased to do that and you know that matters are made right again between

God and you then you can and you do break forth into joy it is the joy of the Lord and there is strength in it break forth into joy sin together ye waste places sin and I might just say that there are other means whereby your soul can become a waste place do remember how the Adam fall took place everything hinges on that as regards all the waste places there are to earth remotest bounds sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death has passed upon all men for that all have sinned and you know it is sin as you yield to it either in thought word or deed that begets in your soul's experience waste places and even while you are committing these things there is something which warns you as to what the outcome will be yes and yet you do it how sad our state by nature is crowds of ill thoughts their bane diffuse proud envious false unclean and every ransacked corner shows an unsuspected sin

I think too of the world as you and I go about in it I do not go about in it very much nowadays but many of you do you have to go out to earn the bread which perisheth and labour it may be farther afield and therefore you come in touch with the world and you know what the spirit of it is and you know if you are a sinner born again that in having to do with the world and the spirit of it your soul soon becomes a waste place I do I do like I do like our hymn writer in his petition and he says save me from this bewitching world which has to death ten thousand hurled it is a good adjective bewitching for that is just what the spirit of the world is you're captivated by it you look at the daily papers you might listen to the radio and it may be some of you see television and you go up and down the city streets and you see the shop windows and you look at this and that and through eye gate and ear gate your soul becomes a waste place and what can you say when at length you appear before

God oh my God I am ashamed I blush to lift up my face unto thee you feel just like godly Ezra did you do not think about then breaking forth into joy yet there is that to come if you are helped to do what the woman in the gospel did when she fell down at Jesus feet and told him all the truth go and do likewise yes not only so break forth into joy sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem and now not only the world but think how time things bring our souls into a waste place and you know there is so much to do for some folk you each have got your spheres in life and your spheres in life take up your time to fill them aright and they take up your thoughts and maybe through the concentration of mind that you give to doing this and that and still thinking how shall we do in this and that which still remains to be done you find at the end of the day that you are in a waste place in your soul the things of

[29 : 47] God have not been uppermost the things of everyday life time things have swallowed up all that you desired to be and you have lost your spiritual mindedness and you were just carnally minded and that is death as regards your soul experience all these waste places dear friends there is also another thought and that is our circumstances can bring us into waste places God may begin to deal with us and he may deal with us in such a way that something comes into our life which we have looked not for he may give us shaken up in our soul's experience he may send some affliction some heavy stroke some bereavement something comes into our lives that alters our life from that time onward and unless you have got grace to help in that time of need you will react against it and think and why should this be and why should that be and you will be in a very sad frame of mind you will be rebellious and what does it say the rebellious should dwell in a dry land and so do you at such a time your soul is in a waste place because

God is dealing with you and you cannot as yet accept his dealings as coming from him who is too wise to her and too good to be unkind and yet that is just what God is and in all his dealings with you he only designs to do you good and he deals in love do think of it it needs to be thought about deeper down he deals in love to you as many as I love I rebuke and chasten be zealous therefore and repent love to you to think that God should love you and deal with you at all when he might damn you and be just in doing it but he deals with you in love to save you therefore his chastenings therefore prize the privilege of a saint their hearts are hard who this despise and theirs too weak who faint much might be said along this line of thought but just another thought comes to my mind regarding these waste places and how they come into our souls and now you might be

I said you might be I leave it for you to decide whether you are you might be in a back sliding state you might have become very formal in your religion your profession and much of it has narrowed down to just chapel going and you have not been very earnest in following on to know the Lord lately and there are some things come into your life which have captivated you and you are in your soul's experience at the ends of the earth and afar off and the truth is your soul is a waste place and it is you by your doings and dealings that have wasted your soul's experience so that you have lost a while that which you have tasted handled and felt of the peace of

God in your soul much might be said along that line of thought but I must just look at the other viewpoints of the subject break forth into joy sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem and now what is it to break forth into joy that is the other side of the subject I hope you know what that is go back to when you first of all did it when you first of all did break forth into joy surely it was the joy of hope the joy of hope in God let let your consciences tell you when first of all something said inside you who can tell but what God will be gracious unto me and you felt hope in

God it is a wonderfully sweet feeling and sweet is the remembrance of it as some of us look back and try to think about it before God that he should give us hope something like Joseph Hart says in one of his hymns I look for hell and he gave me heaven hope good hope through grace oh that will help you to break forth into joy there is the joy when you break forth as you realize the Lord has appeared for you in matters that you have laid before him the majesty of heaven when you can say like Hannah for this child I prayed and his name is Samuel asked of God think of the joy of answers to prayer the psalmist said blessed be

[36 : 30] God for he hath heard my prayer turned away is mercy from me think too of the joy when you first heard the gospel in its power and preciousness when it was in your soul good tidings of great joy when you and the preacher could walk together in agreement when you could say like the church in Solomon's song the watch men that go about the city they found me and you were found and found in the city an inhabitant of Zion and you could but break forth into joy although it might not have been great joy but it was real and how glad you were when you first of all realized it in your soul's experience break forth into joy there is the joy of deliverance in times of trouble and how many deliverances some of us have had a long life's way he hath delivered thee in six troubles and in seven there hath no evil befallen thee and you can look back and see how the

Lord has been to you what he declared the Lord is good a stronghold in the day of trouble and he knoweth them that trust in him break forth into joy Nehemiah said and so does Ezra too in their books the hand of our God was upon us for good and to see the hand of God at work on your behalf will help you to break forth into joy and you can say the Lord of horses with us and the God of Jacob is our refuge then to see how the Lord fulfills promises it may be after years of waiting for them to be performed but at length he fulfills them to you the word of the Lord oh that will help you to break forth into joy then there is the joy of forgiveness of sins and that is the highest joy that you can attain to as you journey on through life to know that matters are right between your soul and

God and that he has said to you I will be merciful to your unrighteousness and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more much might be said along this line of thought but I must come to the Amen break forth into joy sin together ye waste places of Jerusalem there is also this joy and now you do know more of that it may be there is the joy of worship and you know sometimes you have come up to worship God and felt so unfit for it I wonder whenever you did feel fit for it what does it really mean to feel to be fit for the worship of God what do you sing sometimes the vile sinner out of hell who lives to feel his need is welcome to the throne of grace the saviour's blood to plead it is not a question of fitness only as heart views it all the fitness he require it is to feel your need of him and this he gives you tis his spirit rising beam but oh you have come sometimes to worship and wondered if there would be anything for you under the gospel or in the worship of

God and might even have been tempted not to come because you felt as you judged so unfit for the worship of God and then you came and what did you find oh you found that ere long all your cast down feelings seemed to melt away and you felt as you liked to feel and you could say here would I find a settled rest while others go and come no more a stranger or a guest but like a child at home and you could break forth into the joy of worship sometimes you have done it in singing the songs of Zion and made melody in your heart sometimes you have heard the gospel in its power as

I said earlier on and that has delighted you because your case was traced out and you thought the preacher knew nothing whatever about it but his master did and you went on your way helped with a little help and you could break forth into joy yeah you got comfort as our subject suggests and it says here break forth into joy sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem for the Lord hath comforted his people he hath redeemed Jerusalem and now do listen even if I keep you a minute to make it plain because heaven or hell may hang on it and you might as well spend a minute or two to get that matter made plain and now if you have known the great mercy of what it is to be comforted in the worship of

[43 : 20] God and under the gospel and with answers to prayer and helps by the way and hope in God so that you can look back and feel comforted as you review the way you have come along and feel having obtained help of God I continue unto this day oh to have such comfort means this if God has comforted you from that viewpoint it is because he has redeemed you you have got an interest in what was done on Calvary's cross and it will never be undone as long as you live and all the joy you get in this life is you are helped here a little there a little to break forth in it is only an earnest of what awaits you beyond the grave when you dwell with the blissful hosts above and it is said in thy presence is fullness of joy and that thy right hand is laid up pleasures forever more and there is just one word here that you must take home and think about because

I do believe that you somehow have overlooked it in your reading in the word of God the dear saviour said to his disciples ask that your joy may be full there you see it brings it back the onus is on your head ask that your joy may be full ask and ye shall receive seek and ye shall find knocking that shall be opened unto you every one that asketh receiveth and he that seeketh findeth and to him that knocketh it shall be opened the

Lord help you to lay these things to heart Amen