

## **Behold Your God**

### **Text: Isaiah 40:9–11**

The Lord God will come with strong hand...behold, his reward is with him" (Isaiah 40:10).

### **Message**

#### **1. Man's search for God.**

This text depicts God coming in search of sinful man—in power—rewarding those who accept Him. In other religions, the exact reverse pertains—sinful man searches for God but never finds Him.

Turn to Romans 10, where the apostle Paul vividly shows the fruitless search of man for God. "Who shall ascend," they say, "to bring us salvation? And who shall descend," they say, "to deliver us from death?"

This all began in the Garden of Eden. There it was not necessary to ask, "Who shall ascend?" For God himself descended every evening to fellowship with man. Neither was it necessary to ask, "Who shall descend?" For there was no death. There were no graves in the Garden of Eden.

Then the devil tempted Adam and Eve and changed all that. Sin and death came like a great curtain, blocking access to God. Man was alienated from God. The evenings became empty—like the sinner's life. God never came down again to fellowship with men.

It was on that day that the cries first went up: "Who shall ascend?" and "Who shall descend?"

These are the cries of every religion, the promise of every prophet. "Follow us," they say, "and we will show you the way to God." But they fail, for they themselves fall victim to sin and death. The blind lead the blind, and both fall in the ditch. Adam's race is a lost race.

#### **2. God's intervention.**

Into this dilemma God stepped. Our God! Behold Him! The God of love. The God of holiness. The Just and the Justifier. Isaiah described it with wonder. He started his 53rd chapter by saying, "Who hath believed our report?" What he saw was too good to be true. If he told it, no one would believe it.

#### **3. The prophet's vision.**

What did Isaiah see? He saw the plan by which God would save the world. He saw God leave His glory in search of man. He saw the Creator become creature. He saw the creature turn on the Creator and crucify Him. He saw the Savior die, not for sins He had committed, but 'he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes ye are healed!' Unbelievable! Incredible! Who would believe such a report?

But he saw more. He saw Him numbered among the transgressors. He saw Him laid in the grave with the wicked. What an unbelievable report!

Then the scene changed, and Isaiah saw Him risen from the dead. He saw the grave unable to hold Him. He saw Him seated with God in heaven. He saw Him review the pain and suffering He had been through without regret. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11).

#### **4. Believe the report.**

Then Isaiah saw one more thing—the answer to his second question. "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" he asked. To whom does He come with a strong hand? Who benefits from the travail of His soul? Who is rewarded? Why, those who believe the report, of course! Who else? To believe the report is to be saved. To believe the report is to experience the strength of His arm. To believe the report is to enjoy the reward He brings with Him.

#### **5. Behold your God.**

And it all happened as Isaiah saw it. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the question, "Who shall ascend?" became redundant. The search was over. God had once again come down!

It now became a matter of faith. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," Paul wrote in Romans 10:9. That's the first thing you have to do. You have to believe it was God who came down. You have to confess, like Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).

But there's more. You've got to believe He rose from the dead. "[If thou] shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead," Paul continued. Two things, and only two, are necessary for salvation—and both require faith. The Incarnation and the Resurrection are the very heart of God's plan

of salvation. To be saved you must believe God came down—Incarnation—and God came up—Resurrection.

It's as simple as that, and as essential. Jesus is the new Way; God came down in search of man. Jesus is the living Way. He rose from the dead. He lives!

That is why Paul said in Romans 10, “But the righteousness that is by faith says: ‘Do not say in your heart, “Who will ascend into heaven?” ’ or “Who will descend into the deep?” ’ ” (verses 6,7 NIV).<sup>1</sup> The righteousness that is of faith tells us, “The word is near you: it is in your mouth and in your heart” (verse 8). There is no need to search. “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved!”

This is the message we must take to those still asking, “Who shall ascend?” and “Who shall descend?” Through our lives and ministry, we must show them the One who came down to save them. Behold the new way! Behold the living way! Behold your God!

—Morris Williams

#### **Endnote**

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