

PASSAGE -

“But now listen, Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen. This is what the LORD says— he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams. Some will say, ‘I belong to the LORD’; others will call themselves by the name of Jacob; still others will write on their hand, ‘The LORD’S,’ and will take the name Israel.”

(Isaiah 44:1–5 NIV11-GK)

THEME STATEMENT - Take hope! Even through difficult times God never abandons His promises.

I. INTRO - Sixth Sense ‘99

- A. The end of the movie reveals Bruce Willis is dead
- B. Re-watching the movie after knowing Bruce Willis is dead
 - 1. Pick up on clues that Bruce Willis is dead
 - 2. Bruce Willis never moves anything except when he is around just the boy

II. BACKGROUND - Location of the passage

- A. Babylonian Expansion
 - 1. Isaiah informs the Israelites that they will be exiled by Babylon if they do not repent
 - 2. Chapter 43 that precedes this verse has the message of exile
 - a) “Review the past for me, let us argue the matter together; state the case for your innocence. Your first father sinned; those I sent to teach you rebelled against me. So I disgraced the dignitaries of your temple; I consigned Jacob to destruction and Israel to scorn.”
Isaiah 43:26–28 NIV11-GK
 - b) The Israelites are not repenting and they continue to sin against God
 - c) They are eventually exiled and sent to live in foreign land
 - d) It was not a short amount of time that they were exiled
 - (1) 70 years that was then expanded by seven times

III. Israel the Chosen - Despite all this, Israel is still the chosen one

- A. “But now listen, Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen. This is what the LORD says— he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.”
Isaiah 44:1–2 NIV11-GK
- B. “But Now” provides a sharp contrast from Israel being destroyed to being the Chosen One
- C. Isaiah 44:1 is shifting from a cursed message of exile to hope in being the chosen
- D. The change and hope is to help them to not be afraid
- E. The help and hope to not be afraid during the exile should come from remembering God has chosen them.
 - 1. The verse sandwiches the help/don’t be afraid between Chosen

III. Promise of the Holy Spirit - The Chosen will receive the Spirit

- A. “For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.”
Isaiah 44:3 NIV11-GK
 - 1. God will pour out His spirit on Israel
 - a) Despite the preceding message of their need to repent or be exiled -
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V. The Fulfillment - New Covenant

- A. The passage is using the imagery of new creation, new life linked to the benefit of being the Chosen
- B. It is alluding to the new covenant and pouring out of the Holy Spirit
- C. “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” Acts 2:1–4 NIV11-GK
- D. “because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts 8:16–17 NIV11-GK
- E. The Holy Spirit has been provided to Christians by Jesus dying on the cross

VI. The Promise of Growth - Many will spring up

- A. “They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams. Some will say, ‘I belong to the LORD’; others will call themselves by the name of Jacob; still others will write on their hand, ‘The LORD’S,’ and will take the name Israel.” Isaiah 44:4–5 NIV11-GK
- B. They will be of many
 1. Exile, the nation is going to be conquered, life as you might know it is over
 2. Your country is gone
 3. Numbers should decrease but instead Isaiah is stating they will increase, spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.
- C. Who are the offspring, the grass in the meadow?
 1. Scholars are actually split on verse 5
 - a) Some say it is only Jews who are now proud to be identified as such
 - b) Others say it is Gentiles
 2. My answer is Gentiles
 - a) The reason is the scholars who say it is Jews say Isaiah knows nothing of a mission to the Gentiles so why would he be referencing them in verse 5
 - b) My belief is that it is the Gentiles because Isaiah makes references in other passages of all nations coming to God so he does have knowledge of the Gentiles mission and coming to God

(1) “In the last days the mountain of the LORD’S temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and **all nations** will stream to it. **Many peoples** will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” Isaiah 2:2–3 NIV11-GK

(2) “So the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge the LORD. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and keep them.” Isaiah 19:21 NIV11-GK

(3) “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the **Gentiles**, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 49:6 NIV11-GK

VII. Fulfillment - The apostles preach and bring God’s Word to the Gentiles

- A. In the beginning of the Apostles ministry the Church grew significantly through

VII. Fulfillment - The apostles preach and bring God's Word to the Gentiles

A. In the beginning of the Apostles ministry the Church grew significantly through both Jews and Gentiles

1. "repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:47-49 NIV11-GK
 - a) The power they were waiting for is the Holy Spirit that they received in Acts 2:1-4
2. "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles." Acts 10:44-45 NIV11-GK
3. "I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?" When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life." Acts 11:16-18 NIV11-GK

B. The Israelites facing the exile did not know this was exactly what was coming but like in the Sixth Sense we can now see the hope God was providing the Israelites facing the hard times of the exile to come

1. We should have the same hope during our times of struggle

VIII. Applying the Word

A. How do we approach struggle

1. The Israelites were facing exile during the time Isaiah prophesied this passage
2. The Israelites did not know how the New Covenant and Jesus dying on the cross was going to be their redeeming factor
3. They only knew that somehow despite the exile they were God's chosen, they were going to receive the Holy Spirit and they were going to multiply
4. It was through this that they were able to have hope that God will provide
5. Do we draw near to God during times of struggle?
6. Do we remember the promises that God has already fulfilled?
7. Do we look forward to what God has promised us?
 - a) Love
 - b) Faithfulness
 - c) Caring for us
 - d) Salvation