

LIVING WATER FOR WALKING AND WORKING IN THE DESERT

Scripture: Isaiah 43:16-21

March 23, 2020

It is a late August/early September morning. Temperatures hover around 95°(F) at 7:00AM and will rise from 110° to greater than 115° by midday. Even in this heat, work is performed wearing thick pants, long-sleeved shirts, and gloves which protect one's flesh from becoming 'baked' in the desert sun. Bandanas are worn over the face in an attempt to prevent inhaling the fine dust which constantly swirls. Ten-minute hydration breaks are required after 50-minutes of exposure. This is a brief glimpse of work in a Middle Eastern desert.

Was ancient Palestine this hot and arid; did Jesus work and minister, at times, under these weather conditions? Perhaps. Scripture indicates that our Lord did face harsh physical hardships - hunger, pain, even death on the cross.

But our Lord also taught us that even more destructive than physical hardship and harsh weather is the spiritual damage wrought by sin, specifically our personal sin, which can potentially be eternally fatal. Idolatry, pride, arrogance, lust, and greed leave our souls "baked" under its deceptively withering glare. As a consequence, our attitude and response toward others (and God) may often be insensitive, impatient, less kind, less gentle, less loving, and more self-serving.

Isaiah wrote: *'...for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people.
The people whom I formed
for myself
so that they may declare my praise'*

Jesus clearly demonstrated that God fulfills His promises. Jesus made time to seek God, to pray and talk with His Father (Our Father), and to tarry in His presence at every opportunity. God bathed Jesus with His 'Living Water' of Love and Grace, such that Jesus withstood every physical, *emotional*, and *spiritual* hardship, (again) even death on the cross.

God will do no less for us. He will rehydrate/ refresh our soul with His 'Living Water' by giving us His Peace, His Guidance, His Wisdom; when we take time in our busy lives to tarry but a few minutes with Him. By His Grace, our sins will be forgiven and His Will be done, and we will 'declare our praise for Him'.

Prayer: Lord, give us the 'living water' to refresh our soul so we can continually praise Your Holy Name! Amen.

Mike Spratt, Scott Depot, WV
sprattmp@suddenlink.net