

The wilderness and the desert will be glad, and the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it will blossom profusely and rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Isaiah 35:1-2

Isaiah 35 marks the beginning of a new section of the book. The contrast between chapters 34 and 35 is sharp and unmistakable. One commentator puts it this way: "It is difficult to imagine a sharper contrast. In the previous chapter Isaiah announced the coming judgment; in this chapter (35) the prophet announces a coming deliverance. As the previous chapter looks far into the future to the Last Day, so this one also looks far into the future to the Last Day. Each provides a different perspective. One is the perspective of the Law; the other, the perspective of the Gospel."

When Jesus came to earth the first time, it was to earn salvation for all mankind. He accomplished that task, but not in the way one might expect. He assumed human flesh and humbled Himself to death on a cross in order to redeem the world. The Apostle John tells us of Jesus, that "we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). I remember hearing a definition of God's glory as the "shining forth of all God's attributes." In other words, God's glory is His total deity on display. Jesus displayed God's glory in His person and work during His incarnation, but Jesus' glory was couched in humility. He came to serve. He came to give His life as a ransom for the sin of mankind. On Easter Sunday, He rose victorious over sin, death, and Satan himself. By faith, we behold the glory of Jesus in His suffering and death and His Easter resurrection. But Jesus' glory is readily apparent only to those who behold Him through the eyes of faith.

This Jesus, who came once in humility as the servant of mankind, will come again in unmistakable glory as the King of kings. On the Last Day, those who rejected or ignored Him will be judged and condemned for their faithlessness, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 34. Those who have trusted Him as Savior will be perfected and share in His glory, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 35.

*Pastor Gary Jorgenson
Assistant to the AFLC President
Plymouth, Minnesota*