

STUDY 1 - Snapshot of the Messiah 1 (Isaiah 4:2-6)

Describe to the group the best view you've ever seen through the lens of a camera (or perhaps on the screen of a smartphone camera). What made the shot so special/memorable?

READ Isaiah 4:2-6

1. Flick back briefly to the beginning of Isaiah. What does the opening verse (1:1) tell us about:
 - (a) The genre?
 - (b) The author?
 - (c) The audience?
 - (d) The date?
2. Now flick forward to Isaiah 6:1-13. What does this chapter add to our understanding of the messenger and his message?
3. Now let's return to our original passage (Isa 4:2-6). "In that day" is a key phrase that first appears in chapter two (verses 11, 17, 20) and chapter three (verses 7, 18). Why do you think this day is initially presented in such a negative light?
4. What / Who is the "Branch of the LORD" (v. 2)? Check out Isaiah 11:1 and 53:2 for some more clues.

5. The arrival of this mysterious Branch will bring about a new day of purity and security for Israel¹ and Zion. Discuss how the following images illustrate these two ideas:

(a) The Holy City ~ *purity* (vv. 3-4)

(b) The Glorious Shelter ~ *security* (vv. 5-6)

READ 2 Peter 3:1-18

6. Isaiah 4:2-6 reveals a glorious future for God's people beyond judgment. As people who have come to find our refuge in the cross of Christ, how does Peter say we should live in light of the judgement to come (c.f. vv. 11-13)?

Implications

- In what ways are you most tempted to compromise your purity?
What about substituting your security in Christ for something else?
- How does this first snapshot of the Messiah help you to seek and savor Jesus even more than you have done so before?

Give thanks and pray

Thank God for the cross of Christ; pray for carols this Friday

¹ Note that the term "Israel" (v. 2) is used in different ways throughout Isaiah. On a few occasions it is used to refer specifically to the northern kingdom, but more often (as it does in our passage) it refers more generally to the covenant people of God.