**DRY PLACES**

*2 look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many. 3 The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.*

Isaiah 51:2-3

*18 I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs. ... 20 so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it.*

Isaiah 41:18,20

*43 “When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it.*

Matthew 12:43

I. The desert is losing its grip. (Matthew 11:2-6)

*2 When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples 3 to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” 4 Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: 5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. 6 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”*

A. Jesus encouraged John the Baptist to see symptoms of the desert losing its totalitarian grip on the most vulnerable to its violence.

B. Blessed is the one who doesn’t fall away in disappointment about the way God chooses to make the desert ...bloom; the Blind ...see; the deaf ...hear; the lame ...leap; the dumb ...speak; all things ...new.

II. Dry places

A. A dry place is an internal landscape: parched, barren, sweltering, empty, fruitless, inhospitable, shriveled up, drained, unoccupied, waterless, arid. Going through the motions of living but not being alive.

B. The enemy of a dry place is water, replenishment, milk and honey, deliverance, oases, rivers, water, rain, wells, fruitfulness.

III. Only devils are drawn to dry places.

A. Satan’s clearest roads of access into our lives are through dry places.

B. Water is the antidote to dry places. (I Kings 18:41)

*41 And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.”*

IV. Three dry places

A. Abraham

B. Sarah

C. The Woman with the issue of blood (Mark 5:25-34)

1. A word to the bleeding / A flow of blood with profound implications Socially, Financially, Mentally, Emotionally, Religiously, and Familially.

2. She was a living dead person for 12 years. (4,383 days; 144 months; 624 weeks; 105,192 hours) Some people are dying slowly around us in total isolation.

3. Her condition turned her into a social outcast: no hugs, kisses, marriage, children, no cooking or cleaning for family. No going to temple, synagogue, or any public place. Anything she touched was defiled.

4. According to the Jewish Mishnah tractate Niddah

V. What to do with a dry place?

A. Call it a dry place. (Don’t misname dry places.)

B. Laugh at its pretentious claims of finality.

C. Tell the crudest of desert jokes behind its back.

D. Roll your eyes sarcastically at the dry place and have pity on its approaching doom.