

## Behold Your God!

Sermon delivered on January 11th, 2015

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Text: *Isaiah 40:1-9*

### Introduction

As I have promised last Sunday, I am going to introduce to you our theme for this year. The theme for this new year 2015 is "**Behold your God!**" I took this phrase from ...

*Isaiah 40:9* O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, **Behold your God!**

These words were spoken by the prophet Isaiah to a **frightened, discouraged and depressed people**. The northern kingdom Israel was taken captive by Assyria, and the southern kingdom Judah was invaded and in exile in Babylon. Jerusalem and the Temple are in ruins, and have been so for long, to the point that **they think that God has forgotten them**. They have **lost hope**, they have **stopped expecting** and even **stopped desiring** to be released.

But in the midst of all that, God sent Isaiah to comfort and encourage the Jewish exiles in Babylon.

*Isaiah 40:1* Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. 2: Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

Go to my people and **comfort** them, reassure them, **give them hope**, by announcing to them with victorious confidence the certainty of the **approaching restoration**. This is the aim of the great prophecy which now occupies the last twenty-seven chapters of the Book of Isaiah.

*Isaiah 40:1* Comfort ye, comfort ye **my people**, saith **your God**.

I believe that is one of the two-fold task of the messengers of God - We are called **to comfort the afflicted** and **to afflict the comfortable**.

I don't know where you are today, you may be in financial difficulties, physical difficulties, emotional difficulties, marital difficulties, spiritual difficulties but in the midst of all that, **Behold your God!**

The greatest joy I have as a servant of God, a pastor, a preacher is that God has commissioned and authorized me to proclaim, **Behold your God!**

What a privilege it is to seek to set before men and women the character, the nature of the great God and great Saviour revealed in Holy Scriptures!

### **My Mission as a servant of God**

**Behold your God!** That is what I believe my calling is, to proclaim to you, **Behold your God!**

**To set before you God and His glory.** I want to be faithful to this calling. Please pray for me that every time I preach, people would go home from the preaching **sensing the presence of God**, feeling brought closer to God. **God is here!** Christ is in this assembly!

Psalm 27: 4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, **to behold the beauty of the LORD**, and to inquire in his temple.

To those who come with desire to behold the beauty of the Lord, that you will not be disappointed. That through the preaching **you will get what you came for** - to behold the beauty of the Lord! And that by beholding God and His beauty **you will have a deeper hunger and thirst for Him.**

That you will be so impressed with God, with His beauty, glory and greatness that you will want to know Him more, want to walk more intimately with Him.

I want people to go home from the preaching, thirsting and hungering for God.

Psalm 42:1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.  
2: My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm 63:1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2: To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

Psalm 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. 26: My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. 27: For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. 28: But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

And **to those who come to church not knowing why they come**, will be challenged to seek after God.

1 Corinthians 14:24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: 25: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and **so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.**

As they listen, their secret thoughts will be exposed, and they will fall to their knees and worship God, declaring, **"God is truly here among you."**

## Our Mission as a Church

God is calling Zion, calling Jerusalem, calling us, His people as messengers of good news, to climb up to a high mountain, to lift up our voices with strength, raise our voices loudly, and not be afraid; to say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" God is calling us to openly and boldly proclaim the good tidings, "Behold your God!"

But before we can declare "Behold your God!", **we must behold our God** ourselves.

I believe the greatest need of the Church of Jesus Christ today is not more programs, not more **seminars**, not more **conferences**, not more **revival meetings**, and not more **activities** though nothing wrong with all these, there is time and place for all these, but in my humble opinion our greatest need is **supernatural revelation of a supernatural God**. What we need is a great awakening of the heart and soul to who God is.

If we are to bring the good tidings to our community and to the world, we need a clear view of who God is. **Because apart from understanding the nature of God**, His **holiness**, His **righteousness**, His **justice**, His **anger**, His love, His **mercy**, His **grace**, the **Gospel will make no sense to us**. If we don't understand God's character, sin, justice, hell, the cross, forgiveness, justification will make no sense to us.

That is what I intend to do this year, a year-long look at our God! **I will be bringing a series of messages on the attributes of God**. We will look at who God is, what He is really like. Behold God as He is, who He is.

And as we behold God, as we behold His glory, His greatness and His goodness, my prayer is that **we will be transformed more and more in character** into the same image. I hope and pray that this will be a **life-changing journey and experience** for all of us.

## Made to know God

In the Scriptures we are called to know God ...

Job 22:21 Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee. God calls us to constantly gaze upon Him; to constantly stop and look and see Him for who He is; to get to know Him, to walk in intimate fellowship with Him.

Jeremiah 9:23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: 24: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Do you want to have true wisdom, experience true strength, enjoy true riches? **Know God!** True wisdom, true strength, true riches is found in knowing God. This is **ultimate purpose of our existence**. This why we were created. We were created **by God and for God**.

**Blaise Pascal** a French physicist and inventor, got it right when he said...

*"There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus."*

The highest good and deepest joy is found in knowing God, in beholding God, in God!

The great goal of these series of messages is God! **God is the goal.** To be brought to God.

### **God is an incomprehensible Being**

I am aware that God is incomprehensible. It would be **arrogant** or **presumptuous** of me to say, Behold your God! This is your God, in a year and promise that you will know and understand Him fully and completely. No. When we behold God, we will be lost in wonder at His infinite greatness.

### **This is what Zophar (Job's friend) experienced when he contemplated God ...**

[Job 11:7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?](#)

Can anyone attain to the searching out of God? Can anyone attain to the perfection of the Almighty? Can anyone attain a perfect knowledge of God? Can anyone search out and fully know the character of God?

### **The answer is obvious - No!**

[Job 11:8 It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? 9: The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.](#)

When we turn our thoughts to God's eternity, His power, His immensity, His wisdom, His love, His grace, His mercy, our minds are overwhelmed. All we can say is ...

[Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34: For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?](#)

### **This is not agnosticism**

This is not to say that we can know nothing about God as the Agnostics claim. It only means that we can never know Him fully. We can never exhaust the knowledge of Him, for He is infinite. God is incomprehensible and what may be known of God will take us an eternity to know.

So I am aware of the incomprehensibility of God, but the incomprehensibility of the divine nature should not keep us from praying with Moses in Exodus 33.

Moses had an life-changing encounter with God when God called him and when he was given the privilege to know God's name.

Moses had enjoyed a close communion with Jehovah. He had often heard the voice of God that called him, commanded him and guided him. Observe that it was not through another man that Moses communicated with God but rather he had a direct communion with God.

Exodus 33:11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend ...

But here in our text we read Moses pleading with God ...

Exodus 33:12 And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. 13: Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, **shew me now thy way, that I may know thee**, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

Exodus 33:18 ... I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

*"Lord, I know Your name, I know You know my name, but now I beseech thee, show me Your glory, allow me to behold Your glory!"*

Moses was not satisfied with just to knowing God's name, and that God knows his name, now he wants to have a sight of God's glory.

### **God is knowable**

God graciously answered Moses' prayer.

When Moses besought Jehovah for a sight of His glory, He answered him ...

Exodus 33:17 And the LORD said unto Moses, **I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken:** for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

Exodus 33:19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and **I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee**; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

Exodus 34:5 And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and **proclaimed the name of the LORD**. 6: And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. 8: And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

God has so graciously revealed of Himself in His Word. Because we are unable to acquire perfect knowledge, it would to our loss if we say, we will therefore make no efforts to attain to any degree of it.

### **Do you know God?**

My question is not, do you know things about God? But do you know Him?

### **Do you want to behold God?**

You must begin by beholding the Lamb!

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, **Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**

Have you beheld the Lamb of God? Have you looked to Jesus with the eye of faith? Do not look to Moses. Do not look to the law or the Ten Commandments, hoping by keeping the Ten Commandments will save you. The Ten Commandments was not meant to save us. It was meant to point us to the Saviour, who alone can take away your sins?

Look away from the law, look away from yourself, look away from your fellow human beings. But "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**"

Look to Jesus Christ who is able to remove your sins completely.

Come to Jesus Christ. Come to Him in repentance and faith. Come to Him confessing your sins. Come to Him relying only on His grace for your forgiveness and salvation. You may have been sinful and have been careless but Christ is just waiting for you to call upon Him. He is willing and able and ready to forgive you and give eternal life and live with Him in Heaven forever.

He will save you. He wants to save you. He wants to forgive you. He wants to give you eternal life and spend eternity with Him. Would you come to Him? Come as you are, come with all that you are, but come, come, come to Him who is all in all. Come to Jesus, the Lamb of God!