

Righteousness and Justice

Description

Isaiah 51:1-6

Chapter 51 of Isaiah invites the Judahites to recall their lowly origins: from one father (Abraham, the rock from which they were cut) and mother (Sarah, the quarry from which they were hewn) God helped form them into a nation.

Yet God does not promise freedom from consequences; Judah's embrace of violent nationalism and idolatry resulted in ruin and desertion. But even in the midst of exile and destruction, hope remains: joy will return to Jerusalem and the sound of singing will be heard again.

How will this great reversal come about? The answer appears over and over: God's righteousness (tzedek) and justice (mishpat)—closely related, almost interchangeable words in the original Hebrew—will accomplish it. Christ affirmed the promise of verse 6 shortly before His arrest, trial, and crucifixion: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away” (Matthew 24:35).

May it be so!

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