

17 Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty; they will see a land that stretches afar.

If you read the sermons from individual pastors you will notice that they tend to follow a certain pattern. Spurgeon used a single verse or part of a verse and would bring out several points and an application. Others pick a topic, start with a joke, and then bring out a number of verses about the topic with an illustration. If you've been here awhile you know that I go through a book of the Bible one passage at a time explaining what it means and how it applies to our lives. Every pastor has a style or pattern and the Holy Spirit works within that personality. But sometimes the Holy Spirit can also interrupt that pattern. It makes preachers uncomfortable, but that is good, because then we tend to be more reliant upon God. This is one of those rare times. I just knew that I had to preach on this verse.

Your eyes will behold the King in His beauty! The cycle of godly and evil kings in Israel and their current state of hopelessness caused the people of Judah to wonder about the promises of God. Would this One who Isaiah predicted would to be called Everlasting Father, Wonderful Councilor, Prince of Peace, who would reign forever on David's throne ever come (Isaiah 9:6-7)? So to those with a Messianic hope, God promised their eyes would see Him. They would see Him at the right hand of God when they die, but their descendants would see Him physically walk the streets of Jerusalem.

We should first consider what is meant by "beauty." Jesus of Nazareth was not a handsome man. Another prediction of Isaiah tells us that the Messiah has no physical beauty that we should desire Him (Isaiah 53:2). He doesn't have the features of a movie star. Isaiah isn't contradicting himself. God is letting us know that there are different kinds of beauty. Perhaps God intentionally made Jesus' physical features unattractive so that people were attracted to something more than His physical being. His message and life were so important that physical beauty would have been a deterrent to the delivery of His message. It is the Spirit that makes alive, the flesh does not profit us (John 6:63). **It is the heart of a person that makes a person truly beautiful, and there was never a more beautiful heart than that of Jesus (Isaiah 4:2).** May the Lord help us to make this important distinction!

While Isaiah's prophecy speaks of the Messiah as King, Zechariah wrote that the King of Israel was coming humbly on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9). The first coming was not to force His kingdom on others, but rather to invite us to be His subjects. So we can see the beauty of the King in both His first and second comings.

Let's look for a moment at how we see His beautiful heart expressed. He was certainly humble. In obedience to the Father, He submitted to the baptism of repentance even

Commented [PW1]: Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV)

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Commented [PW2]: Isaiah 53:2 (ESV)

² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

Commented [PW3]: John 6:63 (ESV)

⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Commented [PW4]: Isaiah 4:2 (ESV)

² In that day the branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel.

Commented [PW5]: Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

though He had no sin. This is when John the Baptist recognized He was the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Paul tells us that Jesus humbled Himself and took on the form of a servant (Philippians 2:8). His every action was service to the Father and to mankind. To the shock of His disciples, He even washed their dirty feet (John 13:5).

Jesus called men that longed to be servants of God but did not think they were worthy. Young boys in Galilee would study the Scriptures and learn to read and write Hebrew so they could take their turn in the reading of Scriptures in their local synagogue. Once they finished that education, they either went on to learn a trade, or, if they showed a capacity to memorize and understand the Scriptures, they could continue their education in the Scriptures. All of Jesus' disciples had gone on to a trade. One was a despised tax collector. Many were fishermen. One was a zealot. They were all rejected from continuing study of the Scriptures to become spiritual leaders, but Jesus chose them.

Think of it this way. What if in your heart you longed to be an Air Force pilot, but you failed the exams? Then, after going on to another career, a general came and asked you to go into flight training. You'd be elated. Jesus knew these men's hearts. Even though the culture said they couldn't do it, the beauty of Jesus' heart is that He could see their hearts' desires and called them to follow Him. Did you know that same beautiful heart is for you as well? **If you long to serve Him, He has a place for you. He says to you what He said to them, "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19)!**

We see His beautiful heart in how He treated women. Within the ranks of Jesus' followers were women disciples (Luke 8:1-3). He allowed them to sit in on His teaching and welcomed them to follow with the apostles. That was scandalous to the religious elite of that day who would never consider doing that. But Jesus' heart is for every soul, man or woman, and even the outcasts like the tax collectors, Samaritans, and so called "sinners."

He was so beautiful in loving the least, that He was called "a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Luke 7:34). Jesus cared more about the broken hearts of men and women than He did about the respect of men. He showed the beautiful heart of the Father for sin sick souls and explained to the self-righteous leaders that those who were sick needed the Physician. Jesus is our soul doctor (Matthew 9:12).

Don't you love the beautifully patient but persistent way He deals with us? We see an example of it with Nicodemus, with the woman at the well, with the rich young ruler, and in His parable about the Good Samaritan. I could tell you how beautiful His patience and persistence has been in my life, but each of you can tell the story of how He's been with you.

Commented [PW6]: John 1:29 (ESV)

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Commented [PW7]: Philippians 2:8 (ESV)

⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Commented [PW8]: John 13:5 (ESV)

⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Commented [PW9]: Matthew 4:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Commented [PW10]: Luke 8:1-3 (ESV)

¹ Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him,

² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,

³ and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

Commented [PW11]: Luke 7:34 (ESV)

³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

Commented [PW12]: Matthew 9:12 (ESV)

¹² But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick

If I was god dealing with someone like myself, I would never have called me to ministry. I wouldn't have bothered at all to even think of a person like me. Or even more likely, I'd have struck me dead. The numerous times I had close calls in car accidents, well a god like me wouldn't have bothered to spare a person like me. Let him crash, and good riddance! But that is because without Jesus I don't have the unconditional love of God. **Can you recall the great patience and love God has had toward you throughout your life? Isn't that beautiful!**

We are talking about the beauty of the attributes of God which Jesus demonstrated so clearly in His earthly ministry. God's patience, grace, and mercy are so beautiful. As the eyes are the windows of your soul, I can't imagine more beautiful eyes than those of Jesus (1 Samuel 16:12).

The greatest display of that beauty was the cross. It was there we see the glory of God manifest most clearly. In the midst of all that brutality and suffering we see God's great love for us, bringing us forgiveness, as Jesus' paid a debt we could never pay. Outwardly it was horrific, but the unseen reality of what was taking place as **the Divine warrior took on the forces of hell on our behalf, that was magnificently beautiful!** We'll be talking about that throughout eternity. And wasn't it beautiful the way Jesus walked with the two on the way to Emmaus and opened the Scriptures to them (Luke 24:45)? And the way He restored Peter on the shores of Galilee (John 21:15-17), and the way He restores us when we fail, is so beautiful.

In Isaiah, the beauty of God is paralleled with His glory (Isaiah 28:5). His attributes are beautiful and His attributes are His glory displayed. Isaiah saw the beauty of the LORD in chapter six (Isaiah 6:5). **The train of His robe filled the Temple with glory. In that account He called Him the King, the LORD of hosts. It must have excited Isaiah to know that the day was coming when the eyes of others would see the King as he had seen Him. The revelation of His beauty puts us on our faces and reveals the areas of our lives that don't conform to His beauty.**

The psalmist wrote that the heavens declare the glory of God (Psalms 19:1). How beautiful the night sky is where city lights do not hinder. Remember, that was written long before telescopes revealed an even greater beauty than we can imagine. The Hubble has sent us pictures of galaxies that amaze us with their beauty. As one of our satellites passed Venus, we learned that the outer ring was braided. How beautiful must be the God who created such beauty where no human eye could see.

My wife and I watched a TV special on a family that inherited the world's largest insect collection. The variety and colors were incredible. A stick bug was over a foot long. Beetles donned iridescent colors. Butterflies of all sizes were so beautiful in their patterns and colors. How beautiful must their Creator be!

Commented [PW13]: 1 Samuel 16:12 (ESV)

¹² And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he."

Commented [PW14]: Luke 24:45 (ESV)

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

Commented [PW15]: John 21:15-17 (ESV)

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs."

¹⁶ He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep."

¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

Commented [PW16]: Isaiah 28:5 (ESV)

⁵ In that day the LORD of hosts will be a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, to the remnant of his people,

Commented [PW17]: Isaiah 6:5 (ESV)

⁵ And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

Commented [PW18]: Psalm 19:1 (ESV)

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

We only have to look out our windows here in Sedona to see the beauty of this earth's topography. The red rock cliffs and formations, with thousand foot sheer walls, and layers of color, capped with grey basalt, the Grand Canyon, the Painted Desert. Then there are the Tetons, the Himalayas, and beautiful oceans with their colorful reefs. How beautiful must be their designer and maker!

There is another beauty that may not have crossed your mind. It is the beauty of the body of Christ, His church. She is His bride (Song of Songs 1:15). Though the work is not completed, we can see glimpses of what she is becoming. When people give of themselves to serve like Jesus did, we see the beauty of Jesus in them. When you sacrifice your time and energy to do something for others just because there is a need, we see that beauty. Someone wants to stand out at our entrance and read the Word aloud as people pass by. Another person asked if they could just hand out an invitation to the church service to passersby. Another volunteered to cook men's breakfast. How beautiful is Jesus who inspired them to give of themselves without recognition.

I went to Rainbow Acres a few weeks ago and saw the beauty of Jesus in some of the staff who so graciously love and serve the Ranchers. And the Ranchers, well they have their own beauty of simplicity and love that reminds me of Jesus' beauty. Wherever we see unselfish love and service that does not seek recognition, we see the beauty of Jesus (Matthew 20:28).

Jesus said that Mary's act of anointing Him with precious oil and her tears was a beautiful thing (Matthew 26:10). To worship Him is to worship what is truly beautiful. To share the knowledge of His beauty by sharing the Good News is described as having beautiful feet (Isaiah 52:7). To ignore or despise Him is to shun what is truly beautiful. We should ask ourselves if we have a developed a taste for what is truly beautiful or if our sense of beauty is fixed on that which is fading.

Our verse today told the Jewish people they would see the King in His beauty. The first coming of Jesus was a preview of the glory that will be seen when He reigns on the earth (Revelation 22:22-24). During His first coming He only unveiled His glory briefly on the Mount of Transfiguration. There Peter, James, and John saw Jesus shining like the sun, whiter than any white they had ever seen (Matthew 17:2) Later Peter wrote about that experience and said it was a glimpse of Jesus' majesty (2Peter 1:16). Majesty is the King's beauty.

God was telling the faithful in Judah that though the Assyrian siege would be costly, it would not end the promises of God. No man or army or even spiritual powers can stop the promises of God. Those Jews would one day stand before the throne of God and see His glory. Their descendants would one day see Him reigning on Zion in all His

Commented [PW19]: Song of Songs 1:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves.

Commented [PW20]: Matthew 20:28 (ESV)

²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Commented [PW21]: Matthew 26:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me.

Commented [PW22]: Isaiah 52:7 (ESV)

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Commented [PW23]: Revelation 21:22-24 (ESV)

²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it,

Commented [PW24]: Matthew 17:2 (ESV)

² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

Commented [PW25]: 2 Peter 1:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

beautiful glory, in a similar scene to what the three disciples saw on the Mount of Transfiguration.

We have a natural fear of such an all-powerful ruler, because every man that obtains such power becomes unaccountable to others and soon falls into a depravity. We look at the Caesars, and some of the popes, and other world leaders, and shudder to think of the devastation of an all-powerful ruler. Only Jesus can be a beautiful ruler. The rule of man is often ugly and brutal. The rule of the beautiful One will be just but also merciful and kind. He is the kind of ruler man has longed for, one that will truly be a servant of all, and yet who will deal with evil swiftly and in righteousness (Isaiah 32:1). The good will be honored and the evil will be dealt with. That is beautiful! And so we say, "Come quickly Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)

What is beautiful to you? What do you ask of the LORD? What are you seeking after? King David was a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22). He was a sinner, like the rest of us, but God honored him by calling the Messiah the son of David, and having the Messiah come from his lineage. That was God's sovereign choice, but I think it had something to do with David's great passion. He wrote, ⁴ *One thing have I asked 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 gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.* Psalm 27:4

David understood that all beauty came from the Beautiful One. He wanted to live in the Tabernacle and just gaze upon the beauty of the LORD. He wanted to just ask questions and hear His beautiful answers. Everything that conforms to our Creator is beautiful. Everything that does not is ugly. We say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, meaning that each of us considers beauty uniquely. While that may be true of the passing beauty of this world and personal taste, it is not true of eternal things. The eternally beautiful is beautiful because it conforms to Christ and His attributes. That which does not is ugly.

We are deluded if we think there are grey areas in our hearts and minds. Our affections and thoughts are beautiful or ugly. This is why we must be born again (John 3:3).

To be born again means we acquire a taste for what is truly beautiful, and we begin to be uncomfortable with, and even detest what is truly ugly. Our society is telling Christians that they need to conform to the present standards and tastes of this world. Those who are born again are unable to develop a taste for it. Compromise sickens us, for our hearts are after one thing, to behold the beauty of the LORD. For us who are subjects of the King, God has given us a promise through the prophet Isaiah. ^{17a} *Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty;*

Questions

Commented [PW26]: Isaiah 32:1 (ESV)

¹ Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule in justice.

Commented [PW27]: Revelation 22:20 (ESV)

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Commented [PW28]: Acts 13:22 (ESV)

²² And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'

Commented [PW29]: John 3:3 (ESV)

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

- 1 Was Jesus handsome? Why or why not?
- 2 When does Jesus come as King?
- 3 How did Jesus' actions express beauty?
- 4 Has He been beautiful toward you?
- 5 What was His most beautiful action?
- 6 How does creation speak of God's beauty?
- 7 What beauty might we overlook?
- 8 When did the disciples see His beauty?
- 9 When will all Jews see His beauty?
- 10 What was David's desire?
- 11 What is your desire?