

still waters

home church studies

## Psalm 126

[Worship]

1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them." 3 The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced. 4 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses in the Negeb. 5 May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. 6 Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

### Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

by Peter B. Price

The prophet offers hope for the present time. Isaiah says God "loves fair judgment" and "hates robbery and wrongdoing" (Isaiah 61:8). Isaiah looks for God's "saving justice and praise to spring up in the sight of the nations" (61:11). The prophet's task is to "prepare the way in the desert" (Isaiah 40:3). Real change in human affairs is often planned in the wilderness, exile, or prison. God prepares for the future through his people practicing justice now.

Isaiah envisaged a prophetic people. The prophet received anointing—"God has anointed me" (Isaiah 61:1), but no one person could implement this manifesto of justice—as well as news to the afflicted, soothing to the brokenhearted, liberty to captives, release to those in prison; offering comfort to all who mourn, rebuilding the ancient ruins, and restoring the ruined cities (61:4). Many are needed to practice the justice demanded by the Jubilee, "the year of the Lord's favor" (Isaiah 40:1-3; Leviticus 25).

Such a vision can only be fulfilled through the anointing of God, who clothes in "garments of salvation" and wraps in "a cloak of saving justice" (Isaiah 61:10). Words like salvation and justice (as well as kingdom and authority) have political implications. God's activity in history is public, communal, and visible. God intends his people in every age to be recognized as "a race whom God has blessed" (61:9).

God holds out the vision of a new light in the world, like John the Baptist ("he was not the light"). Prophetic people are to bear witness to the light (John 1.8).

Practically, that means being a community at peace among yourselves, who support the weak, aiming at what is best for everyone (1 Thessalonians 5:13-15).



### Talking Points

Where are the signs of hope in the present time? How are you being a prophetic people?

### Reflection and Action

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22 and ask, "Are we God's people, acting justly?"

[Scripture] 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.