

In That Day Isaiah 25:6-9

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever get songs stuck in your head?

- Maybe a memory triggers it. (the school fight song)
- Or a season of the year. (It's the most wonderful time of the year)
- Last week I had a Billy Joel tune stuck. (She's always a woman to me.)

Just out of curiosity, I did a Google search for the most common songs that get stuck in people's heads. Dozens of scholars have done research in this field. The scientific name for this is "earworms." Not surprisingly, I found out that your age, your economic status, your geographic location and factors such as that all have an impact on the songs that get stuck.

I also learned that regardless of age, status, education or location, if you are an American, the most annoying song that gets stuck in your head is "Baby Shark."

- And just in case you find yourself haunted by that song the rest of the day, those same scientists who study this sort of thing suggest that chewing gum will make the song go away.

When I am prepping a sermon, a song, an old hymn for example, may well stick with me for quite a while. Sometimes those songs make it into the sermon. Sometimes I spare you.

The text I was reading this week is Isaiah 25:6-9, and this verse in particular:

In that day they will say,
"Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the Lord, we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation." (Isaiah 25:9)

The phrase "in that day" was my trigger point. That line made me think about an old gospel hymn that I have always loved, but one that came to have special meaning for me now that I'm a grandpa.

- When they were little and no one else could get them to take a nap, I would put them on my chest and quietly sing this song. It is in the perfect register for my baritone voice, and my vocal chambers vibrate just right to calm them and help them sleep.

If you promise to stay awake, I will sing a little bit of it now.

*There is coming a day when no heartaches shall come
No more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye
All is peace forevermore on that happy golden shore,
What a day, glorious day that will be.*

*What a day that will be When my Jesus I shall see,
And I look upon His face, The One who saved me by His grace;
When He takes me by the hand And leads me through the Promised Land,
What a day, glorious day that will be.*

IN THAT DAY

When Isaiah writes his “in that day” phrase, God’s people are at a very difficult time in their history. The people are in exile because of their disobedience. They are discouraged and distressed. And to top it all off, Isaiah has just prophesied that things are going to get worse before they get better.

This “in that day” phrase is, in fact, in the middle of a portion of Isaiah’s prophecy known as “Isaiah’s Apocalypse” because of its vivid language and consistent theme of judgment. After hammering home how bad things are going to be, Isaiah includes these verses of hope about the future.

Look with me at verse 9:

*In that day they will say,
“Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the LORD, we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”*

Quoting a line from another old gospel hymn, “There’s a Great Day Coming.”

It’s not here yet, but one of these days the people of God will be able to look around and say without hesitation:

*“Look at what’s happened! This is our God!
We waited for him and he showed up and saved us!
This GOD, the one we waited for!
Let’s celebrate!” (Isaiah 25:9, The Message)*

Oh, what a day that will! But it’s not here yet. There’s a great day coming! But it’s not here yet.

IN THIS DAY

Until **THAT** day comes, we must live in **THIS** day. And while **THIS** day does have some really happy moments, there are constant reminders that we are not yet living in **THAT** day.

The Shroud

Look at verse 7:

*On this mountain he will destroy
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;
he will swallow up death forever.*

One of the things that makes **THIS** day different from **THAT** day is that in **THIS** day people die. Three years ago this week, my dad died ... followed three days later by my Aunt Doris for whom I had a number of end-of-life responsibilities. Nine years ago, my son-in-law (Gabriel's dad) died as well.

- My family understands well the reality of a shroud and the intense impact it has on people in **THIS** day.
- So do many of you. In just a minute we will commemorate some of those dear people.

But in **THAT** day, the text in Revelation says, “There will be no more death ...” (Revelation 21:4). Here in Isaiah the prophet uses the imagery of the shroud – the linen covering placed over the bodies of the deceased. **IN THAT DAY** God will destroy the shrouds, because they won't be needed any more. He will destroy death forever.

What a day, glorious day that will be! But it's not here yet.

The Sorrow

Look at the first half of verse 8:

The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces...

This sorrow involves more than the sorrow experienced at a time of death. There are a lot of other things in our world that break our hearts.

- Our city has seen a rise in racial tensions in recent days.
- Today and in the weeks ahead, all of you will express your generosity as our congregation begins collecting warm weather items and food because there are people who need them
- Families are fractured, diagnoses are dire, the government is dysfunctional, another company in our community announced that it would be closing its doors – there are many, many reasons for tears.
- How many things can we list that cause us to sorrow – that bring tears to our eyes?

In addition to the promise of no more death, in **THAT** day, the Revelation text says, “There will be no more mourning, or crying or pain” (Revelation 21:4).

There's a great day coming. But it's not here yet.

The Shame

Look at the last half of verse 8:

He will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth.

Each week we hear stories about how hard it is to be a Christian in this day and age – how this nation is becoming more and more anti-Christian.

And while none of us enjoy being hassled for our faith, what we face is still a far cry from the persecution faced by Christians in other parts of the world – places where it is illegal to be Christian and where Christians are martyred on an almost daily basis.

Verse 8 speaks of those times when the world views it as disgraceful, shameful to be considered one of God's children. But there is a day coming – a great day coming – when “every knee shall bow ... and every tongue confession that Jesus Christ is Lord.”

That will be a great day indeed! But it's not here yet.

IN THE MEANTIME

God's people have always lived with an eye toward that coming day. We live, having experienced many of God's promises fulfilled in our own lives, but with the reality that the biggest and final promises are yet to come. In short, while we wait for **THAT** day, we still have to live in **THIS** day.

In the meantime:

1. Remember that God is still God even when the circumstances of our lives are filled with death and mourning and sorrow and pain.
 - Christians are not exempt from those emotions. Walking in faith with Jesus doesn't protect us from the sorrows of life. Being ordained didn't keep my son-in-law alive.
 - I remember one preacher saying our current troubles were like those last skirmishes with Japanese soldiers on remote islands following World War II. God has won the victory, but there are still little demons trying to keep the fight alive.
2. Live expectantly in the hope of that coming day.
 - Hope is not a wimpy word for Christians. Hope is, for us, a looking forward to something that is real. It's different than hoping you got a pony for Christmas when your family lived in a second floor walk-up apartment. It wasn't going to happen. Ever.
 - When Christians sing “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” we talk of the reality of that coming day. It will happen. It just hasn't happened yet.
 - In the midst of the tears and pain and sorrow of **THIS** day never lose sight of **THAT** day.
3. Extend the banquet invitation.
 - Did you notice the wording in verse 6? The great banquet is open to **All** people. Not just Jews. Not just those who already believe. All are invited.

- That doesn't, however, mean all will have a seat at the table or get to go through the buffet line.
- The banquet is prepared for those who are counted as God's people when **THAT** day comes.
 - I'm always torn. Sometimes I want to pray, "Lord, I'm ready for that day. Come quickly." Other times I think about people I love who will not be joining me at the table and I pray, "O Lord, be patient. I can endure this day a bit longer if it means my loved one has another chance to hear of your saving grace."
 - But since I know **THAT** day is coming, and I know that it is closer to coming than it was yesterday, I need to be extending the invitation.

APPLICATION

*In that day they will say,
"Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the LORD, we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation." (Isaiah 25:9)*

What a day that will be. If you know that song that has been stuck in my head this week, sing the chorus with me as we conclude this message:

*What a day that will be When my Jesus I shall see,
And I look upon His face, The One who saved me by His grace;
When He takes me by the hand And leads me through the Promised Land,
What a day, glorious day that will be.*

Amen.