

SING O BARREN SING.

HAVE YOU NOTICED, HOUSE CHURCH FOLK DON'T SING VERY MUCH IF AT ALL

Isaiah is often referred to as the fifth gospel. The last 27 chapters correspond to the New Testament. The central chapter in this section (53) gives a description of the cross. Immediately after the Holy Spirit's description of the death, of Jesus Christ Isaiah cries out in chapter 54 "sing O barren sing." It's interesting to see whom he's telling to sing; it's a woman and she is barren. This condition was a terrible reproach for a woman.

Luke 1:24-25

"And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men".

You can gauge the spirituality of a congregation of saints by its singing. Dead singing or singing spiritual nursery rhymes is a sign of immaturity, or even worse. Some say Isaiah 54 is for the Jews and has nothing to do with the church. If we accept that the New Testament writers were the infallible interpreters of the Old Testament scriptures, and then let's hear what one of them in particular called Paul has to say.

Galatians 4:21-31

"Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things is an allegory: for these are the two covenants, one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. (Hagar the mother of Ishmael) For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children (The Jews). But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Isaiah 54:1-3

"For it is written, rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she who has a husband."

Here Paul quotes Isaiah 54 applying it not to the natural seed, but to the spiritual seed. He likens the earthly city of Jerusalem to a woman. We have two women in Revelation, and we have two cities. A woman is a type of the Body of Christ, the false church Babylon. Two women are grinding at the mill, baking bread to feed their households. The kingdom of heaven is likened to a woman in Matthew 13: The church is both a woman and a city, and also a mountain. Paul likens the earthly Jerusalem to Hagar, and her son Ishmael to the natural seed. Look what the scripture that cannot be broken says; cast out the bondwoman and her son for they will not be heirs. He likens the heavenly city to Sarah, and her son Isaac to the church, and just as Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren, so has the church been barren. Barrenness was always a reproach.

Galatians 4:27-31

"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. **Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.** But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

Isaiah 49:13

“Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.”

He’s the singing prophet; he sings about Christ, and His people, he just can’t stop singing because he’s got a lot to sing about. There are *more* exhortations to sing, and prophecies about singing for increase, and singing in general in Isaiah than in any of the other prophets. Jeremiah can’t stop crying, and Isaiah just can’t stop singing.

Isaiah 51:11

“Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”

Isaiah 52:8-9

“Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.” It’s remarkable the barren women in the Bible that God caused to sing. His people will begin to prosper and enjoy increase when they begin to sing. Not just for the sake of singing, but in expectation with regard to what God is about to do. You can take it for granted and think its just entertainment, but if that is all you see in it you’re blind. There’s a far higher purpose than that in song.

Colossians 3:16 Amp.

“Remember what Christ taught, and let His words enrich your lives and make you wise; teach them to each other and sing them out in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with thankful hearts”.

Singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are three areas of worship that should be heard in local congregations. Christianity is not a spectator religion. King David’s wife Michal despised him when he danced before the Lord; for her attitude she became barren, and although she was born of royal blood, and the daughter of a king she remained childless. I’m not saying we can’t enjoy it, but we are not there just to gawk and listen. We sing because He is worthy to be praised; and we love Him. It’s a remarkable to see how many barren women in the Bible became mothers after they started singing.

Sarai means contention. Proverbs 21:9-19

“It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house. It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.” God doesn’t want a contentious woman, but a singing woman. God changed Sarai’s name to Sarah when He confirmed the promise of a son to Abraham in Genesis 18 telling him that his seed would be as the dust of the earth and stars of heaven for multitude. O how they laughed when Sarah conceived and Isaac was born. Scientists tell us music is coming from the stars.

Rebekah means captivating.

The bride of Isaac through whom the promises to Abraham were to come was barren. **Although she was prophesied over she remained barren for 19 years.**

Genesis 24:60

“And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them”. The lesson here is that we inherit the promises through faith and patience.

Rachel means beautiful.

“Hello Rachel, I’d love to hear you sing.” “Don’t ask me to sing thank you very much. We don’t do a lot of singing around here as you have probably noticed”. Like Rachael a lot of us think we haven’t got a lot to sing about because we are barren. “In fact I’m not going to sing unless my husband gets saved, so until then I’m just going to be a contentious miserable woman. I might think about singing if I ever have a baby, but until then don’t bother asking me to sing, all right? So get this straight once and for all, I’m not going very to be a very nice person to be around until I get what I want”.

Psalm 126:2

“When the Lord turned again their captivity, **then** was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with **singing**; **then** said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.” There are other barren women besides those we have mentioned such as Hannah Samuel’s mother, and Elizabeth John the Baptist’s mother.

Psalm 113: 6-9.

Hannah’s song. “He makes the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord.” How? By singing of course dummy! Sing O barren sing. All these point to the people of God. It’s a secret to personal growth. It’s not the only one, but it is one nevertheless.

Psalm 137:1-4

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, oh how we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps on the willows in the midst thereof. For they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land”. Have you noticed that they don’t do much singing in house churches, they ought to do something about it; perhaps using the scriptures for a manual would help to convince them.

Acts 16:24-26

“Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks, and at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and **every one’s** bands were loosed”.

In the Bible there are only three men that God called by His name: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Each had a wife who was barren. Here God was foreshadowing a condition in the church, and at the same time offering a solution for all those that want to overcome the desolations caused by sin Isaiah 61:4. How can I sing says Israel! My city is in ruins, my temple is burned with fire, the precious things I once counted on as being mine are wasted and gone. How can I sing? The divine reply is sing and see the salvation I’m about to bring to you. Sing **not** for what has happened to you; **nor** about your present condition; **but sing for what I am about to do for you**. Because what I have promised to give you is enlargement and increase.

Isaiah 54:2-4

“Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of your habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shall break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shall not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shall not be put to shame: for thou shall forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.” There’s a world of difference between punishment and chastisement. God is not punishing you, that is a lie of the enemy. Christ was punished for our sins. The Father chastises us for future blessing.

It is this writer's conviction, that that no matter how far an individual may have wandered, or how much of their inheritance he or she may have squandered, if they will come back to God just as they are, God will take their life and restore the years that the locust has eaten. Then by His miraculous power and grace make them as an instrument in His hand and use them for His glory, and for their restoration, satisfaction and joy. The pardoned prodigal can talk of the father's love in a way that the elder son could never do. Your life can be productive and spiritually fruitful in a way that you never imagined was possible. Your life in Christ has not failed it's just begun.

Jeremiah 31:12-13

"Therefore they shall come and **sing** in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow."

Psalms 42:3

"My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?"

Job 23:1-2

"Then Job answered and said, even today is my complaint bitter: my stroke heavier than my groaning." God seems so very distant, uncaring, impersonal, and our lives seem to dry up and die. When misfortune strikes us, death, deep depression, sickness, the loss of a job, the breakdown of a close personal relationship happen, the saints of old in similar circumstances expressed their feelings in no uncertain way. They directed their passionate expressions of grief to the God whom they no longer experienced. They let it all hang out so to speak. In this day and age our tendency when things go wrong, is to attempt to go back to the root of the problem and fix it by whatever means available. We try to get healing for the memories of the past, or start seeking to find significance, or begin to look for scapegoats because we feel we have been victimised, we run constantly looking back over our shoulder, instead of engaging in the constant biblical practice, of looking in anticipation to God who tells us that all things are working together for our good. Things are not only operating, but also cooperating for our ultimate blessing. David said I would have fainted if I had not expected to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Paul said in 1Thes 5:18. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus".

Two of the most severe forms of physical pain are giving birth, and passing kidney stones. I have had considerable experience with the latter. Only a psychopath would welcome them I can assure you. But women will willingly become pregnant, but for a very good reason. My wife was an only child and resented it. She determined that when she married she wanted more than one child; this was made plain to me when we married. We eventually had six children, five sons and a daughter. It makes all the difference when suffering has a desirable constructive purpose. Suffering as the result of injustice, through no fault of the victim can be bitter. Such pain needs to be expressed if it's not to become a liability, but to achieve its full purpose in the growth of an individual.

Job 23:8, 10

"Behold I go forward, but He is not there, backward but I cannot perceive Him; But He knows the way that I take; when He hath tried me I shall come forth as Gold." It's better to be Stoic than to cry to men. You can cry **before** the Lord, or cry **to** the Lord, the last is preferable.

Psalms 142:1-2 "I cried unto the Lord with my voice." (A habit we would all do well to cultivate.) "Unto the Lord did I make my supplication, I poured out my complaint before him: I showed before him my trouble".

Psalm 142:3-4 “When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me? I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.” Other than the Lord I don’t know of any one who would be prepared to allow you to come to them every time you were overwhelmed with problems and pour them out all over them. Time and again the expressions of David’s soul are marked by the great intensity of his feelings. It’s a safety valve.

Vs 5-6. “I cried unto thee O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.” Here his prayer becomes more positive until faith begins to saturate his being. **Vs 7** “Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shall deal bountifully with me.”

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

The trial of our faith is more precious than gold that perishes. We live by faith, we walk by faith, and the next step forward with God can only be a step of faith. My prayer for you dear reader is that you will rise up in faith and sing to our wonderful deliverer and enjoy your resurrection.

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