The Refuge of our King

Isaiah 32:2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

The Messiah
There is no subject that is spoken of in such magnificent terms
- or in such exalted style
  - by the Old Testament prophets
  - as that of the Messiah.
- Those Prophets of old caught a glimpse
  - of what was to come
    - and spoke of it with great rejoicing.
  - They didn’t full grasp it,
    - they didn’t fully comprehend it,
      - but they searched diligently to understand it.
  - They were faithful to share,
    - under the uction of the Holy Ghost,
      - what God had revealed to them
    - and they strained against the veil
      - with a hunger to understand
      - what had not been revealed to them.
    - Peter said of them in 1 Peter 1:10-12
      - Concerning this salvation,
        - the prophets who prophesied
        - about the grace that was to be yours
        - searched and inquired carefully,
      - Inquiring what person or time
        - the Spirit of Christ in them
        - was indicating
        - when he predicted the sufferings of Christ
        - and the subsequent glories.
      - It was revealed to them
        - that they were serving not themselves but you,
        - in the things that have now been announced to you
        - through those who preached the good news to you
        - by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven,
        - things into which angels long to look.
- So the theme of the Messiah is woven throughout the Old Testament
  - as the prophets searched
    - and inquired of the Lord
    - and the angels longed to look into it.
Nowhere is that theme more prevalent or more wondrously expounded upon than in the writings of Isaiah.

One could choose from a multitude of texts in the book of Isaiah and preach about our wonderful Lord and Savior.

The text before us tonight is one such passage.

Isaiah in his prophecies concerning the Messiah declares that he will be a king who reigns in righteousness.

In Isaiah 32:1, Isaiah writes about “a king”; but in 33:17, he calls him “the king.”
By the time you get to verse 22, He is “our king.”
This is who the Messiah is,
He is OUR king!

But it is Isaiah 32:2 that has captured my attention this afternoon.

Here we see our king as a refuge.
We are told by Isaiah that
- a man shall be as an hiding place,
- as rivers of water,
- and as the shadow of a great rock.

There is a particular emphasis in the words “a man.”
Isaiah, by this reference,
is very pointedly referencing the incarnation and declares that God,
the king of all the ages,
will become a man.

And, becoming a man,
he will become our refuge.
- He will be a hiding place from the storm,
  a river of water for the thirsty
  and a shadow of refuge for the weary.

Hiding Place
Isaiah first likens the messiah to a hiding place.
He declares that he will be the place to which his people flee
in times of danger and trouble.
The idea conveyed is that when one looks to the horizon and sees a great and terrible storm brewing,
he runs to a place of shelter and refuge.
Jesus, the messiah,
will be that same kind of shelter and refuge to those that put their trust in him.
I want you to know tonight that you can put your trust in him.
Jesus is a refuge in times of trouble.
  • He is our hiding place.
  • He is our safe room.
  • Our shelter from the storm.

The great thing about a shelter is that however furious the storm,
  ▪ however torrential the rain,
    • the man who has a hiding place
    • is safe from the fury of the storm!
  ▪ The storm may blow,
    • the tempest may rage,
    • but the hiding place is a sure and certain shelter
      o that provides a shield
      o from the effects of the storm.

I want you to know tonight that there is in Christ Jesus
  o an abundant foundation of peace and safety
    ▪ for those who are in fear and danger.
  o There is a reliable shelter from the raging tempests of this life.
    ▪ Isaiah said that the messiah
      • would be a hiding place from the wind
      • and a cover from the tempest.

Mark my words tonight -- the storms are going to come!
  o Matthew 5:45 declares that
    ▪ the Lord “maketh his sun to rise
      • on the evil and on the good,
      • and sendeth rain
      • on the just and on the unjust.”
  o Mark Twain said
    ▪ “The rain is famous for falling
      • on the just and unjust alike,
      • but if I had the management of such affairs
      • I would rain softly and sweetly on the just,
        o but if I caught the unjust out doors
        o I would drown him”
  o Thankfully, God is no respecter of persons!
    ▪ Else, none of us could be saved.
    ▪ But, because of that, trouble comes to all men in this life.
  o Isaiah didn’t say
    ▪ that the Messiah would remove the danger of storms
      • or take away the tempest.
  o Rather, the verse pretty much insures
    ▪ that there will be storms
    ▪ and the winds will blow.
      • There are going to be hard times in this life.
      • There’s going to be trouble and chaos.
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- Turmoil is going to invade your life.
  - From time to time the storm winds will blow.
    - The promise is that he will be a refuge in the storm.
      - He will be the shelter that you can run to.
      - He will be the one that overshadows you
        - and hides from the fury of the storm
        - that rages around you.
  - I can’t promise you tonight that there will never be any bad days,
    - I can’t promise you that there will be no more storms,
      - but I can point you to a hiding place,
      - I can declare to you that there is one
        - that longs to shelter you from the storm.
- How terrible would it be to go through life’s storms on your own
  - when there is a shelter and refuge that you can turn to?
    - I want you to know tonight that Christ longs to be your shelter.
      - He desires to be your hiding place.
  - No matter what storm comes,
    - you can rest safely in his arms of love.
  - No matter what trouble arises
    - you can take shelter in the peace and comfort of knowing
      - that the one that watches over you
      - never sleeps nor slumbers.
- You might hear the rush of the wind,
  - you might feel the rumble of the thunder...
    - But safe in your hiding place,
      - the wind loses its fury
      - and the thunder loses its strength.
- According to Isaiah this is one of the ministries of the Messiah.
  - Jesus came to be your hiding place.
    - He has given his faithful promise,
      - a promise that he will not break...
        - That you can find refuge from the storm in him.
        - You can find a shelter from the tempest in him.
- The Lord is in this place tonight
  - and he’s calling out into the storms of your life,
    - Come to me.
      - Come in out of the storm.
      - Come to a place of refuge.
  - He is your refuge and your strength.
    - He will be your high tower.
      - He will be your impenetrable fortress.
    - There is no rock like your rock.
      - There is none like Christ Jesus...
- Dueteronomy 33:26-37 There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun,
  - who rideth upon the heaven in thy help.
and in his excellency on the sky.
- The eternal God is thy refuge,
- and underneath are the everlasting arms...

- I want to join my voice to Isaiah’s tonight
  - and declare to you that 2,000 years ago
    - in a manger in Bethlehem
    - a man was born
    - that was so much more than just a man.
  - In his life and death,
    - in his burial and resurrection,
      - there is a shelter and a refuge
      - from the storms of this life.
    - His everlasting arms are enough to hold you!

- Psalm 56:3-4 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.
  - In God I will praise his word,
  - in God I have put my trust...
    - Where is your trust tonight?

River
- Next Isaiah compares the Messiah to rivers of water in a dry place.
  - This is an allusion to the deserts of the Middle East, a hot and dry place.
    - One may travel there many days
    - and see no sign of a river,
      - or any evidence of a refreshing spring.
  - There is nothing there but miles and miles of hot desert sand
    - and a cruel torturous sun.
  - It was the kind of place
    - where a traveler might be consumed with thirst.
  - This is exactly what happened
    - to wandering Israel in that barren wilderness.
      - They were weak and weary because there was no water.
    - But Christ was typified then as he is now by Isaiah
      - as that rock from which flows a river of refreshing.
  - The man who turns to Jesus in this dry weary land
    - will find a river of cool refreshing water
      - to quench the thirsting of his soul.
  - There is, in Christ,
    - provision for the satisfaction and contentment,
      - of the needy and thirsty soul.
  - He shall be “as rivers of water in a dry place.”

- Psalm 63:1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:
  - my soul thirsteth for thee,
  - my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land,
where no water is;

- There exists a certain anguish of the soul
  - that can only be likened to thirst
    - Thirst, when it gets its grip on you,
      - commands your full attention.
  - It’s not like the gentle pangs of hunger
    - that can be brushed away and ignored.
  - There’s something about genuine thirst
    - that drives a man to do
    - whatever it takes to quench the desire.

- I want you to know that there exists a thirsting in the soul
  - that is like nothing else in this world.

- The soul has a capacity to thirst
  - for the presence of God
    - and nothing in this life will satisfy it.
      - Psalm 143:6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee:
      - my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.

- But Isaiah said that Jesus Christ would be like rivers of water in a dry place.
  - He came to satisfy the thirsting of the soul.

- He’s not just a cool refreshing drink to the soul.
  - He’s not just a pitcher of refreshing.
  - He is a river of water in a dry place.
    - A river is continually flowing.
      - A river is not a rain fed creek
        - or water run off.
      - A river is mighty powerful lasting source of nourishment.
    - This is not just a momentary flow
      - issued from a temporary source.
    - This is a river that is always fresh.
      - A river that never runs dry.
  - A cup may be emptied,
    - a pitcher may run out,
      - a cistern eventually dries up,
      - but a river is everlasting.
  - There is a consistent fresh supply of water at the river.
    - This is what Jesus is to us,
      - he is a river of refreshing.

- The unique thing about a river is that it is hard to use up.
  - This is why great towns sprung up around rivers and river crossings.
    - Although the territories on both sides
      - of the great Mississippi River
    - were unsettled and wild,
      - there were posts and forts
      - and the beginnings of cities at places
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• like Louisville, Kentucky
• and Memphis, Tennessee

• as early as the journeys of Lewis and Clark.

- Because there is life and sustenance in a river.
- You get what you need there today.
  - But you can go back there tomorrow
  - and it’s still there
  - and you can get what you need again.
- You can go every day,
  - for the rest of your life,
  - and you will never exhaust
  - the bountiful supply of the river!

• I want you to know tonight that Jesus is an ever-flowing fountain,
  - he continually supplies his people
  - and is never spent.
  - There is an everlasting fresh supply.
  - Like a river of water!

- John 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast,
  - Jesus stood and cried, saying,
    - If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

• I believe he is calling again in this place tonight.
  - If any man thirsts, let him come to a river of water in a dry place.
  - You can satisfy your soul tonight!
  - He is like a river that is always flowing.
    - You may dwell beside it forever more
      - and never diminish its great supply.

Shadow of the Rock

• Finally Isaiah likens him to the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.
  - Once again the allusion is made to the wilderness of the Middle East
    - where the sun shows no mercy
      - and it’s hot draining rays beat down
        - on the traveler without ceasing.
  - In that place Isaiah says,
    - the Lord shall be like the shadow of a rock.

• In the hot burning desert the only refuge to be found is in the shadow of a great rock.
  - That huge, unmovable boulder
    - that juts out from the hot desert sand
      - is more than just a navigable landmark
      - in the desert wasteland.
    - It is also a shelter and refuge.

• In the shadow of the rock
  - there is an escape from the unbearable heat
    - of the hot desert sun.
• In that desolate place
  o where there is no shelter,
    ▪ where to lie upon the hot sand is to be cooked on both sides
    • by the burning heat of the sun,
      o the shadow of a rock is an incredible blessing.
  o This is what the Messiah is:
    ▪ a rock that casts a shadow of refuge!
    • A great rock is a fitting representation of Christ
      o It is used over and over in scripture:
        ▪ He is a sure foundation to builders.
        ▪ A bulwark and a defense.
        ▪ The chief cornerstone.
        ▪ The rock of ages
  • Like a rock, He is everlasting and unchanging.
    o A great rock remains steadfast,
      ▪ unmoved and unbroken
    • by the winds and storms of our life.
      o It remains the same from age to age.
    o In a changing world
      ▪ there is some peace and shelter to be found
    • in the shadow of an unchanging rock.
    o The sun may beat down
      ▪ but it doesn’t change the rock.
    o Years, turn to decades,
      ▪ decades turn to centuries,
    • but the rock remains unchanged.
    o Through all of time
      ▪ it is faithful to cast a shadow
    • that is a continual shelter from the blazing sun.
    o The traveler may return years from now,
      ▪ or the generation that follows him
    • may navigate on his instructions
      o and they can each count on the fact
        ▪ that the rock will remain
        ▪ and the shadow of refuge will still be there.
    • For all of time the shadow remains!
• In Christ we can find such rest and refreshing
  o that the weary traveler finds
    ▪ in the shadow of a great rock.
  o The old songwriter said it,
    ▪ *On Christ this solid rock I stand,*
    • *all other ground is sinking sand.*
• There are quiet rest and sweet refreshing
  o in Jesus for those who are weary.
    ▪ He shall be “as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”
• There is rest and relief in Christ.
  o He is the cool shade
  o after a long day in the punishing sun.
• The traveler that finds that shade finds new strength.
  o The fainting spirit of the man is revived
    ▪ and his life finds a sweet refreshing.
• This is what Christ is to us.
  o He is the shadow of rest that calms the mind
    ▪ and soothes the soul,
      ▪ like a refreshing breeze of wind.
  o He gives strength to the weary,
    ▪ lifts up the hands of those that are weak,
      ▪ and refreshes those that are exhausted.
• This is not a shelter constructed of man’s hands
  o that you must pay to use.
    ▪ The wonder of a rock is that it is free for all.
      ▪ It belongs to no man,
        o yet it belongs to every man.
  o Christ is that kind of shelter.
    ▪ No one has the corner on his shadow,
      ▪ it is free to all that desire to rest there.
• He calls to us to come freely to rest in his shadow.
  o The shadow is a place of refreshing.
    ▪ Not just a resting place
      ▪ but a banquet house
        o where you may rest and feast.
  o He prepares for you a table in the presence of your enemies.
    ▪ He is more than just a shelter from the heat of the sun,
      ▪ he is a source of renewing and refreshing.
  o Tonight you can be refreshed
    ▪ in the shadow of a great rock!

The Escape
• The Psalmist lamented in Psalm 55:6-8
  o And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove!
    ▪ for then would I fly away, and be at rest.
    ▪ Lo, then would I wander far off,
      ▪ and remain in the wilderness.
    ▪ I would hasten my escape
      ▪ from the windy storm and tempest.
• Oh that we had wings that we might escape the storms of our lives,
  o that we might hide from the hot burning sun.
• However, we don’t have the wings of a dove
  o and we can’t escape the troubles of this life.
    ▪ We can’t flee from the storm and tempest.
• Instead, we have a hiding place,
  o a river of refreshing
  o and the shadow of the almighty.
• Psalm 91:1-2
  o *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High*
    ▪ shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
  o *I will say of the LORD,*
    ▪ *He is my refuge and my fortress:*
    ▪ *my God; in him will I trust.*
• The **enemy of our soul** will continually cast doubts into our lives.
  o He will seek to fill the mind with fear,
    ▪ to hinder and distract us.
  o He rejoices in the storm and glories in the tempest
    ▪ for he seeks to fill the mind with concern
    ▪ and burden the soul with anguish.
• The promise tonight, however, is that the soul that turns to Jesus will find its rest in him.
  o Colossians 3:11 declares that "Christ is all, in all."
    ▪ He is everything that we need him to be.
    ▪ When we needed a savior,
      o God became a man.
    ▪ When we needed a sacrifice for our sins,
      o he laid down his life on the cross.
    ▪ And tonight, if you need a hiding place,
      ▪ he is the one that you can turn to.
    ▪ If you need a river of refreshing,
      ▪ he is the source of all life.
    ▪ If you need to rest in the shadow of the almighty,
      ▪ he is the great rock of ages,
        o that casts a comforting shadow
        o across all the deserts of this life.
    ▪ He is everything that you need him to be.

**Close**
• A missionary shared the story of the driver of a wagon
  o that was on his way to market
    ▪ when he overtook an old man
    ▪ carrying a heavy load upon his shoulders.
  o Taking compassion on him,
    ▪ the driver invited the old man
      ▪ to ride in the wagon.
    ▪ Gratefully the old man accepted.
      ▪ After a few minutes,
      ▪ the driver turned to see how the man was doing.
  o **To his surprise, he found him sitting in the wagon**
but still straining under the heavy weight,
  • for he had not taken the burden off his shoulders.

I’m afraid that, all too often, we are just the same.
  o We come into this place heavy laden,
    • under the weight of a heavy burden.
  o The Lord comes in like a flood
    • and would be to us a hiding place,
      • a river of refreshing
        o and a shadow of rest.
  o But we stubbornly insist
    • on carrying our heavy loads with us
      • into his hiding place.
  o I want you to know tonight
    • that Lord has a desire
      • to be to you your “all, in all.”
  o He wants to minister to your life, right where you live.
    • Why don’t you rest your heavy load
      • in the arms of the master for a moment,
        o take shelter from the storm,
        o drink deeply from his refreshing
          o and rest in the shadow of his grace and mercy.
  o The Lord is our refuge.
    • He is in this house.
  o Will you take advantage of his offer
    • or will you sit, in the presence of grace,
      • and continue to strain under your heavy burden?