

- <sup>17</sup> “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.<sup>18</sup> But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.
- <sup>19</sup> I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. <sup>20</sup> No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.
- <sup>21</sup> They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. <sup>22</sup> They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
- <sup>23</sup> They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them. <sup>24</sup> Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear.<sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says the LORD.

“Yes. Yes! That’s what I want. To live in a time such as that. Will it only be when we get to heaven on the other side of the grave? Surely, surely, we’ll never see it in this life time.”

Well, that’s not what it says.

And it’s certainly not what Jesus was talking about when He said “the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

And I seem to remember that the whole sermon last Sunday was how the home of God is amongst mortals. We’ve been given the map of getting to this treasure. We just aren’t going there.

This is a wonderful vision that Isaiah was gifted to see. I do not believe that he was just eating wild mushrooms and had some induced fantasy. This is a wonderful vision that Isaiah was gifted to see. How about us?

Henry Miloux (the Ojibwe Mide, in the fictional 16 book series about Corcharan O'Conner and life on the Iron Lake of Northern Minnesota, by William Kent Krueger) says that we each have two dogs that live within us. They are FEAR and LOVE. And the two cannot live together passively. They are always in conflict. The one that will survive/win the conflict is the one which we feed.

What are you looking for in your daily living?

There was a song sung "back in the day" by a one-hit-wonder band whose lyrics began like this:

**Wild thing, you make my heart sing / You make everything groovy, wild thing / Wild thing, I think I love you / But I wanna know for sure...**

What's making the music in your daily living?

We are not able to experience the Kingdom of Heaven at hand, if we are not looking for it.

The 12<sup>th</sup> century mystic Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) observed:

**You understand so little of what is around you because you do not use what is within you.**

God has given us this wonderful potential. But, so much of the time, we are unhappy and dissatisfied by the conditions around us. We see not so much as Isaiah saw, but so much looking for the flaws, for what is wrong about things.

It says more about the "LOOKER" than about the THINGS LOOKED UPON.

[Use visual example of a large poster size piece of white paper with a black dot in the middle.] What do you see? The white sheet of paper occupies \_\_\_\_\_ times the amount of space, but how many of you said, “I saw a very large piece of paper with a tiny little black dot in the center”? And how many of you said, “I saw a big dot”?

**[We] understand so little of what is around [us] because [we] do not use what is within [us.]**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.