

# THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

By: Jan Davis

Today is Tuesday, October 29 and as we keep our eyes on Christ the Cornerstone, we recall how God wants to move the world from places of brokenness to places of healing.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Holy and loving God, as I enter this time of prayer, I pause and become still. I calm my thoughts and silence my mind. I breathe deeply and slowly, and center myself upon Your steadfast love and gentle presence. Enlighten my heart and soul as I digest Your Word found in Holy Scripture. Teach me to listen for your voice above the surrounding chatter of the world. Help me understand what You are saying in my life. Reveal my places of brokenness and my need for healing in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Isaiah 35:1-6***

## REFLECTION

Centuries before Jesus, the prophet Isaiah predicted the coming of the promised Messiah. Isaiah's words describe the fulfillment of this prophecy like the glory of springtime and the blossoming of the parched desert after the spring rains. When the Messiah comes the blind will see, the deaf will hear, the lame will leap and the mute will shout for joy. All that was lifeless and barren will burst into bloom and flourish with vitality. What is weak will be strengthened and the fearful will become courageous. This prophecy is fulfilled in the coming of God's Son, Jesus Christ. Through Jesus the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, lepers are cleansed, the lame walk and the dead are raised (Matthew 11:5). Good news is preached to the poor.

Even in the warm state of Texas, winter can bring frosty mornings, snowy evenings, ice storms, frigid temperatures and power outages. In the dead cold of winter, it is normal to long for the days of spring. The prophet Isaiah utilized images from the seasons of winter and spring to establish a contrast. The wilderness of winter, the parched barren land of the lonely desert is replaced by something beautiful that causes people to rejoice. Flowers blossom, doves coo, and trees are laden with fruit. The coming of the Lord is like the coming of spring. The coming of the Messiah is the ultimate restoration bringing new life, healing, and wholeness.

Like Isaiah, I am aware of barren, cold, winter places in my heart and in my life. Within me there are places of brokenness, spaces of dryness, and an emptiness that can be compared to a frigid winter. What do the images of the parched desert and wilderness land represent in my life right now? What emerges from the cracked earth and bursts into bloom like the early spring crocus, promising more blessings to follow? What will gush forth in the wilderness and bring new life to my lonely barren places? What part of my life needs strengthened and restored, like knocking knees and feeble hands? What does restoration look like in my life? Where I am afraid? What do I fear? I name my worries and concerns before God, one by one, big and small.

**Ask:** Can I name the winter places of my heart and life? What would the coming of spring represent for me today?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Holy God, in my wilderness places, I cry out for Your promises. Let me see Your glory, show me Your splendor, come, Lord Jesus. Where my hands are feeble, give me strength. Where my knees give way, help me to stand firm. Where I am broken, let Your healing begin. I look for Your promises to be revealed in my life and Your blessings to restore me to wholeness. Almighty and Powerful Lord, I invite You into my circumstances. I place my fears and worries in Your strong hands. I set down the burdens I have been carrying and allow You to shoulder them. Answer my cries and grant my petitions. Renew me in Your love. Amen.*