

Advent Series – See Amid the Winter’s Snow

Week 1

Text: Job 37:6-13 (NIV)

⁶ He says to the snow, ‘Fall on the earth,’ and to the rain shower, ‘Be a mighty downpour.’ ⁷ So that all men he has made may know his work, he stops every man from his labor. ⁸ The animals take cover; they remain in their dens. ⁹ The tempest comes out from its chamber, the cold from the driving winds. ¹⁰ The breath of God produces ice, and the broad waters become frozen. ¹¹ He loads the clouds with moisture; he scatters his lightning through them. ¹² At his direction they swirl around over the face of the whole earth to do whatever he commands them. ¹³ He brings the clouds to punish men, or to water his earth and show his love.



Theme: Snow Is a Part of God’s Good Creation

We often complain about snow, but there are few things as beautiful as a fresh snow on the ground. To this day I still remember standing at the window at my dad’s gas station when I was a kid and marveling at how beautiful the snowfall was that evening. There are times when I drive to the church, admiring how beautiful the snow looks on the trees along the road.

These verses are from a man named Elihu. He was one of Job’s 4 friends who were trying to make sense out of his suffering. The first three said that Job must have done something very bad to be suffering this much. Elihu, even though he was the youngest, was the wisest of all. His point was that God is God, and we do not understand the way that He works. He ends by simply calling on us to fear God for He does have regard for all of those who are wise in heart.

As part of his speech Elihu spoke about snow and how it is also a good part of God’s creation.

I. What does snow do?

This is an interesting point that Elihu makes. He says in verse 7, “*So that all men he had made may know His work, He stops every man from His labor.*” Basically, he says that snow shuts down everything. In our northern climate we try to conquer snow. We have plows, snow blowers, salt trucks, and all kinds of chemicals on our streets. In a short time, we go from a pristine snowfall to a gunky brown mess in our streets and driveways.

But in most parts of the world, snow shuts down everything. In our southern states, it just takes a little bit of snow to shut down an entire city. It is the same in Israel. I read that Jerusalem gets a good snowstorm about once every seven years. Last December they had a storm that dumped 30-50 cm on the city. The airport and public transportation were closed down. Thousands were left without power. Hundreds of motorists were stranded and had to be rescued. It shut down everything, but there was another side to this. An article that I read stated, “**Snow in Jerusalem is a cause for celebration for Jerusalemites and the many visitors who come to see the world’s**

most beautiful city painted white,” said Barkat, who dropped in on the city’s public works department to check on preparations for the storm Wednesday. “We hope the snow won’t disappoint, especially for Jerusalem’s excited children, who are looking forward to it.”¹

All kids love “snow days.” Even adults like those days that we can stay home from work and drink hot cocoa, while we watch the snow outside. No matter how hard we try, there are those days when the snow wins. It stops us from our labors and gives us a day of rest.

But snow just doesn’t stop us from our labor. Elihu remarks that the animals also take cover. They remain in their dens. The snow stops ever creature. It is a miracle of God. These tiny little snow flakes are some of the most powerful substances on earth. They do declare the power, the glory, and the goodness of God.

II. Why does God send the snow?

Elihu says in verses 13, *“He brings the clouds to punish men or to water His earth and show His love.* There are times when God allows storms to bring us to realize that He is God. They are a call to repentance. We think that we are so wise and great. We have been able to put a man on the moon and come up with so many kinds of technological advances Yet, there is one thing that we cannot control. That is the weather. When there is a drought, we are at the mercy of waiting for more rain. When it rains or snows too much, we pray that it will soon stop. Prayers about the weather are probably second only to prayers about health. We can do nothing more about the weather than to fall on our knees and pray to God for help. Bad weather is a part of this sinful world. Jesus said that natural disasters are signs of the end of the world. It reminds us that this world in its present form is passing away and that God does control all things in the end.

But it is also a way that God shows His love. A few years ago, we had very little snow. The plants were very slow to sprout that spring. The winter snows shield the plants and even small animals from the harsh winter temperatures. They also water the earth. The melting snows gives the plants the moisture that they need when spring comes again. Snow is not just a beautiful part of nature, it is a way that God shows His love for us by watering the earth and protecting the plants from the frigid temperatures.

III. In all of this we see the goodness of God who made everything.

Snow is a blessing of God, but we are very good at making it ugly. It’s that way with all of creation. God created it pure and good, and we have ruined it in so many ways. Yet, God found a way to restore His good creation. He sent His only Son from Heaven to redeem us. Christ was so unassuming, just like a flake of snow, but the sinless, humble Son of God came down from heaven to do the greatest work of all. He redeemed us from our sins. He paid for them all on the cross. Just as we ruin a pure covering of snow, we bloodied the Savior, but He bore our sins to make us as white as snow. (That is the point of next week’s sermon.)

¹ 'Worst storm in decades' batters Jerusalem | The Times of Israel
<http://www.timesofisrael.com/jerusalem-braces-for-storm-three-times-worse-than-what-has-been-seen-so-far/#ixzz3Kmm60vle>

When He rose Matthew writes that the appearance of the angel who rolled away the stone was as white as snow. When John saw Jesus in His glory in Revelation 1, His head and hair were as white as snow. One day He will return in all of His glory, and He will renew the heavens and the earth, so that everything will be pure and good again. Where there be snow in heaven? The Bible never says, but it does assure us that everything will be good and pure, even purer than a winter's snow.

While we might moan and complain about snow, the Bible only talks about it in good ways. It is a part of God's good creation. Thank God for those days when a winter's snow causes you to take a break and let it help you to look forward to the purity and goodness that we will have with our Lord forever in His glory.

Amen.

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