

Desolation and Rest

Scripture Reading — Isaiah 55:9-13

As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth . . . so is my word that goes out from my mouth. — Isaiah 55:10-11

While living in California's central valley, I learned some surprising things about almond orchards. For example, I learned that almond trees need about 500 hours of sub-40 degree temperatures in winter for a good crop yield in the summer. The orchards in winter looked desolate to me, but almond farmers called it a time of rest. I now live in central Michigan, where a variety of fruit trees grow. The orchards here also need a winter rest in order to be fruitful each year.

Snow and cold were not things I viewed as necessary for growing fruit. Naively, I thought of winter as a waste of time—a time of waiting for the return of spring so that gardens and orchards could flourish again. Now I see things differently. Isaiah points us in this different direction too, in the picture he paints.

We need watering too, as God's plantings. Warm rain and cold snow are both part of God's watering program for a rich harvest. The watering of his Word is sometimes warm and comforting. In other seasons his Word may be more like snow that chills and challenges us to rest in his higher thoughts and purposes.

Reconsider a thought from God's Word that has you wrestling with God. Rest with that thought and let it sink deep in your heart and mind.

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for your Word and how it waters my life to fulfill your purpose. Open my heart to let your Word sink in and transform me. Amen.

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