

Verses 1 and 2 give a ringing declaration in general terms of the change of what is now a desert into a place of beauty. They contain a marvelous general picture of the glory of the millennial kingdom of Christ, portraying the blessed condition of those portions of the earth where God's people will live and be active. It hardly seems likely that they describe a condition of the earth as a whole, since chapter 34 describes the desolation of Edom as something that will continue for a long time. The ruins of the centers of wickedness will be a perpetual object lesson of the futility of opposing God and His righteousness. It may be noted that there was nothing in the description in chapter 34 inconsistent with removal of the curse from the entire earth. The wild animals there pictured are not said to be ferocious. Loneliness and desolation, not violence or danger, characterize the ruins.

With the wonderful picture in verses 1 and 2 before us, verses 3 and 4 contain an exhortation. When we are tempted to give way to weakness and despair, we should strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, because we can know that God is certainly going to come with power and establish His wonderful promises.

The remainder of the chapter vividly portrays the great change in human life during the Millennium, when the curse is removed. There will be no more blindness or lameness, for each of God's people will have a resurrection body. No lion or ravenous beast will be found there. Streams will break out in the desert, and there will be established a way of holiness so plainly marked "that the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Even in our pilgrim walk during this age we are constantly surprised at finding "streams in the desert." Springs break forth in unexpected places, giving us tastes of God's blessing and assurance of His presence. Yet during this age our highways are often beset with lions and we find dragons hiding in the tall grass. Sometimes it is necessary that we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, with sorrow and sighing all around us. In these situations God is present as our stay and comfort. We can always lean upon Him and be strengthened with His power. A great additional source of strength comes in the knowledge that He is going to fulfill the wonderful promises of this chapter and that the power