

LIVING WATER

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THE WORD OF OUR GOD WILL STAND FOREVER

by Taylor Hogland

***"All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field ...
The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever."
(Isa 40:6, 8)***

Life on earth — whether it be plant, animal, or human — **is transitory**. It is here today, and gone tomorrow. Grass withers, flowers fade, and change & impermanence characterize everything the eye can see.

This time of year we welcome the Spring season and the changes that it brings — the grass grows, the flowers bloom, and everything comes back to life. These transitions are always a wonderful respite from the cold days of Winter, and most of us look forward to them every year.

But of course, these things do not last forever — as surely as the flowers bloom & grow, so also will they fall & fade as the year goes on. These changes serve as an annual reminder that all of life, including our own, is fleeting. **Everything that grows will wither, everything that blooms will fade, and everything that is, will change.**

Our life, and everything in it, is constantly in a state of flux. Nothing stays the same, and nothing remains as it is. From start to finish, our lives will change and keep changing a thousand times over. Our bodies will change, our careers will change, and our families will change. Our economy will fluctuate, our national leaders will move in & out of office, and our country will continue to transform with each successive generation.

Some changes we may warmly welcome, while others we may fear and resist. But whether we love it or hate it, change is inevitable. It is built in to the very fabric of our existence, from the flowers in the field to the breath in our lungs. And since we cannot escape it, we must learn to embrace it.

The question is, **how?** How can we live lives of consistency in a world that is changing by the moment? The key to living with change, simply put, is to fasten ourselves to something unchangeable. In order for a house to withstand nature's elements, it must be built on a reliable foundation — and in order for us to withstand life's changes, we too need a foundation of our own. Archimedes famously said **"Give me a place to stand ... and I will move the world"**. Each of us need a solid place to stand if we are to withstand the ebb & flow of our lives.

That foundation, that place to stand, that unchangeable substance is **the Word of our God**. For no matter what happens, come hell or high water, **the word of our God will stand forever.**

When he wrote these words, Isaiah had been tasked with bringing the Word of God to the People of God during a time of great turbulence and distress. Their fortified cities had been conquered, the Northern tribes had been carried off into captivity, and the glory days of the Kingdom of Israel were well behind them. Life had perhaps never felt more unpredictable and impermanent than it felt for the people of God at that time.

And yet amid all of these unwelcome changes, Isaiah pointed them beyond their changing circumstances to the LORD and His unchanging Word. God had promised them that a Savior would come, and seven hundred years or so later, He did. Every word that God had spoke concerning Him was fulfilled by Jesus Christ – an eternal testament to the fact that **God is true to His Word, and the Word of our God stands forever.**

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The world has changed drastically since Isaiah's day, and it will continue to change as time marches on. **But no matter what happens, the Word of God has and will continue to hold firm.** Although we look back at the promises God fulfilled when Christ came, we look forward to the promises He will fulfill when Christ comes again. Peter speaks of this in (2 Pet 3:1-9):

"I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and ... apostles, knowing ... that scoffers will come in the last days ... [saying] 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ... all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.'

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

Although many years have passed and many things have changed since Jesus ascended into heaven some two thousand years ago, the promise of His Second Coming stands firm. Nothing will prevent the fulfillment of this promise, and any delay we might perceive is simply a result of God's wonderful mercy and patience with those who not yet repented. But even the great magnitude of God's mercy will not prevent Him from making good on His Word – Peter goes on in (v10-18):

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

When the Lord returns, the world will see its final change. Its grass will wither and its flowers will fade for the final time as it burns & dissolves in its entirety.

But by the Word of God we've been promised a new heavens & a new earth, a place in which righteousness dwells and life lasts forever. We will no longer lament life's unwelcome changes, but instead we will celebrate its constant permanence and unending abundance in the presence of our Almighty God and Wonderful Savior. This will be a World where the grass does not wither and the flower does not fade, for this New World, like the Word of our God, **will stand forever.**

So then: may we all prepare ourselves and those around us for His Coming – so that it will be a change that we welcome and not one that we dread.