



Links Players

Waste Land to Promise Land Jeffrey and Aaron Reflect on Life's Journey

The wilderness and the dry land [Waste Land] shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus [flower]; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing (Isaiah 35:1-2, ESV).

Golfers visiting Palm Springs or Phoenix for the first time are awestruck by the meticulously manicured golf courses set against a vast desert backdrop—unrivaled beauty in a sprawling “Waste Land!”

Jeffrey’s conversation with “Badds” just before the Waste Management Open reveals several vital themes, none more poignant than trusting the Lord’s sovereign plan while navigating the metaphorical desert of life.

In 1999, Aaron Baddeley won the Australian Open as an amateur, defeating Greg Norman by two strokes. Many years later, with eight victories to his name, he found himself on the “outside looking in.”

The year 2015 had turned into a wilderness with no oasis in sight. Aaron had to admit that he was not “walking closely with Jesus.” By November, he had lost his card.

Aaron began seeking the Lord in the early mornings and came to terms with the reality that God truly controlled his destiny—he experienced a “peace that surpasses understanding.”

Followers of Jesus Christ often describe difficult seasons of life as “the wilderness.” Christians don’t pull this metaphor out of thin air; we see this “wilderness theme” throughout Scripture.

For example, the first two verses of Genesis emphasize a wasteland: “...the earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.” Yet, “...the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

In the opening act of Scripture, God transforms an uninhabitable, empty wasteland shrouded in darkness into a thriving garden. The Spirit of God is always hovering, intending to turn chaos into the cosmos.

If we skip a rock across Scripture, we see the Lord continually taking his people through a wasteland into a land “flowing with milk and honey.” Unlike Israel, Jesus went through the wilderness and triumphed.

At a micro level, God teaches us to persevere during our personal wilderness seasons. Yet, at a macro level, God also teaches us

something about the Cosmos—the universe at large!

The world exists “East of Eden,” in a land cursed, a wilderness (Genesis 3:17-19). Humanity’s history lies between the Fall of the First Adam and the return of the Last Adam, Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:35-58), with Jesus’ first arrival midway through history.

In the aftermath of World War I, William Butler Yeats wrote a poem titled “The Second Coming.” In it, he writes, “Things fall apart, the center cannot hold; anarchy is loosed upon the world. The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere the ceremony of innocence is drowned....”

We are a hundred years removed from Yeats’ description of the world—or are we? No matter how hard we try, we cannot heal our world. Yet, we are not without hope.

Jesus will return at the appointed time, bringing with him the promised land—a world free from sin, shame, heartbreak, sickness, and war (Romans 4:13; Hebrews 11:8-10, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Prayer: Come, Lord Jesus!

READING: 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; Romans 8:18-30

1. More than a few PGA players close their eyes and envision the shot they want to make. Do you have a pre-shot routine that visualizes (i.e., seeing the future) the outcome before you pull the trigger?

2. After reflecting on our readings, it is evident that Paul “envisions the promised future.” How might keeping the future in mind benefit you in the present?

3. Application: what spiritual disciplines would help you develop a keen awareness of our heavenly inheritance?
