

Isaiah 12:1-6

Isa 12:1 In that day you will say:

“I will praise you, O LORD.

Although you were angry with me,

your anger has turned away

and you have comforted me.

Isa 12:2 Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust and not be afraid.

The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song;

he has become my salvation.”

Isa 12:3 With joy you will draw water

from the wells of salvation.

Isa 12:4 In that day you will say:

“Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;

make known among the nations what he has done,

and proclaim that his name is exalted.

Isa 12:5 Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things;

let this be known to all the world.

Isa 12:6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,

for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.

The Lord is my strength and my song. These words are found earlier in the Bible. They are part of a song the Israelites sang to praise the Lord after He rescued them from the Egyptians. God’s people were on their way to the Promised Land. They were encamped on the shore of the Red Sea. They looked and saw their former masters, the Egyptians, coming after them. They didn’t seem to have a chance. You probably know the story. The Lord caused the waters of the sea to divide and the people passed through on dry ground. The Egyptian army went in after them but the Lord stalled them in the middle of the sea and then when Israel was safely on the other side, God caused the sea to return to its place and the Egyptians were drowned. The Lord saved His people and the next day Israel saw their enemies lying dead on the shore. Then Moses and the Israelites sang to the Lord.

This song of Isaiah praises the Lord for even greater deliverance. It is a song of God’s people sing in gratitude for being saved from the slavery of sin, death and hell. This is the Christian’s Song of Praise to God for his Salvation. In these words God’s people recognize God as the source of their deliverance and Isaiah encourages them to praise their Savior among the nations.

God inspired the Prophet Isaiah to write, “In that day you will say, ‘ I will praise You, O Lord. Although you were angry with me, Your anger has turned away and You have comforted me.” The day Isaiah is writing about is the day when the Lord completed His work of saving sinners. Although Isaiah lived centuries before the birth of Christ, he by inspiration, foresaw the Savior and His work.

A person might wonder what this reading is doing in the middle of Lent. Isn’t Lent a time for repentance, for sorrow over sin? Isn’t it a time to remember God’s anger at our sins? Yes, but it is also a time to remember that God transferred that anger from us

sinners to His Son. God made Him to be sin for us. Yes, it is a time to remember how Jesus suffered and died, but it is also the time to remember why He sacrificed Himself and what He accomplished by His sacrifice in our place. He received God's anger and turned that anger from us forever. Now instead of God speaking curses upon us because of our guilt, He comforts us. He later told Isaiah, "Comfort, comfort my people." Lent is also a time for singing praise.

God for Christ's sake now speaks words of comfort to those who have been crushed under their load of sin. He says to those who have been fearful and suffering, "Peace, be comforted." Jesus has taken away your sin."

The person who believes God's message of peace will be filled with gratitude. Listen to the song of the believer, "Surely God is my salvation, I will trust in Him and not be afraid.

God has saved me. I didn't save myself. God has saved me and I am surely saved. Earning forgiveness, getting on the right side of God and having heaven, these things are not my doing. They rest in the strong hands of the Almighty. He is my refuge and strength. Therefore, I will fear neither human, nor devil, nor hell. It is God who saves me. The Lord, I will say it again; the Lord is my strength and my song. He has been my salvation.

As long as one tries to save himself, he or she has no real comfort and no assurance. The writer of the Book of Proverbs says, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

To continue that thought, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. What is more satisfying than a cool drink of water on a hot day? As long as the believer is in this life he is going to feel the heat. There will be trials and temptations and he will have to bear the hatred to the devil and the world. But the Christian can again and again return to the fountain of refreshment, the Gospel, which says Christ has saved you, God loves you, heaven is your home and he is refreshed and again moved to sing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow. The joy of salvation is restored.

As the message of Christ brings comfort and joy to the heart of the believer. After he comes to faith, the Christian is encouraged to praise God among the nations.

In that day you will say, "Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name; make known among the nations what He has done' and proclaim that His name is exalted." Believers are to encourage one another. God has been so good to us just look at what He has done. He pulled us off the trash heap of sinners and made us His dear children. Give thanks to the Lord. Call on His name. To call on His name is to praise Him; to tell what He has done for you. But don't do this in a closet. Don't do it in secret but let the nations know what He has done. Tell the world about Jesus and how He has purchased salvation for all.

Proclaim that His name is exalted. The Lord God of the Bible is the greatest and I am proud to tell the world.

Sometimes I hear people talk about a praise service. I want to assure you that every one of our services is a praise service. A praise service is more than clapping our hands and getting into a religious mood. A praise service is a service that tells what the Lord has done for us sinners. Even some of those old hymns that are hard to sing really do praise the Lord.

The Prophet wrote, "Sing to the Lord, for He has done glorious things; let this be known to the entire world. Sing to the Lord." I have heard some church members say, "I don't sing." How can you help but sing and say thanks to God aloud for the glorious things He has done for you. In the Letter to the Colossians St. Paul wrote, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."

Again, let the goodness of the Lord be known to the entire world. Friends, This is witnessing. This is mission work. It is praising the Lord. It is God's thankful, joyful people telling of the great things God has done. It is not a duty, or a burden, it is a song of praise to our Savior God.

Christianity is not cheap emotionalism. But it is emotional. Listen to the last verse of our text, "Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."

The prophet urges shouts of praise and songs of joy. The people of Zion are the New Testament Church. Why shout and sing? Why get emotional about the Gospel? Because of the Holy One of Israel. Consider that name for a moment. God is the Holy One. He is set apart, He is pure and sinless and He makes His people a holy nation.

A reason for God's people to celebrate is that the Holy One of Israel is among them. Jesus was called Immanuel, God with us. God actually came to earth to become one of us so that He might save us. He is always with us as He promised at His ascension, He dwells within us and He will be visibly with His people through eternity showering them with His love and blessings.

When I was working on this sermon I felt very inadequate. Who can give our Savior God the praise He deserves? But He has loved us and saved us and will bless us forever and ever. How can we be still? Beside that, He is pleased with our praises.

At the close of our service today you will be asked to think of someone who doesn't know Jesus, who doesn't know that the Lord has done for him or her. You will be asked to invite someone to hear you and your fellow believers speak the praises of our Savior. You are invited to do so because this is an opportunity to say publicly, "The Lord has done glorious things." Amen.