

Our God's Salvation

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Bible Text: Isaiah 52:7-15

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I'd like to invite you to look with me in your Bibles to Isaiah 52 and I'm going to read from verse 7 down to verse 15 and speak with you about "Our God's Salvation." In reality, that's the only kind of salvation there is, that which gives all of the honor and glory to God. Any message that in any way gives a part or a portion, no matter how miniscule that may seem to man in some sort of cooperation, is not God's salvation and we see that over and over again in Scripture. But here in Isaiah 52, beginning with verse 7,

7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! 8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. 9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. 10 The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. 11 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. 12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward. 13 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15 So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

We can see here God's salvation depicted in Israel's deliverance from Babylon. As I have mentioned to you, when Isaiah wrote these words, Babylon was not yet even a force to be contended with. It was over time that the Lord raised up the Babylonian empire and Nebuchadnezzar and used that nation as an instrument to bring Israel into captivity for those 70 years and then after the 70 years, raised up a Cyrus of the Medes and the

Persians to come in and overthrow Nebuchadnezzar and give that decree for Israel to go back and rebuild Jerusalem.

So from the beginning to the end, the Lord himself foretold what would be, but what's in it for us is exactly what he does in the salvation of sinners. All of the history of the Bible is written as a type and a picture of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus and if we miss that, we've really missed the theme of the Bible. We can study all the history we want to and line it up with dates and places and people, but if we miss how that is a type, how that is a picture, a prophecy of how God takes the worst of sinners and the most desolate of captives and through the deliverance that is in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, his coming, his doing, his dying, then we will have missed the true message of Scripture.

So here the removal of the Jews from Babylon, you say historically that's really what's being described as you look at the context. Well before it ever took place, the Lord prophesied not only the captivity but the deliverance and it is spoken of here as a mercy when it says in verse 7, and imagine you being alive in that day when the news came that now you would be going out from captivity and back to the land of promise. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" You can think of the different cries that went up in the houses as the people of Israel learned of the decree of Cyrus to go back and to rebuild and it says there in verse 8, "when the LORD shall bring again Zion." So, yes, there is an historic context to this particular portion of Scripture that you can see here. Verse 9, "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem," Jerusalem laid waste for 70 some years until that decree went forth that they should go back and rebuild it. And as the Lord gave them instruction this time in verse 12, they're going out would not be with haste, in other words, as refugees running from the enemy. No, it would be calmly that they would go forth. "nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you," much as he led the children of Israel out of Egypt. The Lord went before them in that cloud of glory, the Shekinah glory. "And the God of Israel will be your reward." It's interesting how that's put. The fact that he always was their reward but in that time of captivity, there were many that thought that there was no hope and what he was and has been, he now has proven himself again to be. Faithful to his own. Faithful to those that he purposes to deliver.

But, as I said, all of this is a type and picture of the deliverance that the Lord brings to those for whom Christ died; those that God the Father has purposed to save. In fact, in verse 7, if you have a Bible reference, you'll see that it takes you over to Romans 10:15, so let's just turn there. Keep your hand here in Isaiah 52 and come over to Romans 10:15. This was the portion of Scripture that the Spirit directed the Apostle Paul to write these words. In verse 11 of Romans 10 it says, "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Whenever you see "whosoever" in Scripture, no matter what type of sinner he or she may be that believes on him, whoever that sinner is and we know is caused to believe on him, shall not be ashamed. Will not be confounded. If the Lord has given you a trust in him and in that death that he accomplished for sinners, it's not a cat and mouse game. You would not be trusting him, resting in him alone, looking to him alone, if it were not true. If it were not that the Spirit of God has drawn you to him.

"For there is no difference," in Romans 10:12, "between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." Now, we live in a day where there is so much confusion that almost every word of Scripture has to be explained again to make sure that we understand the sense here because preachers are telling people, "If you'll just get down on your knees and pray the Sinner's Prayer or cry unto him, then God will honor that." The word here "to call upon him" is a much deeper sense. It has to do with how you worship. To call upon him in worship, to come in the way that he has ordained in worship, much as he directed Abel to come through a blood sacrifice in worship and to call upon him in worship and distinguish that from the way that Cain came and called upon the Lord. He came with the fruit of his own hands and the Lord rejected him.

There is but one way to call upon him. There is only one way of worship and that is through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's why it says in verse 13, "Whosoever shall call upon the name," whosoever shall worship the Lord. There are many today calling upon him in a so-called Sinner's Prayer that are not coming as God has ordained. There is no hope or promise of assurance given to such. Here it says, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Such that call upon him have been saved, are being saved, and shall be saved, is the sense there.

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" So you can see the calling on him in the way of worship is based upon having truly believed on him.

"And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Again, that word "heard" has to be explained. It's not in the sense of just hearing with a physical ear but hearing in the heart. This is a revelation of the Spirit to the heart. You can have two people sitting the same row, listening to the same Gospel message, one hears, one doesn't. You say, "Well, we were both there and both heard." Well, you heard with a physical ear but there is a hearing and then there is a hearing. All who believe in truth on the Lord Jesus Christ have been given a hearing that is in the heart by the Spirit of God. "And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Then we see this passage that Paul quotes, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Now, Paul took it and interpreted it in this particular portion to those men or instruments that the Lord raises up and causes to go forth with the Gospel message. The Lord directing their message to his elect, those that he has purposed to save and causing them to hear. If you're the Lord's, then it is sure that the Lord directed his word to your heart otherwise you wouldn't believe and the word that he directed to your heart would be the word of the Lord, that word which the Spirit of God takes and causes Christ to be exalted in your heart. That's how we hear.

But it's interesting if you look here in Romans 10:15, it says, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" If you

look back here in the context in Isaiah 52, Isaiah said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." You say, "Well, is that a contradiction?" No, it's just a different emphasis. I believe in this context in Isaiah 52, the feet of him, yes, it could be that messenger that the Lord caused to go forth and bring the good news or tidings of salvation, but when I read particularly "him, of him," as I ended the last message last week on this, I have to see Christ. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." Apart from him, there are no good tidings.

It is he "that publisheth peace." Having been justified by his death, therefore we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. "That bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation." Back in this prophecy, those messengers of whom Paul speaks, the Lord has sent forth to declare the message of salvation would have no message of salvation were it not for him that first came and him that published peace and him that published salvation.

But it's all summed up, you see, in this word at the end of verse 7, "that saith unto Zion." Again, we saw last time how Zion is a picture of God's church. There is a spiritual church, an assembly of sinners that have been redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ identified as Zion in Scripture and what is it that is said to them? "Thy God reigneth!" Thy God reigneth. There are many today that want to have a salvation that at the same time would deny that it is God who does the work from beginning to end. You can't have salvation and disagree with God on this point. No, thy God reigneth. In other words, he reigns not only in whom he saves but how he saves and when he saves. Even Saul of Tarsus when the Lord brought him low was brought to declare, "When it pleased God to reveal Christ in me." Until then, he would not know him and it's the same for any today. God reigns and in that reigning, he is the one who has worked out salvation from beginning to end.

I think of the feet of my Lord, his feet that were nailed to the cross, how beautiful upon Mount Calvary his feet when he came leaping on the mountains as Song of Solomon declares in chapter 2 and verse 8. How beautiful were those feet to those who heard his voice and knew it to be the voice of their beloved. How beautiful and certainly all of that can be summed up in him.

So when we speak of our God's salvation, it is a salvation that brings blessing and good tidings to needy sinners. Christ himself said he didn't come to call the righteous but sinners to salvation. Think of these back in the day that sat in bondage for 70 some years and may have long ago given up any hope of ever seeing the land again and the Lord now promising that he would bring deliverance and bring them out.

So that brings me to the second point with regard to this matter of salvation. It is here spoken of as a great blessing that was to be welcomed with joy and thankfulness, but it's also a message that these good tidings bring great comfort. As we see here in verse 8, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing." It's interesting, thy watchmen, plural, shall lift up the voice. The voice. In other words, one

message. There is one message. The watchmen were those that were keepers of the gate; those that the Lord raises up to go forth with the Gospel. There is not a contradiction in their message.

They shall lift up the voice, "with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion." If there is discrepancy in men's messages with regard to Christ, then one of two things is true: either they're both wrong or one is wrong and one is right. There cannot be discrepancy among the watchmen that the Lord raises up pertaining to this matter of how it is that God justifies sinners. They shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing in concert and call others to come to this Christ.

I have often said to you over the years that if you ask me to boil down for you in simple terms what the Gospel is because people say that, they'll say, "There is so much confusion today. How do we know where the truth is? And how do we know who is telling us the truth?" Well, those are good questions but we know that those that the Lord raises up speak with one voice and these five questions that someone challenged me with years ago are ones that I have continued to bring up and to lay before you and that is: who is the Christ? Who is he? If we disagree on that then, again, it calls for us to come back to the Scriptures and weigh prayerfully what these Scriptures have to say. Who he is.

Why he came? Why did he come to this earth? Did he come to try to save everybody? There are some that say that. Or did he come to save a particular people that God has given them? You can't have both and so that's a vital question: why did he come?

For whom did he come? For whom did he come? And what did he accomplish? That would be number 4: what did he accomplish in his death? Did he do anything? When you hear some say that there are those in hell for whom he died, does that line up with what the Scriptures say about what he accomplished when Christ said, "Of all that the Father has given me, I shall not lose one. I shall lose nothing"? Where do you line up there.

And the last one is: where is he now? Either he's in heaven and those for whom he died are seated with him in the heavenlies and he's coming again to receive unto himself his own, or he's like some preachers portray, wringing his hands and hoping that people will believe on him so that he didn't die in vain. What kind of Christ do you have? I believe that those that are God sent and that he has taught, if the Spirit has taught them, they're not divided on who he is and what he accomplished and why he came and for whom he came and where he is now.

Those are basic, fundamental to the Gospel and I believe that's the sense here in verse 8, those to whom these tidings are brought are caused to rejoice with great joy. Not with confusion. Where there is confusion, there is no rejoicing, but where there is clarity and the clarity has to do with seeing, as it says here, "eye to eye." They shall see Zion's King eye to eye. They will see him in his glory. This one who was made flesh and dwelt

among us. They saw his glory. They looked upon him and that's that revelation that he gives to any today that are truly, truly taught of him.

But you can see that this is the Lord's work to do and it's in his time. Verse 9, "Break forth into joy," notice, "sing together." Sing together. Some of the hymns that we sing here even before we came up, I trust the words as we sang them and you considered them, that you could sing them with joy. And as we sing together, those that are the Lord's find a comfort and a blessing in those words because that's what this salvation does. It brings comfort.

It brings blessing to those whom the Lord has redeemed. Do you see that word that's used there, "for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." Do you find comfort in the message of salvation being entirely of God? Do you find comfort in the message of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, having worked out that salvation for needy sinners? Do you find comfort in a redemption that actually redeems? I do. I'll tell you, I can't tell you before then the times when I would get down out of my bed at night and on my knees and pray one more time, "Lord, I hope I'm right. I hope I'm right with you," and then get back into bed and lay there and wonder, "I wonder if I was sincere enough. I'd better get back out again and pray again so he knows I'm sincere. I'm calling on you. You promised that if I call on you, you'd save me." It was all based upon me, I, until it pleased the Lord to reveal Christ in me and cause me to see it had nothing to do with me or I. It had everything to do with him being merciful to a desperate sinner that had he so chosen to pass me by, he would have been right in doing so because I deserve nothing better and yet to learn that if he shed his blood for a sinner such as I, my salvation is complete in him.

I rest in that. That's a comfort to this poor sinner. Do you find comfort in it? It's a comfort to the Lord's. That's the word that's used, "for the LORD hath comforted his people." But therein is the difference, you see. It's not the pastor reassuring you. When people get a little bit distressed and they run to the pastor and they want the pastor to reassure them that they're okay and they want the pastor to say, "Okay, well, let's just bow our head and pray and you'll feel better when we're done." It says here, "the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." If you don't find comfort as a sinner in the redemption that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished, then it's a false comfort. It's a false peace and certainly not of the Lord.

You can see in verse 10, again, forward looking, how the Lord would deliver Israel out of Babylon, but there it says, "The LORD hath made bare his holy arm." Every word of Scripture is important. There is a reason why it says "his holy arm," because that's how God saves sinners. He doesn't set his holiness aside in order to deliver them, he does so in a just manner. Again, herein is a difference in the way that men preach a salvation and the way the Scriptures declare the salvation of God. Dear friend, God did not lower his standard in order to save any sinner.

He bared his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, "and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." If you want to know just how just that God is, don't look back

to how he destroyed the world in the day of Noah, although he bared his holy arm in the days of Noah and destroyed the world. Don't look back as the extreme example of how he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. He did bare his holy arm in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah and destroyed that city, sparing Lot. If you want to know how God has bared his holy arm for the deliverance of his people in the eyes of all the nations, look what he did to his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He spared not his own Son but delivered him up that he might freely give us all things.

When I consider him dying, the just for the unjust, and thinking that God could not spare his Son and still be just in saving sinners and yet on the other hand the fact that he spared not his Son but delivered him up, he would be unjust not to save those for whom Christ died. Therein is my comfort. Who did he die for? Sinners. Am I a sinner? He sure showed me my sin, my need. Salvation is all in that work that he accomplished and he's faithful and just to forgive sin based upon what Christ did, not based upon what you or I do, but based upon what Christ did. So you can see this salvation, our God's salvation, the blessing and good tidings that it is to needy sinners but it's based upon a just satisfaction. A just satisfaction.

So the Lord has bared his holy arm and it's in the eyes of all the nations. When they crucified our Lord, that title was written in three languages and it was written in those languages in order that all might read it of that day. To me, that is, again, a fulfillment of the prophecies that in the eyes of all the nations. Christ's death was public. It wasn't in some secret corner somewhere. This is not some secret society, but he was lifted up and Christ said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all," it doesn't mean everybody but it means all sorts of sinners from every tribe, nation and tongue, "to myself." And that he has done.

Now, what's the result? We're going to have to come back to this, verses 13 through 15, next time, but let's just wrap this up with what we read here in verses 11 through 12. "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing." Those whom the Lord saves he delivers. There is a separating out and you can see how those words are written here. God purposed that in his time and in his way and through his messenger that these people of Israel should be delivered back out of Babylon. That's the historic fulfilling of it, but spiritually, every one whom God has purposed to save and for whom Christ lay down his life is going to be delivered. Not one is going to remain in darkness. Not one is going to end up in hell from whom Christ died. There is a coming out. There is a separating out.

As Isaiah writes it here, "go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing." Whenever you see that in Scripture, it has to do with that which pertains to false worship. That has to do with idolatry, that which is dedicated to idolatry. So the word is when you go out, don't bring any idols with you. They were in captivity in a very idolatrous nation, Babylon. In fact, Babylon represents false worship in Scripture. But when the Lord delivers one from their darkness and from their lostness and their sin, they come out whole. They come out clean. There is no bringing of any other way with them. There is an exclusive exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the eyes of that sinner. I believe that's what it's describing there.

"Go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD." There, specifically speaking to the priests that were to come out. They were the ones that were ordained to bear the vessels of the Lord in the service of the tabernacle. Do you realize that was the primary reason why God took them into captivity in the first place is because they began to treat those sacrifices lightly? It started with the priests and then on down to the people and it got to where it became a light thing for them. It didn't matter what kind of sacrifice. "Just bring it, we'll offer it. It doesn't matter. You can partake of it if you want to or not."

It became a common thing, much like the message of Christ today that I hear when I see and hear what's being proclaimed of him and his sacrifice on the radio. People are being told by today's priests, which are preachers, that it really doesn't matter. We don't need to divide over who he is or what he accomplished, what he did. All you have to do is believe. Dear friends, that is a message that condemns souls to hell because even as these back in the day began to take the sacrifices lightly, take the priesthood lightly, why was it so vital that they maintain the purity of those sacrifices and of their office? Because it represented the Lord Jesus Christ. It's a picture of God's Son and what he would do in coming as the high priest and laying down his life.

Let me just put an illustration in front of you. What if you had a picture of your son, a portrait that you respected and liked and you invited somebody over and while you were in the kitchen getting things ready they took a Sharpie and started changing it a little bit? Making fun of it? Kind of put a mustache on it. You've seen that in public places. Put glasses on it. Put horns on it. Laughing. What would you think? I would guarantee you, you probably wouldn't have that person in your house for long. But this is what the priests were doing, they were beginning to change and make light of that which God had set up as being an accurate type and picture of his Son and in his wrath, he removed them and took them. He said, "Do you want to know what idolatry is? Let me put you into a place of idolatry." And there they sat until he was pleased to deliver them.

This is why I know from my experience I cannot take lightly anything that in any way denigrates or changes, lowers the standard in any way with regard to how it is that God saves sinners because I know how he has taught me and I know from this word when he brought that word home to my heart. Yes, I've had a heart attack in my life and I'm not talking about a physical, I'm talking about a spiritual, where the Lord arrested my heart and showed me that apart from that work, that single solitary work of the Lord Jesus Christ, this sinner would be forever condemned. It's precious to God and it's precious to those that he has so taught and I believe that's the sense here. "Come out from among her and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will be your God and you shall be my people."

But look at the rest here in verse 12. There are some preachers that believe the best way to get people converted is hellfire and brimstone and their blood vessels are bulging out of their necks and they're bearing down on people. That's not the message that the Lord uses to cause sinners to look to Christ. It is a comforting message. It is one of good tidings. It is one that exalts Christ as Savior and verse 12 sums it up. "For ye shall not go

out with haste, nor go by flight," in other words, in fear. There is too much preaching where people make a decision. It's like I heard one preacher say, "Literally scare the hell out of them." That's not what conversion is. It's not a fire escape. It's not getting people shaking for fear that if you walk out that door right now and you haven't made your peace with God, then I'd be afraid.

But here it's more in the sense, "ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your reward." In other words, you'll see him as all. There will be that revealing of Christ as all to your soul as a needy sinner. He is all my forgiveness. His bloodshed is all of my payment before a holy God. His justifying righteousness is all of my righteousness before the Lord and I rest in that. I rest in that. I don't believe a person can truly rest in him unless the Lord has been pleased to so teach him, but I like the way it's put, "for the LORD will go before you." You know, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, he's not walking behind the sheep driving them. He says in John 10 that he would go before them and lead them and that's what he does.

May our eyes ever be upon him. What a great salvation this is, the salvation of our God. Our God's salvation and I pray that if you are the Lord's, you can rejoice with me and find comfort in what you just heard.