SING THE SONG OF SALVATION

Isaiah 12

And in that day you will say: O LORD, I will praise You; Though You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, and You comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; ‘For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.’” Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation. And in that day you will say: Praise the LORD, call upon His name; Declare His deeds among the peoples, Make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, For He has done excellent things; This is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

In Christ Jesus, dear fellow-redeemed:

Music has a way of shaping emotion and feelings. TV programs, movies, and even the video picture albums played at wedding receptions would all have less impact without music. Music in a minor key can give the feeling of dark foreboding and impending danger or sorrow. Quiet gentle flowing music can melt tension in a flood of relaxation. But it is the music of energy, enthusiasm, confidence and joy that can raise spirits, chase away cares and worries, and put an extra bounce into your step.

If we were to write a piece of music based on what we hear in God’s Word, part of it would be in the minor key as we listen to our sins and God’s judgment upon them. However, the music would not stay somber for long because the message of God’s Word is one of salvation for sinners. The song of the Gospel can truly put a bounce into your step. It has the power to add joy and excitement into live and change the outlook for everything. It is a song of forgiveness and resurrection. It is a song of certain hope for sinners. It is a song of thanksgiving to our God who has done all things well. It is a song that each one of us needs to hear. It is a
song that the whole world needs to hear lest they go to their grave without it.

The words of our text which God inspired His prophet, Isaiah, to write are a hymn of praise which sings the song of salvation and thanks God for it. Today we join with Isaiah to thank God for our salvation and ask for His grace to preserve it among us so that we may teach it to others. **SING THE SONG OF SALVATION I. Sing it to yourselves** and **II. Sing it to the world.**

I.

Isaiah wrote this hymn of praise at a time when the Israelites needed a pick-me-up type of song. The nation had, as a whole, gone the way of the heathen. They didn’t worship the true God, they trusted in themselves and in false gods. God told the Israelites that harsh punishment would come upon the nation because of its rebellion and still they did not repent.

In all of Isaiah’s words which prophesied punishment and destruction, God also gave him the promise of the LORD’s deliverance to share with the faithful. A remnant of the people of Judah, God promised, would come back from the defeat and captivity of her enemies and reestablish their nation.

God’s promise of deliverance and return from the Babylonian captivity was a song of salvation, but not the full song because God’s promised deliverance went further. God promised that a Savior would come out of the re-established Judah. The Savior would bring an even greater salvation because He would bring deliverance from sin and eternal destruction. The day of deliverance for the people of Judah and the eventual coming of the Savior were what Isaiah and all of God’s faithful people eagerly anticipated.
That “Day of Salvation” would be fulfilled when Jesus would come and redeem the world. Isaiah prophesied what the song would be that the believers would sing on the day of God’s deliverance. He said, “And in that day you will say: ‘O LORD, I will praise You; though you were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, and You comforted me. Behold, God is my salvation.’” [v.1]

God’s anger is rightfully directed at us just as it was toward the wickedness of Israel. Every sin, whatever it may be, arouses God’s anger. So much of what we do, and by nature all of what we do, is guided by sin — the very thing God hates. Jesus said, “What is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15). In Proverbs God lists some things which He hates—things we see and experience regularly: “…A proud look, a lying tongue, a hand that sheds innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren” (Proverbs 6:16-19).

How often haven’t we failed to love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves? How often haven’t we indulged in our pleasure rather than in what pleases God? How often haven’t we put ourselves into situations of temptation and then fallen into sin? How often haven’t we had thoughts of lust and hatred, words of anger and spite, actions of sin and corruption? How often haven’t we, therefore, kindled God’s anger against us. A just anger which demands death for sins.

Into this sinful situation which demands death comes the song of salvation, “Though you were angry with me, your anger is turned away.” Sin demands punishment and it cannot be ignored or left unpunished by a righteous God. God didn’t eliminate the punishment for your sins but He did turn it away from you and put it onto Christ. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for [you] that [you] might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).
Jesus wrote the song of salvation by living for you and dying in your place. It was first written in prophesy and then in fulfillment. Understanding the song of salvation means first recognizing that we don’t deserve to have that salvation but that it comes to us purely out of God's undeserved love. The song of salvation is a song of penitent sinners who know their helplessness and rejoice in the perfection of their Savior. What a song of joy to hear that the very God whom we have angered with our sin is the one who now brings us comfort. No wonder that Isaiah's prophetic hymn of salvation begins, “O LORD I will praise you!”

The song of salvation is one of comfort for the sin-weary soul because it assures the sinner of complete forgiveness in Christ which is freely given. The comfort of salvation cheers and strengthens hearts. It is a song that chases fears away. “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the LORD, the LORD is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.” [v.2]

All fear and trembling is removed when we lean on the LORD of our salvation. Fearful dread is calmed into a firm confidence. Jesus our Savior has mightily gone into battle for us to defeat the Devil, sin, and death which want to harm us. Each one of us can say that Christ’s strength has become my strength because He has become my salvation—my Savior. The Devil can’t harm you when you use the Word of our Lord to beat back his every attack. Sin can no longer condemn you when it is washed away in Christ’s blood. The world can’t lead you into doubt when you rely on the sure promise your Lord.

The strength which is ours through our Savior goes beyond dealing with the fear of our spiritual enemies. The confidence and strength applies to all of the little things of life too. Driving down the interstate can turn out to be a dangerous thing. We live in world which seems to have danger around every corner. Does this result in ongoing and paralyzing fear? Not when the LORD is your strength and song for then you can say, “My times are in Your hand...” (Psalm 31:5) and trust in Him and not be afraid. Fears
at work, family, home, school; uncertainty with, friends, health, money—one-by-one every fear and uncertainty in life fades away with the Lord as my strength and song because He has become and remains my salvation. I need nothing more because God has promised me “a better that is a heavenly country” (Hebrews 11:16).

All of this leads to one conclusion, “Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.” [v.3]. The fountains of salvation run deep. Their water is cool and refreshing to revive the sinner along the way. Wherever the news of the Gospel is found there are the fountains of salvation. For it is in the Word of God that Jesus offers Himself and the forgiveness of sins. It is with the Word that the Holy Ghost comes to hearts and creates, strengthens, and preserves faith to believe that there is salvation and through faith to receive it. It is the Word of Salvation that Jesus called “living water” and said, “Whoever drinks of the water that I give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

The Gospel is the well of salvation. Go to it. Drink deeply and drink often. It is a fountain that will not—that cannot—dry up. The never-ending supply of salvation through the grace of God and the sacrifice of Christ is the water to quench the thirst of your soul.

The waters of salvation are the subject for the song of salvation. God has provided full salvation from our sins and that is leads to singing the song of His praise and thanksgiving for our redemption. With joy draw water from the well. With joy keep singing the song of salvation to yourselves lest you forget it and lose your strength and comfort along the way.

We sing the song of salvation in a solo to ourselves by personally going to the Word day by day. In that way we are refreshed to once again hear all that God has done and to receive His comfort. We sing the song of salvation in harmony with other children of God, when we “Let the Word of Christ dwell in [us] richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one
another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in [our] hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16). Sing the song of salvation to yourselves.

II.

It is called an “ear worm” when a catchy tune gets stuck in your head and you can’t help “hearing” it all day long. Maybe you even find yourself humming it or singing it out loud and then others hear it and it is stuck in their heads too.

We want the song of salvation to be a spiritual “ear worm” that never leaves our minds and hearts and one that we share with others so that it becomes “stuck” in their hearts as well. So great is our salvation and so wonderful the song that it should be impossible to keep it in. Don’t keep it in! Sing it out so that everyone around you can hear it and learn it. Bringing the song of salvation to those who are still in the darkness of unbelief gives a whole new outlook and far more meaning to the phrase, “I’d like to teach the world to sing.”

“And in that day you will say, ‘Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth.’” [v.4-5] Bringing the song of salvation to the world is professing and confessing, proclaiming and exclaiming all that God has done. It is not complicated. True mission preaching is telling the deeds of your Lord and Savior—nothing more and nothing less. Speak the praises of all that God has done. Give Him honor and glory for everything you are and everything you have. While you speak about the things that God has done not only are you giving God the honor and glory which are rightfully His, but you are bringing the song of salvation to the world. The news about the works and deeds of God is what brought you to Him and gave you His salvation and it does the same for others — if they hear it.
On the night of Jesus’ birth the angel sang the song of salvation to the shepherds (cf. Luke 2:11). The shepherds ran to see the newborn Savior who would bring them salvation and “when they had seen Him they made widely known the saying that was told them concerning this Child” (Luke 2:17). The shepherds were witnesses for Christ, they were missionaries. They did nothing more than tell others the things that God had done.

Mission work and the spreading of the Gospel is something we can all do. It doesn’t have to be a great theological discourse. It doesn’t have to be in the form of a catechism. Simply use whatever abilities and opportunities God gives to you and speak about all the things which He has done.

The magnificent things that God has done and the salvation that He has brought to us are not tucked away in a corner and hard to find. It is not the kind of thing to whisper and keep a secret. The Gospel Song of salvation has been brought forth by God in His Word for all to see. It is to be boldly cried out and proclaimed across the world. “Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion.” [v. 5f]

Go with boldness and confidence to take the song of salvation to the world. We are weak and such a bold and certain cry for the Gospel is often left unsaid and hidden in embarrassment of talking about religion. There will be some scoffing, laughing, ridicule, angry words, and much more when we make known the deeds of God. When you need boldness remember the song of salvation and what God has so graciously done for you. Remember, “the LORD is my strength and my song.” And pray with the apostles, “Now, Lord...grant to Your servants that will all boldness they may speak Your Word” (Acts 4:29).

“Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst.” [v.6] Zion was a name for Jerusalem and is also used in
Scripture to speak of all the children of God. “Cry out and shout children of God for great is the Holy One of Israel in our midst.” In other words, we by the grace of God, have the song of salvation. We have His righteousness, forgiveness, peace in this life, and the hope of the life to come. If we who have these things and who know the song of salvation don’t bring it to others, who will? The Holy One of Israel is great in our midst. He has brought us to Himself. He has made us His own. He has given us life. He has given us the Word to speak and has given each of us differing abilities to do it. Let us cry out and share it with those who do not have it.

We have said that the salvation which we have is what we lean on and the reason we do not need to fear. However, we live in a world of fear and the Devil exploits that. People do fear death and what happens after it. People do fear and worry about health, job, family, and all the other things of life. Everyone will look for answers to their questions and remedies for their fears. If the truth of God’s Word and His salvation are not there to lean upon then something else will take its place. Refuge may be sought in material goods, power, status, and rank. In poorer countries of the world there may not be so many material things in which to place confidence, but solutions are sought in other false gods. Each place on the globe and each individual is different but is always looking for the answers of life and for peace of mind. At home and abroad the need is there and the urgency is real because there are souls who are without their Savior and without Him they will eternally perish.

There is urgent need to sing the song of salvation to the world and the world starts one foot in front of you wherever you go. Make His deeds known to the people with whom you come in contact—neighbors, friends, acquaintances, relatives, fellow-workers. Keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities. Someone who despairs about the state of affairs in this world has need of hearing about the Lord who controls it.
Someone who lives in constant fear of death and is worried about many things needs to hear of the way to eternal life.

Often times, images from our foreign mission congregations show our brothers and sisters halfway around the world singing for joy. Their language, worship practice, and customs are different from ours, but the song remains the same. No matter where the Gospel is preached each word and promise of God is a clear and definite note which is strung together with into a beautiful melody of salvation. It is a melody to joyfully sing to ourselves and to the world until that Day when we join the angel chorus in full orchestration with all the trumpets of Heaven. Amen.

— Pastor Wayne C. Eichstadt