

Raised for our Redemption

Isaiah 52:1-12

Welcome. Good Friday service at noon; 2 Full Services Easter Sunday (consider coming at 8!)

*This is the 56th sermon in the book of Isaiah, and as one NH woman said recently:

"I love the book of Isaiah! I was in tears half of the time just thinking about the compassion that our Savior pours out on all of us! He loves us so much! What He went thru to provide that salvation! I'm so blessed He chose me because I certainly didn't deserve it!"

*Indeed, we are blessed because of all that Christ went through in order to save us.

*More than any other prophet, Isaiah writes with peculiar detail about what Messiah would face.

- *Isaiah 49* *Despised for our Salvation*
- *Isaiah 20 & 50* *Shamed for our Joy*
- *Isaiah 52* *Raised for our Redemption*
- *Isaiah 53* *Wounded for our Healing*

*Those of you who have children or grandchildren know what it's like to have their fingerprints and smudge marks all over glass windows, showing evidence of their grubby fingers.

*As we open Isaiah 52, it is impossible not to see the fingerprints of Jesus all over it.

*In fact, it is titled: *"The Lord's Coming Salvation."*

*Is. 52 is so significant to the unfolding plan of salvation, that NT authors quote it in several places.

*As Peter writes about the cross, he quotes it to remind believers God has redeemed us, not by a stimulus of money, but by a payment of blood.

*Paul quotes it 3x. In Rom. 2, about the problem of sin; In Rom. 10 about the Good News of salvation; and in 2 Cor. 6 where he reminds us to leave our old way of life & walk by the Spirit.

*Those themes shape the message of Is. 52...and it all points to God's work of redemption.

1. Awake, O sleeper, (v.1-6)

- *Out of bondage* (v.1-2)
- *Into freedom* (v.3-6)

"Awake, awake, put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean. 2 Shake yourself from the dust and arise; be seated, O Jerusalem; loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

*Who is talking? And who is He talking to?

*It becomes clear God is speaking, and he is talking to his people who are living in bondage.

*The people are apparently: **defeated, asleep, laying in the dust, and held captive.**

*The Lord calls them into victory, saying:

“Awake, Awake.” “Shake yourself from the dust.” “Arise.” “Loose the bonds”

*Now, I may not be a smart man, but that sure seems like **“resurrection”** language.

*Whatever this meant for Israel, it has the **fingerprints of the Resurrection story all over it.**

***On Good Friday**, the Son of God was defeated, laid in the dust, & held captive by death

*On Easter Sunday, the Father **awoke Christ, shook Christ from the dust**, and caused Him **to rise up** and **loose the bonds** of death.

*The testimony of the early church is that **God the Father raised the Son out of dust:**

“God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death...” (Acts 2)

*“...he was not abandoned to Hades...This Jesus **God raised up...**” (Acts 2)*

*“...but **God raised him** on the third day and made him to appear.” (Acts 10)*

*“...laid him in a tomb. **But God raised him** from the dead” (Acts 13)*

*So, in Is. 52 when God **calls his people to arise and shake off the dust**, it is **Resurrection language** that calls us to break out of bondage and walk in freedom.

***One woman from NH read this verse in 2020** *“shake the dust off”* and wrote:

*“Not sure if we will touch on this in any of our sermons, but it’s Isaiah 52:2, “shake off your dust, rise up.” Boy, if that isn’t beautiful imagery!... I trust God’s got something beautiful waiting in these ashes [2020]. I just have to **shake off my dust** and keep waiting for what in the world he’s possibly got planned.”*

*Perhaps that’s the message some of you need to hear today: The voice of the Father who calls you forth to **shake off the dust of defeat** and walk forward in victory.

v.3: *“thus says the Lord: **“You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money.”**”*

***Let me illustrate. For the last month, I’ve been liquidating household goods...taking at least 10 carloads of goods to thrift stores.**

*After I donated one item, my daughter decided she wanted it back. So I returned to the store, looked high and low, seeing many other items I had **“sold for nothing”** and looked to **buy back the item I wanted as my possession.**

*I would love to report that I found the item, **paid the price**, and secured my possession (which would perfectly prove the point of Is. 52); but sadly the item has been lost forever.

***But in Is. 52, the Lord promises to “redeem” back that which is His!** Notice that His people:

“Sold for nothing.” (v.3)

“Oppressed for nothing.” (v.4)

“Taken away for nothing.” (v.5)

*IOW: His people belong to Him...and are being **held in the thrift store of bondage**, and He promises to **buy them back...but the payment is not going to be with money.**

*What type of payment? If not money, what currency?

*The Bible does not leave it a mystery. When Peter writes about the **cross**, he says:

“you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ...”

1 Peter 1:18-19

*Some of you rejoiced over a **government stimulus this week**. Even better news than that is the **divine stimulus of blood** that forgave sin and set captives free.

*This, by the way, is why we sing so often about **blood**:

“There’s power, power, wonder working power in the blood of the lamb...”

“There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel’s veins, and sinners plunged”

“O the blood of Jesus, O the blood of Jesus...it washes white as snow.”

*Christians sing about the Blood...because it was the payment of our redemption.

2. ...and rejoice that God saves, (v.7-10)

*7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings **good news** of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, **“YOUR GOD REIGNS.”***

*This is the **greatest verse in the Bible** celebrating the Good News delivered to earth.

*It’s often used of **missionaries bringing Jesus to remote lands but it’s as powerful here**

*It pictures a **messenger boy who runs through mountains and villages delivering good news** that causes CELEBRATION AND JOY everywhere he goes.

*The **messenger is said to have “beautiful feet”** (not physically of course, **no feet are that pretty**)...but rather that his words are so beautiful it causes everyone to rejoice.

*As we turn to the NT, it’s no wonder Paul quotes this verse as he celebrates our salvation.

*After giving a simple understanding of **how to be saved (If...Confess/Believe)**, he rejoices in the words of Is. 52:

“How beautiful are the feet of him who brings good news!”

*This is the **reason NH funds missions GLOBALLY...and the reason we do the Promise LOCALLY, because we truly believe that this NEWS IS SO GOOD THAT IT NEEDS TO BE DELIVERED!**

*It is marvelous news; glorious news; news worth publishing; writing and singing about.

*The good news causes the messenger to triumphantly shout in cities: **“Your God reigns!” (v.7)**

***IOW**: Our God has conquered. Our God is in charge. Our God is victorious

***Which is why we sing: "Our God reigns; our God reigns; Our God reigns."**

*This good news causes people to celebrate with great joy. Notice v.8-10.

8 The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy...9 Break forth together into singing...for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. 10 The Lord has bared his holy arm...and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

*The people **sing, break forth, lift up voices**. Why do they rejoice? Here's why:

God has comforted his people. (v.9)

He has redeemed. (v.9)

The Lord has bared his holy arm. (v.10)

The earth shall see the salvation of our God. (v.10)

*Isn't that **worth singing about?** Isn't that why **we rejoice every Sunday?**

***Reminds me:** "At the cross...where I first saw the light, and the burden of my heart rolled away. It was there by faith I received my sight, and **now I am happy all the day.**"

*The most intriguing phrase: "**The Lord has bared his holy arm.**"

***When I was growing up, my brother and I used to watch cartoons like Tom & Jerry...Popeye.**

*That beloved weakling of a man, who would miraculously become strong by swallowing a **can of Spinach**

*As any good story would have it, Popeye had a nemesis named **Bluto** - a large, bearded muscle bound brut of a man who was always fighting Popeye over a woman named **Olive Oil**.

*Olive Oil was always in trouble; held captivity; bound by chains; in need of rescue.

*In nearly every episode, it looks like **Bluto will win**, Popeye is **defeated** and **Olive Oil will fail to be rescued**.

***But right at the point of hopeless defeat...Spinach gets shoved Popeye's mouth.**

*That's when **the holy arms are bared...and Popeye inevitably says:**

"I've had all I can stands, and I can't stands no more!"

*That is the **cartoon version of what really happened at the cross.**

*Right at the point of defeat, when all looked hopeless, and it looked like our nemesis had won...

*Right when **Christ was defeated and buried under rubble...the Father "had all He could stands and couldn't stands no more."**

***He bared His holy arms** and raised Christ from the dead, reversing death, defeating our ancient adversary, and liberating the captives.

*That is the good news of salvation and that is why the church rejoices!

“Up from the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph o’er his foes. He rose victorious o’er the dark domain, and He lives forever with his saints to reign. He arose...”

3. ...and calls us to new life. (v.11-12)

- Don’t look back. (v.11)
- God is with you. (v.12)

11 *Depart, depart, go out from there; touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of her; purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the Lord.*

*This verse is quoted by Paul who calls believers to **LEAVE THE OLD** and **walk in a new way**.

*The double imperative shows just how serious God is: **‘depart depart; go out, go out’**

*IOW: **“DON’T LOOK BACK.”**

*Israel looked back: **“Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”** (Num. 14:4)

*Lot’s wife looked back after the Lord said: **“Flee for your lives! Don’t look back...”** (Gen)

*Believers are not to look back, but are to **exit old life of bondage and walk in freedom**.

12 *For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight, for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.*

*It ends on a note of confidence and victory: **Our God goes before us & follows after us**

*I asked **one NH man, a former Marine sniper, to put this verse in military terms:**

‘God going out before us’ is like the Sniper or Recon team, as he has scouted the path, warned us of dangers (like security concerns or obstacles), and provided us information to complete our mission. Also note, this team does not sit back and watch after they provide the intelligence... Like “God is our rear guard,” this team sets up in a position where not only can they observe, but provide overwatch which ensures they don’t get ambushed...Another term for the team at this point is “Guardian Angel” as they are fully responsible for covering the assault team and ensuring any dangers they cannot see.’

*That’s our God! He entered enemy territory to **set captives free** and lead them into **newness of life**.

*He **goes before us**, clearing a path of victory and freedom.

*He is our **rear guard**, who watches over “our six” and covers us with protection and love.

*That’s the message of Is. 52 – one which delivers Good News that God would redeem us without money, but instead by the precious blood of His Son.

Action Steps:

A. Shake Yourself from the Dust.

*Hear the words of Father calling you out of bondage, into freedom. Out of darkness, into light. Out of defeat into victory.

*Hear Him calling you to shake off the old ways, and walk in the new.

B. Don't Look Back.

*In Luke 9, Jesus said: *"No one who puts his hand to the plow **and looks back** is fit for the kingdom of God."*

*Don't return to the vomit of youth; Don't look back with affection on old ways like Lot's wife.

*Keep your hands to the plow; eyes fixed forward; not turning to the right or left.

C. Take your beautiful feet...and invite to the Promise.

*Feet that bring the good news are indeed beautiful. Share the good news. Invite others to hear the good news. It's news of a Redeemer, whose blood was shed to buy back His people.

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5. **...and rejoice that God saves,** (v.7-10)

6. **...and calls us to new life.** (v.11-12)
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