

Isaiah 52:1-12

“Put On Christ & Proclaim The Good News”

From the *wrath* of God to the *redemption* of God. That’s the transition that’s taking place as we exit Ch 51 & enter Ch 52.

As the curtain began to close on Ch 51, the picture was that of the people of Judah reeling to & fro as though drunk, but not w/wine. They were staggering under the weight of the righteous wrath of God against the full measure of their sins. Ladies & Gentlemen, it’s a principle worth repeating.

* The Bible teaches that God has in His hand (metaphorically speaking) a cup, & the “wine” that’s in it is His wrath, & it’s filled in measure w/the sins of the person or the people who are being weighed in the balance. & When it’s “filled to the brim” when it is “fully mixed”, He will pour it out & press it to the lips of those who are to drink of His wrath & they will drink it down to the dregs... The Psalmist referred to it when he wrote, “For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, And the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out; Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth Drain and drink down.”¹

In Vs 22 of Ch 51 God calls it, “The cup of trembling” & “the cup of My fury”. Judah was being forced to drink of it because they’d sinned unceasingly against God. They’d forsaken God & gone after idols. So God allowed them to suffer the ramifications of their own ways through oppression & the bondage of the Babylonians. & In the end, that’s all that we can hope to expect when we forsake the Lord & seek after our own sinful deeds, desires & inclinations... oppression & bondage.

But God, out of His great love *for* us, because He has a heart of compassion & mercy *toward* us, did for us what we could never *do* nor never *deserve*. He pled our cause, made intercession for our sins, stood in the gap on our behalf in the Person of J.C. & In Christ He has taken out of our hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of His fury & we shall no longer drink it... The Bible says that like this, “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”²

Now as the redeemed of the Lord we’re to *put off* our former conduct, *put on* Christ & proclaim the good news of the gospel to the world around us. *

Vs 1-3

By way of reminder (something else we touched on last time), in the 9th Vs of the 51st Ch, the people of God were crying out to God that He might “wake up”.

¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ps 75:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² *The New King James Version*. (1982). (2 Co 5:21). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

They were asking that He might manifest His power & that even as He had delivered them *historically* out of Egypt that He might (in like manner) deliver them *presently* out of Babylon.

& * There are times that we look around at our society, our culture, we see the corruption, the degradation, the depravity & immorality that prevails... There are approximately 12 million Americans classified as “porn addicts”, & an estimated 40 million Americans visit porn sites regularly. *We see the attack on the nuclear family, the human trafficking, the epidemic of drug & alcohol addiction... racial tensions being imposed upon us, the defunding of protective services & the increase in crime... The intentional gender confusion in children... (You can't choose your bedtime, but you can choose your gender...)* & *We want to cry out, “Wake up O God! Can't You see what's happening here?”*

But God is saying, “I'm not asleep, *you are*. I don't need to wake up, *you do*.” We like to think, “God where have *You gone?* You've forsaken us, You've forgotten us!” God hasn't forsaken *us*, we've forsaken *Him*. God hasn't forgotten *us*, we've forgotten *Him!* Family, it's imperative that you hear me on this... The problem that is found in our relationship w/God is *never* on His end. It's *always* on *our* end.

& *As goes the church, so goes the nation. We look at the problems in our nation & wonder how God could let this happen! But the truth is that He would say, “I've given you every resource, how could you let this happen?” We've fallen asleep spiritually. We've taken a position of apathy & lethargy toward sin; we no longer stand for righteousness.* *

* Listen, we're in an election year. You have an opportunity to let your voice be known. But too many in the church think, “What's one voice going to do? It doesn't really matter what I think anyway.” & As the saying goes, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

We see our little relationship w/God as generally weak & anemic in the big picture, so we don't really pray for our nation or our government & then we blame God for checking out. He hasn't checked out... we have. This is why He says, “*...if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*”³ When a nation falls into disrepute & disrepair, it's not because God doesn't care. It's because His people have *stopped caring*.

³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [2 Ch 7:14] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

They've hit the "snooze button" on their spiritual life. &/or They've simply become carnal themselves & rather enjoy swimming around in the wave of corruption that's washing over the land...✱ That's the gist of the 1st 2 times we see the words "awake, awake" in Ch 51. & I wanted to revisit that application.

But here, concerning our present context, it's the picture of renewal, restoration & reconciliation. God has taken the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of His fury from the hand of His people (Vs 22 Ch 51). Now that they've been restored to spiritual sobriety, they're to put garments befitting to who God's called them to be.

In the NT vernacular we refer to it as being robed in the righteousness of Christ.

✱ We're to lead lives becoming to the work that God has done *for* us & done *in* us. Paul would say, *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,"*⁴ You see, when Christ comes into your life, it's not enough that we simply *stop ungodly* habits, we need to begin to develop *godly* habits. Here God is telling them don't just "wake up", you need to "dress up". It's not enough to *put off* their stupor, they must *put on* their strength & their beautiful garments.

Again, to the Eph Paul would put it like this, *"...that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."*⁵

Do you see what's happening here? We're learning what transpires *spiritually* in our inner man & how that translates, what it looks like *practically* concerning our outer man (or our day-to-day interaction w/others). Spiritually, we put on Christ (we're robed in His righteousness). Practically, that will look like abandoning ungodliness & leading lives of integrity, honesty & kindness toward others. ✱

To the Colossians, Paul explains it like this, *"But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,"*⁶ You see? Since you've "put on" the new man, you're to "put off" those tendencies of the old you, (anger, wrath, filthy language...).

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Eph 4:1-2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Eph 4:22-24). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Col 3:8-10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But we can't simply *stop* doing ungodly things, we need to *start doing* godly things. In place of anger, we show mercy, where there was wrath, there's kindness, where there was malice there's humility. Paul continues in Colossians, *"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."*⁷

"Put on strength, O Zion; Put on your beautiful garments," "Shake yourself from the dust (Vs 2), arise; sit down, loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion." You're no longer a captive, you're a queen. Arise from your mourning & rejoice...

Vs 3

Allow me to draw your attention to an application. Something that I think is worth your consideration. – It's found in this phrase, "You have sold yourselves for *nothing*..." It's the sad & tragic condition of so many people upon this planet. "You have sold yourself for *nothing*..."

Perhaps you can see the scene in your mind's eye, there He was, your Lord & mine. He was speaking to His disciples of the cross. He spoke of how He would go to Jerusalem, suffer at the hands of the elders/chief priests & scribes, be killed & be raised the 3rd day. Peter began to rebuke Him for talking like that, so Jesus rebuked *him* for talking like *that*. Then Jesus said, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."*⁸

The 3 prerequisites for being where Jesus is. Denying yourself, (your own inclinations & self-preservation), taking up your cross (denial of the self-will) & following the example that Jesus set before us. But the cross is in view for every child of God. Not physically (necessarily) but certainly spiritually... This is why Paul said, *"And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh* (or put to death that sin nature) *with its passions and desires."*⁹

But following that exhortation, Jesus put forth 2 questions for consideration. He said, *"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"*¹⁰ How many people do you suppose have gained the whole world?

⁷ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Col 3:12-14]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Mt 16:24]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ga 5:24]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁰ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Mt 16:26]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

There may be a handful of men throughout history who have had a brief rule over the known world... How do you suppose that profits them now? But the 2nd question that Jesus asked is the real kicker. The one that applies to every human being & the one for which people have lowered the bar radically, “What will a man give in exchange for his soul?” Some exchange their souls for fame, fortune, power, or pleasure. What’s your price? Regardless of what it takes, none of it will profit you ultimately, eternally. & The sad reality is that the vast majority of people have sold themselves for absolutely nothing... There’s no payout at all, even temporarily.

But I have good news. Redemption is available. I trust you took note of it, “You have sold yourselves for nothing & you shall be *redeemed* w/out money.” – I want to touch on this word, “redeemed” for just a moment. What does it mean, “redeemed”? In short, it’s a word that speaks of the purchase price of a slave, bought w/the intent to set them free. *You’ve sold yourself (as had the entire human race) into the slave market of sin & death. & God comes along & out of His great love for you, the compassion He has toward you, He purchased you (but not w/money) that you might be free from the chains & the shackles of sin. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

You see, though you were redeemed w/out money, & you were give freedom freely, don’t think that it cost God nothing. To the contrary it cost Him everything. (& Next time we come together we’ll see the radical cost of our redemption). For now, I’ll share w/you how Peter put it. He said, *“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*¹¹ You’ve been redeemed, by the blood of J.C., the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Vs 4-6

God does not appreciate the oppression of His people. “Those who rule over them (Vs 5) make them wail,” “& My name is blasphemed (spurned, disrespected & disdained) continually every day.” The idea being, not only have they treated God’s *people* cruelly, they’ve gone beyond that & shown utter disregard for the Lord *Himself Personally*, blaspheming Him continually, daily.

“Therefore My people shall know My name...” It’s one thing for the world not to know or to honor God, but it’s another thing altogether when God’s people don’t honor Him or recognize Him among them.

¹¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [1 Pe 1:18-19]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It's one thing when the world doesn't recognize that God has spoken. It's another thing altogether when His people don't recognize or honor His word & acknowledge that He has spoken. & God says, "I'm going to change all that." The day is going to come when the nation of Israel will recognize J.C. for who He is. When He essentially says to them, "Here I am. I'm the One who speaks to you" & they not only recognize Christ, but *receive* Him.

Vs 7-10

The idea behind making His holy arm bare is that of "rolling up His sleeves & going to work." He has shown His strength in the eyes of every nation in bringing forth salvation, He's comforted His people, He's redeemed Jerusalem & all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God...

* What a message! A message of freedom, salvation & deliverance! It's no wonder that Isaiah would say, "How *beautiful* upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings the message of the gospel, (good news)!" How are your feet looking these days? 😊 Not physically! I'm not interested in your pedicures 😊. Family, the feet speak of motion, of movement, activity & progress, those who are actively about the work of sharing, preaching or proclaiming the gospel... Think; how beautiful were the feet who brought to you the good news of J.C. crucified for the sins of the world? That you could be forgiven by God, given new life in Him through faith in Jesus, trusting in the "redemption" that He provided for you...

Aren't you glad that someone shared w/you a message of peace w/God through our Lord J.C.? & That when you've made peace *with* God, you can know the very peace *of* God! Glad tidings of good things! Your God reigns! When God reigns in your life, salvation reigns! Peace reigns! Glad tidings reign! * – Leave Isaiah 52 & turn to **Romans 10**

Vs 11-15

* What a wonderful passage. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved... But how shall the call on Him in whom they've not believed? & How *can* they believe if they've not heard? & How can they hear unless someone is willing to go? *Are you willing to go & share w/your friends? Your family? At the gym, in the break room? Wherever you may be, whenever the opportunity is given? – "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"* (Write it down, read it later, Mark 16:15.) Beautiful feet. May they belong to every heart here...

Don't make it more difficult than it is. You don't need to be a seminary graduate. If Jesus has changed your life, you have a message to share. Freely you've received, freely give. *

Vs 11-12

Again, to keep the context, this is speaking into a time of Babylonian captivity. & *It seems strange to us that God would have urge His people to leave a place of captivity, but some had grown rather accustomed to the environment & were reluctant to leave!

Having said that, I suppose it's not so strange when we think of the urgency w/which we have to proclaim the gospel today because some people are simply accustomed to captivity & they don't really *want* to leave...

But the call of God upon the lives of His people is, "Go out from there! Get out from the midst of her, be clean you who bear the vessels of the Lord!" The obvious application for you & me is that though we're *in* the world, we're not *of* the world! Remember those statistics I gave you earlier about the porn industry? **35% of all internet downloads are related to pornography. 70% of men aged 18-24 visit pornographic websites at least once per month. 9% of porn users in the U.S. are children under 12 yrs old, & viewership of "female-friendly" porn rose (from 2013 to 2017, no doubt it's higher today) by 1,400%.**

God is calling His people to purity... You bear the vessel of the Lord... what fellowship has righteousness w/lawlessness? What communion has light w/darkness? & What accord has Christ w/Belial (wickedness)? – You are the temple of the living God... Therefore (2 Cor 6:17) come out from among them & be separate says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean & I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, & you shall be My sons & daughters, says the Lord Almighty." (Write it down, look it up later Rom12:1-2).*

Vs 12 Close

God will *direct* you & God will *protect* you. He goes before us & follows up behind us, He surrounds us. The people of God need to "wake up" to His *plans*, be *pure* in His sight & trust in His *promises*. The day of deliverance is on the way. To which we respond, "Even so, come Lord Jesus!" Amen? Amen.

Prayer Points:

God, may we lead lives befitting to Your work on our behalf. Lives of holiness & purity, sanctified unto You. & May we be those people who are willing & available to share the hope of the gospel w/the hurting around us. We thank for Your love, Your redemption, Your salvation. Be glorified in our lives.

I'm wondering if you're here & God is calling you out? Out of the world, into His redeeming love. God loves you, Jesus died for you. He paid the purchase price of your sin & He wants to set you free, give you new life, right here, right now. Believe on Him & be saved.