

Rejoice in Your Salvation

By

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Key text: Isaiah Chapter 12

Lifelong Joy of Salvation

Amid all the challenges and difficulties of this life, it's unsurprising that we may, on occasion, lose sight of the good fortune and blessings we enjoy as believers in the Lord.

However, as the set-apart people of God redeemed and sanctified by His blood, we must continually see ourselves as eternal beneficiaries of His salvation.

Salvation in God is not a one-time event which we enjoy once and it passes away. Salvation is a destiny-changing redemptive act of God whereby we are saved from the power of sin into a relationship of righteousness with God through faith in Christ Jesus. (See Matt. 1:21; Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 8:2-4). It's a spiritual position where the salvation of God comes to define our very lives.

We are no ordinary people but the saved people of God. This should cultivate in us a habit of thankfulness, giving us joy all day for all time. We are a special people:

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

“Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy” (1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Believers have existed in every generation of mankind, but believers of every generation are not counted among the particular generation of their time and culture. They don't conform to this world or subscribe to its values.

We are a unique subgroup who have been called out into a special relationship with God, a covenant relationship, in which, like Israel, we are separate from the society and generation of our time (Num. 23:9). We form our own holy separate nation under God in which we are His very own people who enjoy His mercies ad infinitum!

A Grateful Heart

Ideally, we should continually rejoice in God's salvation as His saved people of priestly royalty. Sadly, this won't occur naturally unless we nurture a grateful heart to realize how fortunate and blessed we are as the people of God.

Often, we are overcome by a complaining spirit; we are not contented and satisfied. We have unmet needs; some particular prayer requests haven't been answered for a long time. True, I won't begrudge you. But then look at the other side of the coin. Many, indeed innumerable, have been His benefits towards us. The Lord has intervened in our lives so many times to give us the victory and grant us the grace to keep us going when we were at our wits' end. That is also so true, and we praised the Lord during that sweet moment; we even gave a testimony in church.

But we soon forgot it, our own fears and insecurities (even shadows) blinding us to our favoured status in God. One thing God has warned His people against is the human tendency to forget when He has shown them His goodness and mercy. In Deuteronomy chapter six He admonished Israel to be wary of the spirit of forgetfulness:

*“And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which He swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,
“And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;
“Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage” (vv. 10-12).*

When we forget God because the flesh is living good, we starve our own souls of the joy they deserve and which, in fact, exists for their enjoyment – so long as we acknowledge God's saving power and of its continuing effect in our lives. The soul that has been robbed of its security in God and therefore its joy in Him unnecessarily worry for no reason – other than that it has failed to rely on God. Otherwise, a believer is like a watered garden. But in this case, it's like someone sitting by a river crying over thirst!

On the other hand, our blessings seem to have cut simply because we don't see more of it coming because, again, we neither acknowledge nor appreciate what He has done and is doing in our lives.

Yet salvation is an everyday reality. It's not necessarily a tangible reality; it's a faith reality. We don't have to see, feel and touch in here and now to possess it. “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).

The salvation of God is a done deal – secured for us by Christ on the cross of Calvary. “It is finished”, He cried out. All it takes is faith and a grateful heart, and the joy of His salvation will sweep over our souls.

His Anger is Turned away

“And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me” (Isa. 12:1).

To have God's anger turned away from us ought to elicit praise from us towards the God of grace. It might not seem an eye-popping blessing, but it's an uncommon blessing all the same.

Divine anger is the natural reaction to sin from a holy God. But praise the Father for His grace in Jesus, that anger has been turned away from you and me. Messiah is the propitiation for our sins, appeasing the holy Father God:

“And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

The divine anger meant separation from God; it meant unanswered prayers; it meant a life of curse and bondage to sin. It meant a convicted sinner doomed to the sentence of death – eternal separation from God.

But, out of the Father’s love, Christ intervened in the situation and paid the penalty for our sins with His own blood, turning away God’s wrath. What is more, He redeemed us from being tied to a life of disobedience which would otherwise make us “children of [God’s] wrath” perpetually. We read in Ephesians 2:1-3:

*“And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;
“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”*

This is the evil destiny – the spiritual condition of being the children of divine wrath – that has been broken, taken away, in Christ. All disobedient humanity are “by nature the children of wrath” to this day. Thankfully, this no longer the case for us believers. We are no longer the objects of God’s wrath; that belonged to our past. Now we are the objects of His mercy. He comforts us. We have stepped into a world of blessings and divine glory.

We no longer await the judgment of God. Instead, we have an open invitation to appear before His throne of grace with confidence for timely help:

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

The precious blood of Christ has doused the flames of God’s anger. It made full payment for sin, giving us the right to appear before the very presence of the Father:

*“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
“By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh” (Heb. 10:19-20).*

A complete about-turn in our relationship with God! We have “peace with God” through the Messiah (Rom. 5:1).

This calls for praise in recognition of our reconciliation with God granting us access to His blessings and favour. That God's anger is turned away from its cause for thanks and praise to His name, for divine anger, the effects and ramifications of which are incalculable, has given way to favour and life:

"For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36:9).

King David says in Ps. 16:11:

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

What is more comforting than this – to live in the presence of the Holy One where there is fulness of joy?

A Soul by the Wells of Salvation

The absence of God's anger is divine favour. You can't have both permanently at the same time. Since His anger has given way to favour, our next point of praise can only celebrate His salvation born of His favour:

*"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.
"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:2-3).*

One word does not belong here in a theme of salvation, hope and faith. It is the word "afraid". Thankfully, it is negatively worded making the whole idea positive: "I will...not be afraid."

Salvation does not go with fear. Or the salvation is not real. What sustains our salvation is trust, faith, "for the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:38-39).

Thanks to the assurance of His grace on which we have placed our faith, "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition." Instead, YHWH, the unchanging I AM, is our everything – our "strength", our "song" and our "salvation". Without Him we are nothing. He excites our hearts and gives us reason for hope – an undying hope which He materializes daily in our lives. He's our life's hero. We sing about Him as our healer, deliverer, protector, defender and able helper! We don't even have enough songs to celebrate all His deeds of greatness. We owe Him everything – our Life, breath, sustenance, strength, blessing and prosperity now and in the world to come!

He is our all because He has not held back anything from us. Indeed, He has not withheld from us the greatest gift of His perfect love – His Son Yeshua Messiah:

"He who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up on behalf of us all – is it possible that, having given us His Son, He would not give us everything else too?" (Rom. 8:32 CJB).

‘Therefore with joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation.’

The joy with which we draw from the wells is the joy of expectancy, the joy of hope. Because we are saved, we joyfully anticipate that we shall be filled – “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matt. 5:6).

God has graciously provided for us wells of salvation, and the joy is derived from the fact that what we seek is already available in abundance in God’s fount of blessings.

However, like the practical use of a well, you draw water as and when needed. So today, you may draw healing, another time protection, still another time prosperity and wisdom! Day by day we are being watered – “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (Ps. 1:3).

We don’t cease drawing from the wells of salvation. We are saved, and the wells of salvation are there to keep us watered and flourishing – as we keep drawing!

The faith attitude to adopt as we stand by the wells of salvation is joy – the joy of hope that all our needs have been met – but supplied as that need arises. That is why “YHWH is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Ps. 23). When that need needs to be met, God will not disappoint. The blessing is already there for us in the well. We just have to draw from the wells of salvation *all of which converge in Christ*, the power and wisdom of God. He sat by Jacob’s well in Samaria and said to the woman of Samaria who would not give Him water to drink:

“... If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water” (John 4:10).

The wells of salvation in Christ Jesus not only produce healing, etc., but also eternal life (v. 14). So let us let down our buckets of faith to the very depths and draw! We have not drunk all from Christ, the Rock that followed Israel (1 Cor. 10:4). He has a lot more to offer us if only we will stick with Him to the end:

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Heb. 3:14).

We have barely savoured the riches of the grace that is in Jesus. We have only nibbled at them. But now is the time to draw copiously from the wells of salvation. The wells are all there for our blessing and wellbeing. They are not dry wells; we draw to get water – to receive, to move the hand of the Almighty on our behalf:

*“And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted.
“Sing unto the LORD; for He hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth” (Isa. 12:4-5).*

We drew to get results. We called upon His name and because He answered us, we will “declare His doings among the people”. He “has done excellent things”.

We won't keep quiet about it. We will broadcast it, sing about it and praise Him, to the ends of the earth! The power of His name is exalted above all principalities and powers, and we will make that known by our lips of thanksgiving and testimony. So declare in your heart: 'Messiah is exalted at the right hand of power, and my lips will exalt His name; my mouth will acknowledge that truth.

'I am a proud citizen of Tziyon':

"Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee" (Isa. 12:6).

We have no reason to be ashamed of the God we serve. He is a great God of power and wisdom. He's the only true God, the Creator of heaven and earth. And He's full of love and mercy and justice. We cannot even begin to quantify the extent of His love and mercy towards us. He means so much to us in infinite ways: He is our Saviour and Kingmaker and everything in between! Like the Apostle Paul, we will not shy from singing His praises. He wrote:

"...I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

So let's take pride in God, make our boast in Him, for great – infinitely great – is the Holy One of Israel.

Let us not walk through life as though we don't have this great God as our God. Let's refuse to give in to despair, fear, worries and anxieties. The Holy One of Israel is alive for you and me. He is greater than every challenge we have ever faced and every fear we have ever entertained. He has saved us through His Son Yeshua, and it's total salvation. Let us acknowledge and make it our own through our lives of faith and obedience. And of praise. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly" (Ps. 118:15-16).

He is our praise.
Because He saved us.
And His salvation is true.
Amen!