

THE FINAL VICTORY  
Isaiah 52:1-12

Intro: At the end of 1 Thess. 4, after Paul had written to the Thessalonian church about the coming of the Lord for the church, he added these words, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." I believe it was Martyn Lloyd-Jones who said that Paul meant for us to use the very words that he was using, not just our explanation of them.

The truth of the coming of the Lord is a comforting truth. Why?

There are several reasons:

- 1) It is comforting to know that we are going to see our loved ones again, those who have died in the faith.
- 2) It is comforting to know that we are going to see the Lord, and be with Him forever.
- 3) It is comforting to know that this is based upon "the word of the Lord," not just the word of some man.

When you are discouraged or depressed, read about the coming of the Lord. Be assured from the Word of God that all that you are going through is not in vain, but will issue forth into a most glorious, final victory.

This is what Isaiah was doing for the people of Israel in these first 12 verses of Isa. 52. HE WAS POINTING THEM TO THE COMING OF THE LORD FOR ISRAEL, IN ORDER TO COMFORT THEM.

This is the final, "Awake, awake." There are three of them. The first showed us that Israel was trying to wake God up, but they were to realize that it was not God Who was asleep; they were!

And so the people of God needed to wake up and realize what was going on, and what would eventually happen.

We know that what Isaiah said here is still future because it has not yet been fulfilled. He spoke to Israel, or to Judah, as though they were to act upon it then. Actually they were to respond in faith to what he was saying and to bring their lives into accord with these great prophecies. But it is yet to be fulfilled, just as our hope in the church is yet to be fulfilled. But, as we have been learning in Sunday School (1 John 3:2, 3), our future hope in the coming of Christ is to cause us to be holy NOW! So also see Isa. 52:11, 12.

What did Isaiah include in his message here at the end of this section in which we have three hearkens,  
three awakes, and  
a final depart?

The first thing we see is . . .

I. THE VICTORY (Isa. 52:1, 2).

Notice that twice Zion is mentioned, and twice Jerusalem is mentioned.

There is no need to spiritualize this and make it the church. Isaiah knew nothing of the church, but he was ministering to his own people in Judah where Jerusalem and Zion were located.

However, their salvation was the same. And so just as Paul exhorted the Romans and the Ephesians and the Colossians to "put on Christ," or to put on the new man, and to put off the old man, so Isaiah here exhorted them to put on:

- 1) Strength.
- 2) Their beautiful garments, which, as the context shows, were the holy garments of salvation.

Moreover, they were to get out of the dust, arise, and sit down, and throw the chains from around their necks.

Two truths stand out here:

- 1) When the Son sets us free, we are free indeed!
- 2) If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, etc.

This is the victory that awaits the people of God--the final and most glorious victory.

II. THE MEANS OF THE VICTORY (Isa. 52:3-7).

Three significant things are said here, but before we note what they are, please note what Isaiah did not say. He did not say that the people were going to be able to set themselves free. Salvation is of the Lord--from start to finish, and we are talking here about the culmination of salvation.

Well, then, if it does not come from the people, where does it come from?

First, Isaiah stated it negatively.

- A. It will not come by money, that is, by some ransom paid to Judah's enemies. Cf. v. 3.

Cf. Isa. 55:1, 2, 6, 7.

In the NT see 1 Pet. 1:18-21. Note how this passage is concluded--"that your faith and hope might be in God."

If we paid money, or someone else paid money for us, then our hope would be in the one who paid it. God is

certainly not going to lower Himself to negotiate with wicked men. Besides, the bondage of sinners is greater than that which can be settled with money.

It would take the blood of God's only begotten Son.

But notice the second thing which Isaiah said:

B. It would be according to the Word of God (Isa. 52:6).

The Lord is going to bring about their deliverance, and it will be in complete accord with His Word. God stands behind His Word. Not one promise can fail. It will come to pass because He will see to it that all is fulfilled.

Note how this is like Paul's statement, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord . . ."

If you want to know the truth about salvation, and about the future, go to the Word. That is where you will find the truth.

But the third part is this:

C. It will be through the Gospel (Isa. 52:7).

It is a Gospel of peace, not primarily peace among men, but peace with God. Cf. Rom. 5:1.

Note that a part of that Gospel message is, "Thy God reigneth!" God is sovereign in salvation--sovereign in determining that there will be salvation, sovereign in saying how people will be saved, sovereign in selecting those who will be saved, and sovereign in seeing that the work will be completed.

And this is proclaimed by those whose feet are beautiful because they are in the right place at the right time to reach the right people.

Do you remember that a part of the passage we had in Sunday School this morning said that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). The Gospel of the Kingdom is none other than the Gospel of the grace of God. There is only one Gospel. That Gospel is the only hope of Israel, as it is the only hope of the Church.

Now we are ready to look at some of . . .

III. THE RESULTS OF THE VICTORY (Isa. 52:8-12).

A. Joy. Cf. vv. 8, 9.

And it will be such joy as has never been known in Israel.

Cf. Isa. 12, esp. v. 3.

See also David's statement in Psa. 16:11,  
Thou wilt show me the path of life:  
in thy presence is fulness of joy;  
at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

The watchmen will sing, and the people will sing.

The watchmen were the prophets. They were the faithful in Judah. Think how long they had waited and hoped, but did not receive the promise. When the promise does come, they will not be able to contain their joy!

One thing the saints are always to do is to "rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. 3:1; 4:4).

B. The downfall of Israel's enemies--all of them, permanently. Cf. v.10.

No place on the earth will be unaware of what the Lord will do. "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." This has never happened, but it will.

Think of this when you read in the Psalms of David how he prayed that his enemies would be destroyed. His prayer will be answered.

C. Holiness. Cf. v. 11.

Not only will Israel be separated from people who would defile her, but she will be separated from the sins that that have defiled her.

Finally . . .

D. The abiding presence of the Lord (v. 12).

This is the best of all. We could not have the others without this! Oh, how wonderful it will be for Israel to have the Lord Jesus Christ. He will go before to lead, and come behind to protect.

Concl: But what should this all mean to us? We are not Israel.

That is true, but our salvation is the same. So there is much

First it should cause us to reflect much upon our salvation-- the glory of it, its certainty, the freedom we have in it, the joy of proclaiming it, the holiness which results from it, and so on and on!

Secondly, we need to consider if our joy compares at all with the joy that is spoken of in vv. 8, 9.

Why do we sing? Do we sing because our hearts are full of the joy of the Lord? Are we overflowing with that joy?

And, although much more could be said, let me conclude with a final point: we need to anticipate what it will be like to be with the Lord.

When we went back to visit Frank and Carolyn we found not only that they were expecting us, but they welcomed us with great joy. They had everything ready in the apartment we were going to use. The bed was in the room, was made up. There was a place for me to study--with a table, a chair, a lamp. They even had an exercise bike there. And to top things off, there were two balloons with "Daddy" and "Mama" written on them, with "Welcome to Philly."

How different it would have been if the apartment had been empty, if Frank had said, "Dad, there is a bed downstairs in storage. When you have time you can bring it up." No, everything was ready. We were not only expected, but welcome. Carolyn even cried for joy when she met us at the airport.

How are you going to meet the Lord Jesus? Will He know that you were not only expecting Him, but that you were waiting to welcome Him? Do you expect that many of us will shed tears of joy when we see Him? Will the manner of our lives say, in effect, "Welcome, Lord Jesus. We could hardly wait until you got here."

The Apostle John expressed it the best possible way when he closed the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ with a prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Things may not be like we want them to be now, but when the Lord Jesus comes, they will be perfect--BECAUSE WE WILL BE WITH HIM. What more could we ask? Let us be glad now and rejoice in that wonderful prospect.