



Preaching Through The Bible, Michael Eaton

Isaiah

Part 21

A Joyful Community (12:1-6)

• **Isaiah predicts a coming salvation for his nation**

This section of Isaiah began with a prophet saved and sent¹. Judah and Israel are both in need of salvation. Salvation will be delayed but there is hope for the future². Back in chapter 6 Isaiah knew that his problem and the nation's problem were the same³. He himself experienced salvation⁴ and he predicts a coming salvation for his nation⁵. So it is easy to take the next step and see that salvation will lead to an entire people who will be saved and singing⁶.

1 6:1-13
2 11:1-16
3 see 6:5
4 6:6
5 7:14;
9:1-7;
11:1-16:1
6 12:1-6

Salvation will lead to a grateful community

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*1In that day you will say:
'I will give thanks to you, O Yahweh.'*

• **He speaks to an individual, but also to the community**

Isaiah seems to be the speaker. 'That day' is the day when the divine Saviour has brought worldwide salvation. He speaks to an individual but it will soon become clear that the individual is part of a community. Like the Day of Pentecost the event is corporate ('All together in one place'¹) and yet touches individuals ('fire . . . on each one of them'²). Salvation produces testimony ('you will say') in the form of openly expressed gratitude.

1 Acts 2:1
2 Acts 2:3

Salvation involves propitiation

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*1Let your anger turn away and comfort me.
2Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust and not be afraid.
For my strength and my song is Yah, Yahweh;
he has become my salvation.'*

• **Ingredients of salvation**

(i) **Propitiation – a sacrifice that turns away anger**

(ii) **A personal relationship with God**

(iii) **Personal faith**

(iv) **Assurance of faith**

(v) **Joy from security**

(vi) **Whole person**

(vii) **Rooted in the character of God**

Many of the ingredients of salvation that we know from the New Testament appear here in Old Testament form. (i) Salvation has its starting point in the life of the individual when God's anger against sin is taken away. In New Testament language this is called 'propitiation' (the turning aside of anger by the giving of a sacrifice), the word we have in Romans 3:25, 1 John 2:2 and 4:10. The problem of sin is so great that it is a problem even to God; it rouses anger and hinders the showing of his love. Only 'propitiation' — a sacrifice that turns away anger — can 'solve the problem'. (ii) Here is personal relationship to God — 'my salvation'. (iii) Here is personal faith. The worshipper is asking that the sacrifice for sin should be for him, for her ('Let your anger turn away'). (iv) Here is assurance of faith ('God is my salvation; I will . . . not be afraid'). (v) Here is the resulting joy in the present time because of confidence for the future. The salvation is long-lasting and secure and so imparts strength for the days ahead. (vi) Here is a salvation that touches the whole person. It brings clarity of understanding in the mind; it is joyful song in the emotions; it is strength for the practicalities of life in the future. (vi) Everything of this salvation is rooted in the character of God. He is 'Yah, Yahweh', the God of the exodus-period, the God who redeems by the blood of the lamb and in so doing takes a people for himself.

Salvation involves refreshment

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*3'And so with joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.'*

• **'Wells of salvation'**

The communal side of salvation becomes obvious as the singular 'you' of verse 1 becomes the plural 'you' of verse 3. It is ongoing, not momentary, because it becomes 'wells of salvation' — a permanent set of resources which supply life

• For New Testament believers, the 'wells' are Jesus

• Gives refreshment and joy

Salvation involves worship and testimony

• God's people call upon each other to express their gratitude

• The message will be proclaimed to all nations

• The praise and joy of the messengers rooted in their salvation through Jesus

• Predicted salvation now inaugurated – brings glory to God, the Holy One

and spiritual energy to the believer. It makes the once-dead¹ sinner to be alive because once salvation has commenced in their life, they participate in drawing spiritual refreshment from the salvation-well God has provided. Just as on the route from Egypt to Canaan there was Elim with its twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees², so along the lifelong journey of the believer there are 'wells of salvation' along the way. The believer gets into the habit of making use of them. In New Testament language the 'wells' are essentially Jesus himself. Rivers of living water become the believer's experience as he or she comes to the Lord Jesus Christ and draws water from the well. Refreshment and joy are the result.

¹ Ephesians 2:1
² Exodus 15:27

Salvation involves worship and testimony.

⁴In that day you will say:

*'Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name;
make known among the peoples the deeds he has done,
and proclaim that his name is exalted.*

*⁵Sing to Yahweh, for he has acted gloriously;
let this be known in all the world.*

*⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.'*

As the result of the salvation of the Christ-child, our 'Emmanuel', the entire community of God's people call upon each other to express their gratitude and to call upon Yahweh, the God of the Bible. The new community look forward to being enlarged as a result of the salvation being made known among the nations. It will involve proclamation to all nations so that it becomes 'known in all the world'. It begins with a message of what has happened in history. Yahweh has acted. It is understood and proclaimed by messengers who have been touched by their reconciliation to God, and now express their message in words and express their well-based feelings in song. As always in the Bible their praise, their joy and their influence among the nations are rooted in the salvation that has become theirs because of their faith in the One born of a virgin, Emmanuel, the divine Saviour.

The salvation that was predicted by Isaiah and has now been inaugurated through our Lord Jesus Christ brings glory to God. It gives depth of meaning to one of God's titles, 'the Holy One of Israel'. It was as the Holy One that he revealed himself to Isaiah¹. It is as the Holy One that he provided the remedy against his own anger. It will be as the Holy One that he will dwell within his people for ever.

¹ chapter 6