

**CALVARY PANDAN
BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 52

ISAIAH

CHAPTER 52

Theme: "The Beauty of Reconciliation"

THEME VERSES

Isaiah 52:7 (KJV) "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

INTRODUCTION

Continuing on the theme from the previous chapter, God exhorts Israel to do her duty which God had intended for her from the time of her founding. Israel was a nation with a purpose designed by God. She was not meant to be like other nations without a purpose. Gentile nations with despot leaders would conquer at will for carnal purposes to enlarge their greed and personal glory. Empire-building has been the bane of civilizations for centuries and there does not seem to be an end in sight if God, the Creator, would not intervene. Man cannot go on like this in self annihilation. Man keeps destroying and being destroyed. Millions have perished throughout the centuries

giving rise to new nations replacing old ones. Boundaries are redrawn by the victorious and the vanquished silently accepts their fate but inside their heart resentment breeds like a burning flame biding its time for revenge.

Israel, on the other hand, must return back to her roots. To do that Israel must return to the LORD, her God. This is the thrust of Isaiah chapter 52. It will culminate on a prophecy of the suffering Messiah. Israel has been blessed with a spiritual responsibility that brings hope to a world plunging in carnage and self destruction. Israel has failed the world and her God by living in rebellion and sin. Her failure has plunged the world into spiritual darkness. Israel must return to the LORD and fulfil her destiny and be the light on a hill in order for the whole world to see Christ in her.

"How beautiful are the feet of him that brings good tidings" is the phrase that sums up what it means to be spiritual Israel again. The world does not need an Israel that brings a cure for cancer or any creative genius that would improve the carnal lives of this sin-sick world. Israel is a spiritual nation with a spiritual responsibility to the world; she has failed many more years than she has succeeded in bringing good tidings to a world desperately in need of the good news. False worship and wickedness have enveloped this world for too long. Israel must rise and stop this darkness which she alone is able to do through Christ Jesus.

The churches today have replaced Israel, the nation. Churches are like the Israel of old in her failures to show the light of Christ. False churches like the Roman Catholic Churches and the Charismatics have arisen to lead many astray into darkness and Hell. They have taken the initiative to cover the earth with their deception and confusion. Another gospel which is not the gospel of the Bible has dominated long enough and the light of the true gospel has been dimmed for far too long. Will God's people rise to the occasion and shine forth the light of Christ once more? The call to Israel in Isaiah's time is needed now more than ever to all local churches to stop sinning and come back to the LORD.

OUTLINE

1. Awake – Fulfill your destiny! (vv.1-6);
2. The Beauty of God in Israel (vv. 7-10);
3. Depart from all uncleanness (vv. 11-12);
4. Christ's persecution prophesied (vv. 13-15);

COMMENTARY

Awake – Fulfill your destiny! – 52:1-6

The call to repentance continues but it comes with a new twist. Israel was commanded by the LORD to awake again. This time Israel was commanded by God to put on her

strength and fulfil her responsibility as the bearer of the good news of Jesus Christ. Using two different names for the same city, Jerusalem was first called Zion i.e. monumental or guiding pillar. Zion was called to put on her strength i.e. spiritual strength not military or economic strength. She must once again be the spiritual light to a world in spiritual darkness. Jerusalem i.e. teacher of peace was commanded to put on her beauty. This is the spiritual beauty that refers only to one thing, the holiness of God. This means that she must stop sinning and come back to the LORD. A nation of holy people is a nation where idolatry is removed and all idolaters put to death. All places of idolatrous worship must be razed to the ground and idolaters removed from Jerusalem.

No longer will the evil and wicked and those who do not know the LORD be allowed to enter Jerusalem. Jerusalem will once more become a city of God where only God's people dwell. Jerusalem must rise from the dust that she has found herself in because of her many sins. She is in captivity (by the Babylonians in the future) and must break herself out of the bands that are around her neck. The only way is to repent of her sins as it was her sins that brought her into captivity and exile. It was not due to the power and might of the Babylonians that defeated Jerusalem but her own sins. Once sins are repented of, restoration begins. Israel cannot use military might to defeat the Babylonians and to initiate her return. Israel must leave it to God to bring Israel back. Israel's duty was to repent

and make right her relationship with God.

Israel must remember her historical past. Israel was brought into captivity because of her own doings and no payment was made i.e. no price was paid and she shall be redeemed and no price will also be paid. Israel obtained nothing from her slavery and devotion to idolatry likewise she shall not need to pay anything for her redemption. She shall receive it freely through Christ Jesus. Israel must remember the days of her beginning when she was in Egypt as God prepared her for the exodus. There was no power in the mighty Egyptian army that could prevent Israel from leaving for the Promised Land. Israel must also remember the time when the Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem for no reason at all and were soundly defeated by the LORD in one night when 185,000 Assyrians perished. Be assured that the LORD will bring Israel out of exile and back to the Promised Land but she must realize her spiritual duties and not fail the LORD again.

As long as Israel is in captivity, the name of the LORD is blasphemed especially by the enemies of Israel that have Israel in captivity. But the LORD will vindicate Himself from this yoke of Israel's enemies by redeeming Israel. Israel will then see the hand of God in her deliverance as the LORD had recorded in prophecy. When it happens, Israel will know that this is no accident or the work of sinful man but indeed it is the very deed of God

Almighty, the God of Israel who has delivered Israel out of bondage again.

The Beauty of God in Israel – 52:7-10

The beauty of Israel's spirituality is eternal. Their feet are described as beautiful for they bring good tidings to the entire world. What better news can man bring to the world than the good news that in Christ Jesus, they might have their sins forgiven, death destroyed and Hell vanquished. God's people, Israel, are the only ones on earth who could do this. This was the purpose of Israel's existence. When Israel fulfills her divine purpose, what a beautiful and wonderful blessing she can be to the world. The watchmen i.e. the prophets shall be united and see eye to eye in one vocal agreement. They shall sing and rejoice as they see their ministry as one of great success and blessing, where the people of God stand united and shine forth the grace and mercies of God.

Every corner of Jerusalem including the waste places must now rejoice. Jerusalem has returned to her glory for the LORD has brought her back. There is great comfort and joy to be found in the city of God. The LORD has made bare His holy arm i.e. to show forth His power to all the nations of the earth. All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the LORD, the power in the LORD saving Jerusalem as well as the salvation of many lost souls who have been delivered from their sins. This power is not military but spiritual for there is no power on earth that is greater than the power to defeat death. Jerusalem can

now show the world this great power of God by her return to the Promised Land.

**Depart from all uncleanness
– 52:11-12**

With urgency and great concern, the LORD cried to Israel to depart i.e. to get out. Be ever ready to get out when it is time. In the mean time, Israel must wait patiently for the day of her return. When the day comes, she is to be ready to depart and return home to Jerusalem in order to fulfill her purpose of shining forth God’s grace and mercies. Be ye clean i.e. spiritual cleanliness from all the spiritual filth that is in Babylon. Come home when the day of exile ends.

Israel shall not get out in haste like in the days when she came out of Egypt. Israel shall also not get out by flight as if in pursuit by her enemies but the LORD will go ahead of her and God will also be her reward. Israel shall be securely protected front and back and no harm will come upon her. Her return will be carefully done and safely and securely ordered by the LORD. There will be no running or fleeing. No enemies will pursue her as she returns home.

**Christ's persecution prophesied
– 52:13-15**

The focus shifts to the Lord Jesus Christ in these last three verses. The LORD Jesus Christ is called the servant of God here because He comes to do the Father’s will by dying on the cross of Calvary. He will be lifted up and exalted because of His great work of salvation that He will

wrought for His people. Indeed this occurs when sinners become saints and Christ is exalted in their lives as they serve Him and live for Him.

The reference to the suffering is made abundantly clear in verse 14. His persecuted life and broken body on the cross is a visage that is marred for all man to see. Many men would be stunned as they see the crucified Christ. Not even kings would be able to say a word before him. Many would be converted and they hear the good news of the suffering Messiah. Amen.

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Daily Readings

- MONDAY:** Isaiah 52:1-6
- TUESDAY:** Isaiah 52:1-10
- WEDNESDAY:** Isaiah 52:1-2
- THURSDAY:** Isaiah 52:1-15
- FRIDAY:** Isaiah 52:1-15

Discussion Questions

1. Is it a matter of right or wrong if a church builds an ostentatious building and using Solomon's Temple as the biblical basis? What ought to define the strength of the local church today?

2. Is it a biblical concept to say that Israel was a favoured nation by God in terms of all things carnal such as the best in terms of inventions like atomic bombs, scientists, doctors, inventors of great gadgets, etc? Please explain.

5. Is it wrong to expect a local church to be pure? What does it mean to have a pure church? Is there a difference between a perfect and a pure church?

3. Is it correct to say that the beauty of the church today is holiness? What is holiness in a local church? Can holiness be seen? Please explain.

6. What does it mean to you for Christ to suffer and die on the cross for your sins?

4. What does it mean when God calls a church to return back to Him today? Is it the same as Israel?

7. What lessons have you learnt from this chapter about God's Word and about yourself?
