

TOPIC: “My Salvation which Lasts Forever is on the Way!”**Isaiah 51:1-8 (5,8)****Bible Teacher: Rev Alice Tamrie****I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In Isaiah Chapters 40-55, its emphasis was and is to establish trust in the sovereignty of God for our salvation. Exile did not come because of any divine inability to deliver; whether God delivered, his sovereign plan was the purpose to be reassured that God would not fail to carry out his promises. He would like to bring about restoration. Throughout the themes in Isaiah, it includes the coming deliverance of the exiles, the worthlessness of idols, the coming judgment on the nations, and God’s use of a particular “Servant-Jesus” as an instrument to carry out his plan. Reconciliation is God’s goal ultimately. Punishment is used to effect reconciliation, and the Servant has a primary role in making it accessible to the people with a message. The Redeemer-Jesus is God’s focus for this grace, and we must fix our eyes on Jesus, because this kingdom has characteristics: righteousness, comfort, compassion, joy and gladness, thanksgiving and the sound of worship in songs. One of the most profound themes is “salvation” for which all must look, listen, hear for it lasts forever and it is still on the way! The purpose of Isaiah, the prophet is to deliver the words that God gave him to say and God is concerned with this recurrent theme in Chapters 40-55 with God’s forgiveness, deliverance, and restoration of Israel.

II. BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The prophetic work of The Prophet Isaiah suggests that the people were not going to pay any attention to Isaiah’s message; preaching and teaching were going to be unheeded, and thus indictments would be made as is evident. The failed actions of the leaders (Ahaz) would not annul God’s covenant because He was in control over all that transpired politically or in any other realm! Even the alliances made between other countries; even with Hezekiah-a good leader- ironically the act of God’s deliverance stands as a testimony to the unique power of God. Hezekiah’s miraculous recovery from a mortal illness came in response to his prayer and confirmed his standing as a godly king. This king’s crisis in Chapters 40-55 has significance for us today even in this 21st Century.

There is a sense of restoration – confidence and hope -that no matter what, God’s plan is still being carried out. Repeatedly, salvation is with those who seek the Lord, and the recurrent challenges of a disobedient people still avail; (worshipping idols and pagan gods); but God’s plan will prevail, as history displays it in the past and it will be carried forward in the future. **Salvation is on the way, for it will last forever and through all generations.**

III. THE LESSON: “My Salvation which Lasts Forever is on the Way!”

Salvation defined: Divine comfort: theologically: when one is saved from all kinds of deliverance – from enemies, from sins, health (preservation of life and physical); final and complete deliverance from all the curses, including death, sins (**Rom 10:10**). It gives you a confidence, boldness of speech, plainness, freely and openly; being filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 4:8-12); not destitute of knowledge for they have divine knowledge, without higher education (as Paul), in defense of the Gospel—with the power of the name of Jesus. Come, let’s study this “comfort” and recommit to obey:

1. **vv. 1-2: “Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn;² look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him, he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many.**

a) **Comfort to Listen/Hearken/hear; Called to be committed to righteousness!**

There are 6 calls alternated with ‘comfort: “Hearken” (1-3;4-6;9,16;17-23; 52:1-12). This verse is calling to those who are serious about doing the right living and committed to seeking God; the rock and pit are Abraham and Sarah. They were the faithful ones, the ancestral heritage – look at them; and the quarry that our very own faith is based upon—“the rock from which you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you were dug, for I, the Lord called and blessed them”. The Lord God called them, though he (Abraham) was one and were increased in time and number, by faith (Heb. 11).

2. **v. 3: The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion at all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wasteland like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.**

b) **Comfort for restoration or being restored!**

The Lord will surely comfort Zion/us in all the waste places, and your desert (your dry places in life) will be restored like a garden of the Lord, joy and gladness, thanksgiving and melody in song. OMG! When God rescues/restores you – there is true worship. What is your concept of worshipping the Lord? Attending a church service at which you sing hymns, read Scripture, recite prayers, listen to a sermon, and partake of holy communion? All are these practices which can lead to worship, but Isaiah shows that true worship goes beyond that!

In Isaiah’s day, there were plenty of religious people, but not many responsive people. They afflicted themselves “with fasting”, “delighted” to know God’s ways, etc. But little if any of their piety translated into action. Yet they expected God to answer their prayers and bless them. Through Isaiah, God said that true worship is not just a weekly ritual,

but a daily lifestyle. It may begin in a house of prayers, but it ends up in the public square (sometimes to the appeasement of others). People tend to be known by what they say. Words may strike fear in others, they may reveal the speakers to be foolish, or they may be a source of help or comfort to other people. But the Lord's Anointed would "know how to speak" by receiving instructions from God's divine tutelage. How much more of us need help to know what to say, given our sinful condition. Scripture repeatedly warns us about the power and danger of our words. Do what you say build others up or tear them down! May you blossom like a rose as you recommitment!

3. **v. 4: "Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: Instruction will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations.**

c) **Comfort to listen carefully again to God; be comforted with His instructions!**

My salvation is going forth not only to Israel, but everywhere, to the waste places, to the 10-tribe kingdom as it will be a "light" to all. It's to the kingdom of the world – God says: it's personal – "my" people, nation, justice-the light shines into darkness to all. Things that belong to God: "my" righteousness, salvation, arms, words, hand, fury, my name shall do this! This is serious business, so listen to God's instructions.

4. **vv. 5-6: My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look at me and wait in hope for my arm. ⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.**

d) **Comfort for eternal salvation is on the way!**

The Lord says It is near; my salvation is going forth; the day of the Lord is always near. "My" arm, look to me and "wait" (has to do with confident expectation and active hope (40:31; Ps. 40:1). God's righteousness is the right-doing that He demands of a committed lifestyle in any generation. God's salvation is the universal and complete deliverance from every phase of curses of all who will conform to His will. Salvation is the sum of the gospel: Christ died, bodily resurrection of Jesus; His exaltation of Jesus atoning work; repentance and forgiveness and its power to pardon to be no longer guilty to sin no more (consistent with 1 Cor. 15:1-8-death/burial/resurrection/manifestation of Christ in our lives and faith in God). You can come forth at any time to recommit your life and start anew again! It is to all, Gentiles and Jews will trust eventually in God (Mt. 12:21; Acts 15:13; Rom. 15:12). Every sermon ends with this validation!

So, lift your eyes to heaven, look to the earth, both will wear out like a garment and the people! BUT God's salvation will last forever, His righteousness will never fail. So, LOOK to the rock whence you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit you came from (where you were once deep in sin, sinking to rise no more, until the Master of the Sea, lifted you up,

LOOK to Abraham and Sarah, Look to the heavens, look to the earth. Don't be stubborn with your iron necks and brass brows; stop being faithless, foolish, hard-hearted, blind, self-willed and haughty, hear! Look! Listen! Harken!

5. v. 7: "Hear me, you who know what is right, you people who have taken my instruction to heart: Do not fear the reproach of mere mortals or be terrified by their insults.

e) Comfort for righteousness!

The experience of the righteous (you people) is that: The righteous know! They have God's law in the heart. Woe/Warnings to the righteous: you are not to fear the reproach/taunting of others; do not to be afraid of their reviling/rubbish talk; don't be distressed! Listen now, you know right from wrong; you hold my teachings inside you! Pay no attention to their insults, and when mocked, don't let it get you down. In your heart, is My law by which you are bound to God, by the provisions of the New Covenant (42:6; Jer. 31:33). When you are living godly, anticipate the rejection! God is the comfort.

Emphasis: Verse 8: "For the moth will eat them up like a garment; the worm will devour them like wool. But my righteousness will last forever, my salvation through all generations."

f) Comfort: eternal justice is in you and so, do not fear man!

Emphasis a second time-twice! Know these reasons to not fear man: 1) they are so weak, and temporary compared to Jehovah-God whom men should fear. They soon pass away like garments eaten by worms and moths. 2) Because, in contrast with perishable men, God's salvation and righteousness (right-doing) are eternal and will outlast the generations of men (Job 4:18-20).

So, wake up! Call upon the Lord and put on strength as in the ancient days when God supernaturally intervenes when you are in danger. The arm of the Lord is figurative of His power, as in many scriptures. Why is it so easy for man to trust in man and be afraid of him who is so weak and temporary. Cry out to heaven! Instead, we should be trusting and fearing God who is all powerful and eternal?! He has commanded the praying believing man or woman not to fear or trust in his own weakness and He has promised to protect and bless everyone who will obey and trust Him. Trust and obey all the way!

IV. Prayerful Conclusion.

Sovereign God, hear our cry to Heaven in these times! Your salvation which lasts forever is on the Way! We have comfort in You Sovereign Lord-God! Help us to make that recommitment. It is never too late to be saved! God knock at the door of our hearts even now! Come, Lord Jesus. Amen!