

## **ISAIAH 63:7-14** **HE BECAME THEIR SAVIOUR**

In the Old Testament He is mentioned the most in the book of Isaiah – your Saviour. Depending upon the translation you look at He appears there about ten times. We're more familiar with Him from the New Testament. Yet the New Testament people had to get familiar with Him first from the Old Testament, before they could recognise Him and proclaim Him as their Saviour. We too need to keep looking back to this Old Testament to see what God was revealing to us about this Saviour.

In the Old Testament God is often referred to as the Lord, as He is here. Isaiah says He wants to recount four things about this Lord", His: love, praises, goodness, and compassion. He says that in our first verse. In the next verse Isaiah declares that the Lord became our Saviour. In the next verse Isaiah tells how the Lord saves us. But then sadly in the next verse Isaish says, "But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit".

Christmas is all about recounting the deeds of the Lord our Saviour, telling people about how He became our Saviour. People flock to the church, not as much as in the past, but they still flock to the church for children's plays and Christmas Eve services, but then on the Sunday following, on the fourth day of Christmas how many are still here? The people still rebel and grieve the Holy Spirit. Over ninety people were here for the children's play, and over one hundred on Christmas Eve. According to our membership list there should be around four hundred people here every Sunday. Yet, sadly there might be forty.

The people rebelled, and the Holy Spirit was grieved, and the Lord turned and fought against His own people and became their enemy. Their sinful nature had driven the people away from God, and the Lord wasn't happy with them. The Lord turned on them and He afflicted them with punishments of wars, captivity and famines. Those are not things which one wishes to remember about our God.

Neither does God wish to remember the rebellions of His people, nor continue to punish His people. That's what the Lord says in our reading, "Surely they are My people, children who will not deal falsely". But they did deal falsely with the Lord, but then in the midst of punishing His people, fighting against His people, the Lord remembers something else. He remembers how He saved them from Egypt. That's what the rest of the reading is about, what God did for His people rescuing them from slavery in Egypt, bringing them into the promised Land and making a glorious name for Himself.

And that's what we rebellious people need to do as well, that is remember what God has done for us. We too need to daily recount the steadfast love of

the Lord, the praises of the Lord, the great goodness of the Lord, and the compassion of the Lord. We need to remember that even though we're rebellious people the Lord still became our Saviour.

So let's look at how the Lord became our Saviour. As Isaiah wrote this the people likely didn't understand it, but now, as did the New Testament people, we can look back and see it. The story of salvation is in verse nine of our text. Let's hear it again and see if it impacts you if it didn't the first time you heard it.

"In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old." (v. 9)

"In all their affliction He was afflicted". Sure, God was grieved for the affliction of His people in Egypt, but we can look back now and see the cross on which Jesus was afflicted, "and the angel of His presence saved them", and us, not just from slavery in Egypt, but from slavery to sin now. "In His love and in His pity He redeemed them". He brought the people back from their physical slavery in Egypt and He bought us back from our spiritual slavery to sin. "He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old." He carried them out of their slavery in Egypt, but He also lifted us up on the cross, carrying our sins to the cross where Jesus died for our sins, and then He lifts us up again through His resurrection to our resurrections to come in heaven.

This is the steadfast love of the Lord, but sadly we so easily forget about it, as people forget that it's still Christmas, and will still be Christmas for another nine days. So let's not rush to stop celebrating Christmas, now or in nine days, but rather let's celebrate, recount and remember the steadfast love of the Lord all year long.

Psalm 136 isn't coming up in our readings any time soon, but that could be a good place for you to start. It begins by saying, "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever." And then it repeats that refrain, "His steadfast love endures forever", twenty-five more times. However, it talks about many Old Testament events that many people cannot relate to today. So let's look for more relatable events.

Let's turn back to Isaiah to see the praises of the Lord. Back a few chapters from our reading Isaiah said, "A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord. (60:6). Do your Christmas ears ring? Here Isaiah is foretelling the coming of the Magi to see baby Jesus and bringing Him those gifts of gold, and frankincense and myrrh. The greatest reason for anyone to Praise the Lord is that He sent Jesus to be our Saviour.

Out of God's great compassion, goodness and love He became our Saviour in the person of Jesus. Isaiah foretells of this salvation over and over again, and since Isaiah is saying here that he wants to recount and remember the Lord's great goodness, let's review a few of those times Isaiah says the Lord became our Saviour.

"Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no other god besides Me, a righteous God and **a Saviour**; there is none besides Me." (Isaiah 45:21)

"You shall suck the milk of nations; you shall nurse at the breast of kings; and you shall know that I, the Lord, am **your Saviour** and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." (Isaiah 60:16)

"Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, **your salvation comes**; behold, His reward is with Him." (Isaiah 62:11)

That's only three out of over ten verses, but time is short, and that's why we should come back every Sunday, to hear more. Now let's turn to the New Testament for more praises of our Saviour.

Paul wrote to Titus that at the proper time God "manifested in His word through the preaching with which he had been entrusted by the command of God **our Saviour**" (1:3). And this is what Paul preached to Titus:

"For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when **the goodness** and **loving kindness** of **God our Saviour** appeared, **He saved us**, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ **our Saviour**, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:3-7)

This is the God whom we worship, the birth of whose Son we celebrate, whose steadfast love, praises, great goodness and compassion we recount every Sunday. **Jesus is your Saviour**. Remember Him, as He remembers you and has mercy on you.

"He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:18-20). Amen.