

Isaiah (Quality very good)

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[0 : 0 0] The prophecy of Isaiah chapter 52 verse 7.

The 52nd chapter in the prophecy of Isaiah verse 7. 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.

The mountains in our text have varied significations.

I'd like to dwell for a little while upon them. First of all, they may represent to us the literal mountains that do exist all over the world, and which actually do separate the nations from hearing the gospel.

There may indeed be many families of nations hidden away behind the mountain barriers who have not as yet heard the good tidings of the gospel.

[2 : 0 9] So it may represent literal mountains, whether they be blue mountains, or ice-capped mountains, or most beautiful mountains.

They stand, as it were, as barriers to the gospel. Also, the mountains may, secondly, be metaphorical, signifying the great difficulties that stand in the way of these messengers in our text.

Tremendous difficulties, such as the foreign tongues, the idolatry and wickedness of the nations, the mountain of finding men to preach the gospel and to go forth to them.

The difficulties of crossing sea and land to reach the regions beyond. The difficulties of bridging the language problem.

Translating the scriptures. Men of learning. Material on which to print those scriptures.

[3 : 5 7] The problem of materials. And the transport, whichever way may be adopted. These constitute just some of the mountains in our text.

There are more. And such mountains as are greatly important. The mountains I have to speak of now are not snow-capped mountains.

They are not beautiful mountains. They are not blue mountains. What are they? They are black mountains of sin.

Elsewhere in this prophecy we have such a word as this.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened. That he cannot say. His ear is not heavy.

[5 : 1 0] That he cannot hear. But your sins are separated between you and your God. They are the mountains of Betha.

Mountains of division. These stand in the way. They are erected by us.

We can put them up. But we cannot remove them. You will understand why Jeremiah said My people, They are wise to do evil.

But to do good, They have no knowledge. No knowledge. Do you know about these mountains that stand between God and the soul?

All manner of sin, sins of childhood, sins of youth, sins of age, proceeding from a heart which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, secret sins and open sins.

[6 : 47] Have you thought upon that word? Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Sins of ignorance, sins against light and knowledge and privilege, sins which are aggravated a thousandfold.

These are the mountains. And God said through one of his prophets to the nations, Your sins have grown up to the heavens.

These mountains are at once high. Yes, they're high mountains. We cannot scale them.

They're high so as to be immeasurable. If you think of the sins of one day, multiply it by the days of the year and multiply it by the years which you have lived and you will see a mountain of iniquity reaching to the heavens and these are they which separate between you and your God, between you and his smile and his favor and they are high and they are unscalable by men.

[8 : 30] Not only are they high but they are many. We read in various countries of the ranges of mountains.

We read of chains of mountains. Thus are your sins and mine. Not one single mountain but many.

And said the prophet my sins they are more than the hairs of my head. They are innumerable.

Are they sins beyond recounting? Like the sand the ocean labs they are. Who can count them?

And who can tabulate them? And who can understand stand his errors? They are high and they are many. Consequently they are solid and impregnable.

[9 : 44] So that we being fallen creatures can not rectify one single sin.

not to expunge it from God's book. Not to cleanse it from our conscience. They are impregnable.

They are irremovable so far as our strength is concerned. Oh how they stand betwixt our soul and God.

not all the works all the good works not all the tears that ever have been shed from the beginning of the world till now could eradicate one sin from God's book or from our account.

These mountains are solid. They are unmovable and therefore they are black mountains these dark mountains forbidding formidable they are such mountains as they threaten to fall upon us to our everlasting undoing.

[11 : 09] If we could add not only the actual sins but the aggravation of our guilt so much the more according to our privileges the light of the gospel day the open Bible the house of God godly parents godly teachers and innumerable providences of God sparing our guilty guilty lives add to all our aggravations and what can we do these are the mountains I have in my mind they are high they are many they are dark they are impregnable they are aggravated offenses but more so in a gospel day what saith our conscience about it so many thousands are quite comfortable not perturbed not the least such is the hardness of heart such is the completeness of the fall that we can sin and sin and sin again and be quite comfortable about it there are others who have the mercy to be born again consequently they will feel they will know they will appreciate and understand what I've said and sin to them will be a burden and a trouble and a distress according to the measure of the light which God has given them upon it passing now from the mountains which are dark enough which are dreadful which may represent and bring down the judgments of God upon us

I turn to consider that which stands in happy contrast to them namely how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings I shall refer at times during the day to another portion in Romans 10 15 which reads how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace so we have two things to carry in our minds how beautiful are the feet of him how beautiful are the feet of them I use the plural first and our text is an example of how beautiful were the feet of them of old time namely the prophets they in their generation went forth and we read the spirit of

Christ was in them they went forth upon these very mountains and the scriptures rightly say how beautiful were their feet for you understand the subject matter was this to him give all the prophets witness to him that whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of their sins just a glance or two at the beauty of the feet of the prophet the beauty of their feet will signify the beauty of their character now we read they had in them the spirit of

Christ how wonderful and how attractive was the ministry of the prophets see them going forth each in their generation to proclaim they went forth upon the literal mountains of Israel they went forth under great hardship and tremendous difficulties they went forth in the face of keen cutting opposition painful persecution and often times death was the cost but how beautiful was their faithfulness and their holy determination as impelled by the spirit of

God their feet were beautiful when we contemplate the love of souls welling up in their hearts and their love to God and the steadfulness of their ministry it was this thus saith the Lord whether men will hear or whether they will forbear and beauty in them will signify not only beauty of character but the beauty and harmony of the messages they conveyed to their generation consider the wonder of it that these prophets did live in distinct and separate times in the world's history and in different places of abode and yet their ministry of being of a spirit did always harmonize and express the beauty of

[18 : 25] God's eternal truth it says to him that is Christ gave all the prophets witness there was no contradiction no clashing no discrepancy in what they had to declare how beautiful then were the feet of the prophets consider in passing Moses Jesus said he wrote of me Moses with his types and shadows Moses with his tabernacle all his ordinances by which he did preach the gospel to his generation consider the sweet psalmist of

Israel with more light and a growing revelation also endued with the spirit of Christ how he did in his day preach to the great congregations and now before us the wondrous evangelical prophet Isaiah how seraphical and most beautiful are his expressions he went forth in harmony with the preceding prophets of his day and now the burden of their ministry was couched in just a very few words it was this he shall come that was the burden of their ministry and in varying degrees of clarity these dear prophets saw the day and saw the person and discerned the work of the blessed redeemer most of all

Isaiah here before us has such a view of his advent his sufferings his victorious death his eternal worth and therefore he went forth and truly the feet of Isaiah were beautiful indeed it is very wonderful to notice through the Old Testament ministry the other side of that ministry namely the receiving of it though it was a dark dispensation though it was a time of shadows and similitudes there ever was as now a remnant according to the election of grace towards to them as well as to us the prophets went forth and their words and their ministries the truth they declared were made beautiful to the generation to whom they preached and such was the power such the sweetness and benefit we have it summed up in a verse in

Hebrews these all died in faith now when a man dies in faith he must live by faith when a man dies in faith it signifies he made a good beginning it signifies he was born again and he heard the word of the gospel he received it in the love of it he lived upon it in his life it supported him in affliction delivered him from temptations conducted him safe through life and he dies in the faith so thus you may gather how beautiful were the feet of the prophets to the ancient believers and by them being beautiful you will understand there must be a faculty to value the beauty in

Isaiah we have just read respecting the Lord Jesus Christ and his things there was no beauty in him but we should desire him therefore with these Old Testament saints and with all saints there is given with a new birth a new nature a new set of spiritual faculties which are capable of discerning and appreciating the beauty and glory of the gospel you see unless we have eyes we cannot appreciate beauty in an object unless we have ears we cannot appreciate beauty in music in sounds there must needs be a faculty to apprehend behold and delight in what is beautiful which immediately proves to us that these ancient believers were endued with a holy spirit from on high and they did discern and understand value and appreciate the beauty of the good tidings the salvation and the peace which those prophets proclaim so quoting then from

[26 : 50] Romans 10 15 in passing we may say how beautiful were the feet of them of them they were many but they testified of him and the substance of their ministry was this he shall come he must come he will come oh how full they were of their subject and as you go along through the Old Testament you find almost every prophet making direct reference to that glorious and blessed person who was to come he is the son of righteousness he is the shepherd he is the desire of all nations he is the

Lord's anointed he is the man which shall be the peace he is Israel's redeemer and all along he is God's fellow there's an abounding of reference to the Lord's Christ and there is perfect harmony in their music have you heard it that's the question after all have you and I to behold the beauty of these prophets and these heavenly messengers have you an ear to discern and value the joyful sound now I come to another aspect of the text the singular case behold upon the mountains the feet of him that is

Christ which brings us does it not into the new testament and here we behold Emmanuel God with us his lady's glory by he descended into the lower parts of the earth he has made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death he goes forth as the true minister of the Lord and he has a spirit without measure and without degree and he goes forth then and what is the burden of his message why it is this not he shall come but I am come oh that's wonderful that is beautiful he says

I am come that they might have life that they might have it more abundantly the son of man is come is come to seek and to save that which is lost the son of man is come not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him behold the Lord's messenger he is the word the living word comes forth from the presence of God do you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sake he became poor that he knew through his poverty might be made rich how beautiful were his feet as they walk up and down the holy land as they express his meekness and dove like character how willing was he to minister ever hastening onwards

I must preach the gospel today and tomorrow and the third day I shall be perfect how ready to minister to the needs of poor stricken bodies and to come to the relief of distracted souls how beautiful then are the feet of him in his ministry though often weary though often hungry though often spent yet never refusing that's a beautiful line of ours when Jesus undertook to rescue ruined man the realms of bliss forsook and to relieve us ran he spared no pains declined no load resolved to buy us with his blood how beautiful were those feet as they came ever nearer unto

[32 : 31] Calvary he pants to reach the cross I have a baptism to be baptized with how am I straightened or pained until it be accomplished but his message his ministry is couched in the three main outstanding words of our text what are they why he comes to bring good tidings what sort of good tidings oh there are many good things we enjoy which may be called left hand blessings blessings are providence are good but we know they must fade away they must perish in using so he came then with tidings of supreme good and what were they he came to bring he came to publish salvation his name is

Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins how beautiful is this message he publishes salvation it is full salvation the blood of Jesus Christ God's son cleanses us from all sin through this salvation all manner of sin shall be forgiven unto men it is full for it covers the two great mountains and problems that beset guilty sinners namely their guilt and the power of sin the curse due to sin and the reigning power and dominion of sin he comes to publish salvation which is full and complete he is called the deliverer come to save his people from their sins not only is it full in that way it comprehends a deliverance from all their spiritual enemies every one so at the outset and at the ultimate there shall be this word declared no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper no he will overturn it he will deliver his

Zion he will save her from all her enemies he will sanctify and purify a people for himself publishes a salvation which is full and not only so but which is free oh everyone that thirsteth come me to the waters yea come by wine and milk without money and without price it is one of the glories of that salvation which he brings it is free consequently he secures all the praise and honour and glory of it requiring poor sinners to be debtors forever more to free and sovereign grace alone salvation signifies saving from saving from our sin from ourself from the wrath of God from a deserved hell it will include salvation from all the enemies that beset the believer passing through this wilderness it will include salvation from and in in the article of death and that will lead us on to the other blessing mentioned that he comes to publish peace peace the cause of all our trouble is the controversy betwixt our soul and God betwixt God and our sin and with all our ingenuity works of righteousness we can never by any means establish peace

God hath a controversy with us but happily the name of Christ is the Prince of Peace and this man shall be the peace and he comes then in his ministry to proclaim it and what a blessed comprehensive word it is addressed to his sorrowing disciples when he said peace I give unto you this peace is free cannot be bought then this peace is permanent peace I leave with you peace this peace is superior not as the world giveth give I unto you let not your heart be troubled neither let them be afraid what is the nature of this glorious peace it is this therefore being justified by faith we have peace with

God it is his peace it flows through Christ Jesus to the peace which is altogether honourable he has magnified the law and made it honourable peace which can flow to poor helpless needy destitute sinners honourably without the slightest infringement of God's holy law or any one of his attributes he comes then to bring he comes to publish peace what else a third thing to say unto Zion thy God reigneth which is the crowning glory of our text it will imply this in spite of the good tidings and the publishing of them by the glorious son of

[40 : 20] God Zion she is subject to many many fears and to temptations and to enemies on all hands she is not yet entered into a rest whatever she has here it is by faith whatever she sees it is in part she sees through a glass as darkly and therefore until she gets beyond this veil of tears she will be subject to many fears and faintings and shakings whether indeed this salvation and this peace is verily hers now he come to say unto Zion thy God reigneth which unfolded means this the great God who rules on high and who has everything under his control who sees the end from the beginning he who reigns then over all the worlds this

God Zion is thy God he has of his own free and sovereign will and purpose undertaken and pledged himself to be Zion's covenant God with all that it means therefore his reigning will signify that he will reign in her interests that his glory and omnipotence his wisdom love and power are engaged to make Zion forever blessed and this word is to allay her fears and to promote her faith and to fortify her soul Zion fear not thine enemies for this God that reigneth he is thy

God and he reigns in these two ways he reigns to subdue all thine enemies and whatever weapon may be formed against thee he will so reign as to turn that weapon into a blessing so that nothing which the devil or the world can bring against Zion shall ever prosper for her God reigneth so much for the outer world then there's another way Zion thy God reigneth over thee and his reign is not despotic it is not tyrannical it is a reign of a covenant God through Christ it is a reign of grace he sits upon not a throne of judgment to terrify

Zion upon a throne a mercy seat from which throne he will dispense all wisdom love and mercy and faithfulness compassion pardon and peace he stands ready to perform this salvation to impart and establish this peace which the glorious messenger has declared now very briefly that is a survey of them who went before how beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings how beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good that publisheth peace that bringeth good tidings of salvation that saith unto

Zion thy God reigneth and the question is hast thou eyes to see his beauty hast thou ears to hear the beauty of his voice it is said in the song of Solomon it is the voice of my beloved behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains skipping upon hills do you see the beauty and the glory of Christ coming from the heavenly hills over the mountains of difficulty running to relieve a lost people and he says in prophecy my desires are with the sons of men amen hymn number 51

[46 : 03] John Gerontius number 150 what wisdom majesty and grace through all the world we shall be it is God that speaks and we confess the doctrine most divine who What What wisdom, majesty and praise From all the watershine Is all that sheathen The broken most divine

Good from His shining love of light, New light Hew chamber of light.

Blase His high growth in glory light, And His■.

The mighty angels chosen home, upon the cross he pays.

Then through the night of the century old, his shouts of glorious praise.

[48 : 40] The mighty of rain, I wish the best before his father's throne.

Now on his breast, the mighty of last, and crowns upon his own.

Amen.