

**Text: Isaiah 52:7 - 10 (NIV)**

<sup>7</sup> How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"<sup>8</sup> Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. <sup>9</sup> Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

***Theme: The Good News that our God Reigns***

Today we are able to communicate almost lightening fast. There is almost nothing that happens in the world, which we don't just know of, but we are able to see pictures and video of the events almost instantaneously.

But it was not always that way. When Pearl Harbor was attacked, Washington and the Pacific fleet were notified almost an hour after the attack began. In the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans took place after the peace treaty had been signed in Europe. It took weeks for the news to reach the battlefields in America.

Centuries ago the news also took a long time. Runners would carry the news of how the battle was going. This text speaks of the anticipation of seeing the runners come. There would be lookouts on the walls of Jerusalem, who watched for the runners. There must have been times when the watchmen wondered what kind of news that the runner was bringing. Would it be a word of victory or defeat? However, in our text it is clear that the runners are bringing a message of victory. They are coming to proclaim that our God reigns. Today, I would like to look at that Good News that our God does reign.

I. Like the people of the ancient cities we are often concerned of what the news might be.

When David was king, there was a time when two runners came with news. The news was partially good, that the enemies of the king had been defeated, but it was bad, that David's son Absalom had been killed. Later there were times when the news was not good for Jerusalem. At one time the Assyrians came to lay siege to the city until God sent them away. Later the Babylonians came to destroy the city. At such times the runners came with news that left the city in fear and trembling.

Don't we often live in fear of what the news will be? In today's economy there is a lot of fear that each day of work might be our last. When we have tests at the doctor, we fear what the news will be. When one of our loved ones is in serious condition at the hospital, we are afraid of what the phone call will be. When someone confesses how they have wronged us, we are left shocked. Can you imagine the shock of spouses of public officials or entertainers, who hear of what their spouse has done in the news? When we are in school, the news inside of our report card or the letter from the college, that we applied to, isn't always good. Parents also know the news of what their kids received on a test before the kids do from webgrader. People are not always the bearers of good news, except when it comes to our Lord's church.

## II. The news that we hear in this place is always good.

Even in Israel's darkest days, God had good news from His prophets. Jerusalem was destroyed, but prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel promised that God would bless the exiles, that they would return, and that the city would be rebuilt.

There are so many things that threaten our Lord's church and His people today. Sometimes we do lose a battle, but the good news is that our God reigns. There are times when we lose our battle against a temptation, and our hearts are filled with guilt. You might lose your job. You might even lose your house. You might even lose your respect for someone who did you wrong. You might fail math. Eventually, we all lose loved ones, and each one of us will face our last hour.

We gather here to a message from God. He gives us a message of peace, good-tidings, and salvation. In John 14:27 Jesus says, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."* His words give us peace of heart. They assure us that there is nothing to fear. God gives us a message of good news because they are words of salvation. God always promises that He will deliver us from all evil. He promises salvation by His grace through Jesus Christ. Even death has no victory over us. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15, *"Where O death, is your victory? Where O death is your sting?... Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"*

In Romans 10:15 Paul cites these words and says that applies to the preaching of the Gospel. Think of the good news that we hear in this place. We might come with a burden of guilt. We begin the service with the forgiveness of all of our sins. We remember how God is for us and that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ. There is nothing that happens to us, which God cannot work for our good. Think of the times when you lost a job or a friend or you fought a disease, and somehow God even worked that for your good. But it is especially important that we meet in this place when we lay our loved ones to rest. We come in grief, but we remember that through Christ, God has called their spirits to His glory in heaven and that on the last day they will rise to be with our Lord in His glory in both body and soul. There is one reason why we come to this place week after week. That is to remember that the victory is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## III. But how did our Lord obtain that victory?

It says in verse 10, *"The Lord will lay bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God."* The image is that God will roll up His sleeves and reveal His strong arm, which saves His people. The news is one of peace, good-tidings, and salvation, but chapter 53 describes the battle. That chapter begins with a great surprise. In 53:1 Isaiah writes, *"Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"* Isaiah writes that the Savior would have no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him. He would be despised and rejected by men. He would save us by taking up our infirmities and carrying our sorrows. The Lord would lay all of our sins on Him. Christ won the battle for us by bearing our sins. He suffered in our place. He allowed Himself to be sacrificed, so that we would be freed from sin, death, and all the power of the devil. But death could not hold Him. Chapter 53 goes on to describe the Lord's resurrection and how Christ would justify us. He will conquer and divide the spoils with His people.

The victory that we have in Christ is the greatest act of love there ever was. He gave His life for us. He was numbered with the transgressors, so that He can intercede for our forgiveness and our deliverance from every evil. Our victory is in Christ alone.

IV. That is the good news that we as Christians take to this world.

The message of Christ's salvation is for all peoples. The reason why the LWML was formed was to share that message. The ladies give their mites for various mission projects that the Gospel will be heard and believed in many places. When we know of people who feel the guilt of their sins, who live in fear of any of the evils of this life, and who dread their final hour on this earth, we have a message of peace, of good-tidings, and salvation. Our feet are beautiful when we share the good news of victory in Jesus. We have good news for all who fear the worst.

Our God reigns! That is the good news of all who proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I thought of an old Gospel hymn that describes well the victory that we declare through our Savior Jesus Christ. The refrain goes, **“O victory in Jesus, My Savior, forever. He sought me and bought me With His redeeming blood; He loved me ere I knew Him And all my love is due Him, He plunged me to victory, Beneath the cleansing flood.”**

May God give us all that faith that our God reigns and that there is victory over sin, death, and all the power of the devil through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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