

Session 14

Isaiah 12:1-6 | The Song of the Redeemed Remnant

Isaiah Oracle by Oracle / Dr. Randy White

- Isaiah 12 is the praise response to the salvation promised in Isaiah 11.
- The chapter looks beyond Assyria's defeat to the day when the remnant rejoices in the LORD's comfort, salvation, and presence in Zion.
- It closes the larger section of Isaiah 9:1-12:6, which began with judgment and darkness, then moved through the promised child, the remnant, the Branch, and the regathering of Israel.

In that day: anger turned to comfort (12:1)

- Verse 1 begins **“And in that day,”** tying the song directly to the preceding prophecy.
 - The day in view is not merely the day Assyria is checked, but the day of the kingdom hope described in Isaiah 11.
 - The remnant has been gathered, the old divisions have been healed, and the LORD is present in Zion.
- The speaker says, **“O LORD, I will praise thee.”**
 - The language is personal, but the context is corporate. The redeemed remnant speaks as one people.
 - This kind of singular voice for the nation is common in Scripture, where Israel can speak as a collective person.
- The reason for praise is striking: **“though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away.”**
 - The song does not deny the reality of God's anger.
 - Isaiah has repeatedly emphasized that the LORD's anger was not turned away because the people had not returned to Him (9:12, 17, 21; 10:4).
 - Now the refrain is reversed. The anger that had remained stretched out in judgment is turned away in salvation.
- The result is comfort: **“and thou comfortedst me.”**
 - This anticipates one of Isaiah's great later themes: **“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people”** (Isa. 40:1).
 - Judgment is not the final word for Israel. The LORD's program moves toward restoration, comfort, and praise.

God Himself is salvation (12:2)

- Verse 2 moves from thanksgiving to confession: **“Behold, God is my salvation.”**
 - The verse does not say merely that God gives salvation, though He does.
 - It says **God is my salvation**, making the LORD Himself the substance and security of deliverance.
- The response to salvation is trust rather than fear.
 - **“I will trust, and not be afraid”** stands in contrast to the fear that dominated the Assyrian crisis.
 - Judah had been told not to fear the Assyrian (10:24), and now the redeemed remnant gives the completed response: trust without fear.
- The phrase **“the LORD JEHOVAH”** is a doubled divine-name expression.
 - The Hebrew is *Yah YHWH*, an intensified confession of the covenant God of Israel.
 - It emphasizes that Israel’s strength does not come from Egypt, Assyria, alliances, or human wisdom, but from the LORD Himself.
- A textual note: The KJV only uses “Jehovah” (a transliteration of YHWH) four times: Exodus 6:3, Psalm 83:18, Isaiah 12:2, and 26:4. Three other times it uses “Jehovah” in a compound form:
 - Jehovahjireh - Gen. 22:14
 - Jehovahnissi - Ex. 17:15
 - Jehovahshalom - Judg. 6:24
- The wording **“the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation”** echoes the Song of Moses after the exodus (Exod. 15:2).
 - Isaiah 11:15-16 had already used exodus imagery in the drying or dividing of waters and the highway for the remnant.
 - Isaiah 12 now gives the song that follows the new deliverance, just as Exodus 15 followed deliverance through the sea.
 - The point is that the coming redemption of Israel will be exodus-like, but greater in scope.

Water from the wells of salvation (12:3)

- Verse 3 shifts from confession to joyful participation: **“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”**
 - The pronoun changes from the singular **“I”** in verses 1-2 to the plural **“ye”** in verse 3.
 - The personal confession becomes the shared joy of the redeemed people.
- Water is a natural image of life, refreshment, and divine provision.
 - In the wilderness, Israel needed water and the LORD provided it.
 - In Isaiah, water imagery often points to the LORD’s sustaining grace and future restoration (Isa. 35:6-7; 41:17-18; 44:3).
- Jesus speaks of **“living water”** in John 4:10-14 and of rivers of living water in John 7:37-39.
- The **“wells of salvation”** display abundance.
 - The future salvation is not pictured as a single emergency drink, but as deep wells from which the people continually draw.
 - The joy is not merely relief from danger; it is the enjoyment of God’s continuing provision.

Calling upon the LORD and making His deeds known (12:4)

- Verse 4 begins again with “**And in that day,**” marking a second movement in the song.
 - Verses 1-3 emphasize what the redeemed remnant says to God and enjoys from God.
 - Verses 4-6 emphasize proclamation: what the redeemed remnant says to one another about God.
- The command is plural: “**Praise the LORD, call upon his name.**”
 - To call upon His name is to identify oneself openly with the LORD and depend upon Him.
 - It is worship, confession, and public allegiance.
- The redeemed are told to “**declare his doings among the people.**”
 - The word “**people**” can be understood broadly as peoples or nations.
 - This fits Isaiah 11:10, where the root of Jesse stands as an ensign and the Gentiles seek Him.
- The phrase “**make mention that his name is exalted**” places God’s reputation at the center.
 - The purpose of redemption is not merely Israel’s relief, but the exaltation of the LORD’s name.
 - The nations are to know not simply that Israel has survived, but that Israel’s God is high and glorious.

Singing because the LORD has done excellent things (12:5)

- Verse 5 calls for song: “**Sing unto the LORD.**”
 - The movement from praise to trust to joy now becomes public song.
 - This again matches the exodus pattern, where deliverance produces singing.
- The reason is that “**he hath done excellent things.**”
 - The word points to majestic, exalted, or glorious deeds.
 - In context, those deeds include judgment on the oppressor, preservation of the remnant, the reign of the Branch, and the regathering of Israel.
- The command “**this is known in all the earth**” expands the horizon beyond Zion.
 - The LORD’s work with Israel is never merely local in its final purpose.
 - Isaiah 11:9 said the earth *would* be full of the knowledge of the LORD; Isaiah 12:5 says that the LORD’s excellent deeds *are known in all the earth*. The change of tense (future to present) is important.
- This verse therefore joins Israel’s kingdom hope to worldwide testimony.
 - The remnant is not gathered so that the nations remain ignorant.
 - The LORD’s salvation of Israel becomes a public witness to His glory among all peoples.

Zion's cry of joy: the Holy One in the midst (12:6)

- Verse 6 climaxes the song with a direct address to Zion: **“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion.”**
 - The singular **“inhabitant”** again treats Zion collectively.
 - The city and its people are summoned to loud, public joy.
- The reason for joy is the greatness of the One present among them: **“for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”**
 - **“The Holy One of Israel”** is one of Isaiah's signature titles for the LORD.
 - Earlier in Isaiah, the Holy One was rejected and provoked by Israel's sin (Isa. 1:4; 5:19, 24).
 - Here the Holy One is not distant from Zion, but **“in the midst”** of her.
- This brings the Immanuel theme to a fitting conclusion.
- Isaiah 7 introduced the sign of Immanuel, **“God with us.”**
- Isaiah 9 announced the child whose name includes **“The mighty God.”**
- Isaiah 11 revealed the Branch whose reign brings righteousness, peace, and regathering.
- Isaiah 12 ends with the Holy One of Israel great in the midst of Zion.
- The chapter therefore closes the section with worship.
 - The movement has been from fear to trust, from anger to comfort, from judgment to salvation, and from remnant survival to kingdom joy.
 - The proper final response is not merely analysis of prophecy, but praise to the LORD who has become salvation.

Supplemental: how Isaiah 12 reverses the earlier condition

- **“O LORD, I will praise thee”** (12:1) reverses Israel's earlier rebellion against the LORD.
 - Isaiah 1:4 says they had forsaken the LORD and provoked **“the Holy One of Israel”** unto anger.
 - Isaiah 5:24 says they had cast away the law of the LORD and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.
 - Isaiah 12 shows the redeemed remnant no longer despising Him, but praising Him.
- **“Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away”** (12:1) reverses the repeated judgment refrain.
 - Isaiah 9:12, 17, 21 and 10:4 repeatedly say, **“For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.”**
 - In Isaiah 12, the anger that remained stretched out in judgment has finally been turned away in salvation.
- **“Thou comfortedst me”** (12:1) reverses the wounded and chastened condition of Judah.
 - Isaiah 1:5-6 pictured the nation as sick, faint, wounded, bruised, and full of putrefying sores.
 - Isaiah 12:1 does not erase the reality of chastening, but shows its end: the LORD Himself comforts the restored remnant.
- **“I will trust, and not be afraid”** (12:2) reverses the fear that marked the Ahaz crisis.
 - Isaiah 7:2 says the heart of Ahaz and his people moved **“as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.”**
 - Isaiah 8:12-13 told the faithful not to fear what the people feared, but to sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself.
 - Isaiah 10:24 likewise told Zion not to fear

- the Assyrian.
- Isaiah 12 gives the final response: trust without fear.
 - **“God is my salvation”** (12:2) reverses Judah’s temptation to seek salvation in political powers.
 - Ahaz’s crisis in Isaiah 7-8 exposed the danger of looking to Assyria rather than trusting the LORD.
 - Isaiah 10:20 says the remnant will no longer stay upon him that smote them, but upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.
 - Isaiah 12:2 gives the confession that belongs to that corrected trust: God Himself is salvation.
 - **“The LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song”** (12:2) reverses human pride and self-strength.
 - Isaiah 2:11-17 says the lofty looks of man will be humbled and the LORD alone exalted.
 - Isaiah 10:13-15 exposes the Assyrian’s boast in his own strength and wisdom.
 - Isaiah 12 places strength and song back where they belong: in the LORD.
 - **“With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation”** (12:3) reverses the rejected waters of Shiloah.
 - Isaiah 8:6 says the people refused **“the waters of Shiloah that go softly”** and rejoiced in Rezin and Remaliah’s son.
 - Because they refused the gentle waters, the LORD brought the overflowing river of Assyria (8:7-8).
 - Isaiah 12:3 shows the restored people joyfully drawing from the LORD’s own wells of salvation.
 - **“Declare his doings among the people”** (12:4) reverses Judah’s earlier corruption by the peoples.
 - Isaiah 2:6 says Judah was replenished from the east and pleased with the children of strangers.
 - Instead of being shaped by the nations, the redeemed remnant now bears witness among the nations.
 - **“Make mention that his name is exalted”** (12:4) reverses the exaltation of man.
 - Isaiah 2:11 and 2:17 say the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.
 - Isaiah 12 shows the worshiping remnant doing what that day requires: making His exalted name known.
 - **“Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things”** (12:5) reverses the bad fruit of the vineyard.
 - Isaiah 5:2 says the LORD looked for grapes, but the vineyard brought forth wild grapes.
 - Isaiah 12:5 celebrates the excellent things the LORD has done, despite Israel’s earlier failure to produce what He sought.
 - **“This is known in all the earth”** (12:5) fulfills the widening vision already promised.
 - Isaiah 2:2-4 anticipated nations flowing to Zion to learn the LORD’s ways.
 - Isaiah 11:9 said the earth would be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.
 - Isaiah 12:5 turns that expectation into praise and proclamation.
 - **“Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee”** (12:6) reverses Israel’s rejection of the Holy One.
 - Isaiah 1:4 says Israel provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger.
 - Isaiah 5:19, 24 shows the people mocking and despising the Holy One’s counsel and word.
 - Isaiah 12 ends with the Holy One not rejected, but great in the midst of Zion.

Supplemental: the flow of Isaiah 1-12

- Isaiah 1-12 forms the opening movement of the book.
 - It introduces Judah's sin, the LORD's indictment, the danger of trusting human powers, and the hope of a purified remnant under the promised king.
 - The section moves from courtroom accusation to kingdom praise.
- Isaiah 1 opens with the LORD's lawsuit against Judah.
 - The nation is religious but rebellious.
 - The LORD rejects empty worship because the people's hands are full of blood.
 - Yet even here, judgment is not the only word: Zion will be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.
- Isaiah 2:1-5 gives an early vision of Zion's future glory.
 - The mountain of the LORD's house will be established.
 - The nations will come to learn the LORD's ways.
 - This vision of kingdom peace becomes one of the controlling hopes of the opening section.
- Isaiah 2:6-4:1 returns to Judah's present corruption.
 - The people are full of foreign influence, idols, pride, and misplaced confidence.
 - The day of the LORD will bring down everything high and lifted up.
 - The daughters of Zion, the leaders, and the proud society of Judah all come under indictment.
- Isaiah 4:2-6 gives the first major relief after judgment.
 - The Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious.
 - The remnant will be holy.
 - Zion will be cleansed and covered by the LORD's presence, recalling the cloud and fire of the exodus.
- Isaiah 5 presents the vineyard song and a series of woes.
 - Israel is the LORD's vineyard, but it has produced wild grapes.
 - The sins named in the chapter include greed, drunkenness, moral confusion, pride, and rejection of the LORD's law.
 - The chapter ends with the threat of a distant nation coming swiftly in judgment.
- Isaiah 6 gives Isaiah's call in the year King Uzziah died.
 - Isaiah sees the LORD high and lifted up.
 - His own uncleanness is exposed and cleansed.
 - He is sent to a people who will hear but not understand, until judgment leaves only a holy seed.
- Isaiah 7-8 focuses on the crisis in Ahaz's day.
 - Judah is threatened by Syria and Ephraim.
 - Ahaz refuses to trust the LORD and instead leans toward Assyria.
 - The sign of Immanuel is given, but the larger section shows both the near-term crisis and the deeper issue of whether Judah will fear men or sanctify the LORD.
- Isaiah 9:1-7 turns from darkness to light.
 - Galilee, once humbled, will see great light.
 - A child is born and a son is given.
 - His government, peace, Davidic throne, and righteous rule will have no end.
- Isaiah 9:8-10:4 returns to the judgment cycle against Israel.
 - Ephraim's pride refuses correction.
 - The repeated refrain shows that the LORD's anger is not turned away because the people do not return to Him.
 - The cycle culminates in woe upon unjust lawmakers and leaders who oppress the needy.
- Isaiah 10:5-21 explains Assyria as the rod of

God's anger.

- Assyria is an instrument in the LORD's hand, but Assyria does not think of itself that way.
- The Assyrian boasts in his own power and wisdom.
- The LORD will punish the Assyrian's pride, and a remnant will return to the mighty God.
- Isaiah 10:22-11:16 moves from remnant judgment to Messianic kingdom hope.
 - Only a remnant will return, but the remnant is real.
 - The Assyrian threat comes near Zion, but the LORD cuts down the proud forest.
 - From the felled scene comes the Branch from Jesse, whose Spirit-endowed rule brings righteousness, peace, Gentile hope, and Israel's regathering.
- Isaiah 12 closes the whole opening movement

with praise.

- The anger that had not been turned away is now turned away.
- The LORD Himself is salvation.
- The redeemed draw water with joy, proclaim His deeds among the peoples, and cry out because the Holy One of Israel is great in the midst of Zion.
- The broad movement of chapters 1-12 is therefore:
 - Judah is guilty.
 - Human pride and false trust must be brought low.
 - Judgment is certain, but not final.
 - A remnant will be purified and restored.
 - The promised Davidic king will reign in righteousness.
 - Zion's final word is not shame or fear, but joyful praise in the presence of the Holy One of Israel.