

## THE SONG OF ONE BECOMES THE SONG OF ALL

Christ is Risen!

Hear again the Word given by God through His prophet on this fifth Sunday in the season of the Resurrection of our Lord which Word the people He has saved may continue to receive to our joy:

*“Behold, El my Salvation I will trust, and I will fear not. For my Strength and my Song (is) YH YHWH! He has become for me Salvation.”<sup>1</sup>*

**Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**

Today is the day in the Church Year to sing a new song. That is to say, we are free to sing the Song of God’s salvation in the Christ. We do so because He bore our sins, your sins, and the sins of the whole world into death. He rose from the dead to present you, us, and all who so believe, right with the Father. This is the special day and particular week in the Church’s life to sing of the Comforter we have received, even as we hear of the Promise of the Spirit’s coming.

From the words of the 96<sup>th</sup> Psalm set to the melody of the Hymn of Invocation; through the chant of salvation in the Divine Liturgy; into the Hymn of the Day, the Church in this place has rejoiced in God’s song of salvation. That song goes on, into the day’s readings. In reality, in today’s Old Testament reading, the song of one faithful man is shown to have become the song of all the faithful for all time since. God has joined our voices with those of the faithful across the ages. Today, in particular, He has united us with the song of Isaiah that we might know God has fulfilled these words for His people, for us, for you:

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 12:2.

*And you will say in that Day: "I will cause to give thanks to You, YHWH! For You were angry with me. You turned away Your anger, and You comforted me."<sup>2</sup>*

There is a lot of divine revealed information packed into that verse. From the context in which those words sit, and from the parallel texts which inform us about them, the Day of which God speaks through Isaiah is that of God's second redemption of Israel. The nation, seen as one person, is told that Israel will give thanks to God for His anger in that day. That is to say, when those who were, and are, the spiritual descendants of the people whom God led through the sea on dry land – as the Psalm for today speaks – when the old Exodus is superseded by the new Exodus, those who were oppressed by God's anger will thank Him for their times of suffering. The first part which God says His united people will declare states, literally, *I will cause to give thanks to You, O LORD because You were angry with me*. Why would anyone give thanks to God because He was angry with them?

First, one may actually give thanks for God's anger when he or she sees that suffering under God's Hand has prevented one from falling into far greater error, sin, and from the Word of the Lord. That type of understanding comes with maturity in the Faith. Those of us who have a few years on us can remember times when our earthly parents corrected us, and give thanks for the greater evils that their corrections spared us. In the Faith, such discernment arrives when one beholds the mercy of God in correcting those whom He loves.

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<sup>2</sup> *Isaiah 12:1.*

Second, one may give thanks to God for His anger, when one beholds God's greater consolation. That comes, in particular, when one understands that God has determined to take His wrath from those who are His people. The New Testament word for that action is "propitiation." That is God's satisfying His wrath over sin, by pouring it out a Sacrifice that bears those sins.

Those who are regular in receiving God's gifts in this place are reminded of that before the Service of the Sacrament of the Altar is offered each time in the Faith to the faithful. You will hear such a reminder today after the Prayer of the Church. Reminders of God's truths are declared in the Exhortation, in words composed almost five centuries ago, and translated afresh into English in our era. Pastors here, having given attention to the readings, exhort the hearers of God's Word into the right understanding of the Apostolic doctrine (teaching) regarding the Lord's Supper. We proclaim that, at this Table, we are called to give thanks to God for that which He has done for us in Christ Jesus. We are repeatedly reminded that God showed His love for us when Jesus *saved us*, not just from *sin, death, and hell by his blood*, but, *from the wrath of God...*

Unlike erring confessions of the Faith, we believe, teach, and confess that God poured out His wrath at sinners, all sinners, upon His sinless Son. Jesus hung in the place of all sinners for all time. Jesus, in His atoning death, did not just pay the eternal priced demanded to rescue us, to rescue you, from death, and hell. He actually bore the burning anger of the Father which will be poured out eternally on all who sin and remain

unrepentant of their sins and their sinfulness. Against that, because of Jesus' atoning cross-work, God declares that the one whom He has saved will say to God, "*You turned away Your anger, and You comforted me.*"

The consolation of God which is received by knowing and confessing that He has turned away His anger brings comfort to the one who believes that truth. The words of Isaiah prefigure the saying of Jesus, in which He promises to send the Paraclete, "the Comforter." That One, Whom you know by the Faith, is the Holy Spirit. That Spirit shows the faithful one of the Lord that God, in Christ, has turned away His wrath at the sinner in the death of the Christ.

For the person who knows that he or she is a sinner, that is Good News. You understand that the consolation you receive from the removal of God's wrath is not a license to keep on sinning, but grants you the power of God to turn from your sins. In the Faith which declares that sin is covered, and God's anger at the sinner has been turned away, that having been poured out upon the One Who shed His blood in your stead, comes this confession:

*"Behold, El my Salvation I will trust, and I will fear not. For my Strength and my Song (is) YH YHWH! He has become to me for salvation."*<sup>3</sup>

Faith trusts that God is its Salvation, its Savior, its Jesus. The one freed as God turns away His anger is described as having four characteristics: 1) trust in God; 2) an end to fear; 3) strength; and, 4) song. Trust in God produces in the grateful, forgiven sinner a state of fearlessness with regard to God's wrath at sinners. When the sinner

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<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 12:2.

hears and believes God's salvation, he or she receives God's strength. That strength in the Lord produces song, which in our text reads literally, *YH YHWH. (I, I I am)*. That song contains a doubling of the Name by which God has revealed Himself. This song of God's people as He leads them out of slavery under His wrath in the New Exodus is actually part of the song of the first Exodus in which God led His people out of slavery under Pharaoh.<sup>4</sup>

In like manner, the redeemed one of the Lord declares, *my Strength and my Song (is) YH YHWH! He has become to me for salvation*. With those words, the Name of God is sung both in the endearing short form and the formal long form. That usage shows that, as God has taken a personal interest in turning His wrath from the sinner, the sinner responds in thanksgiving, acknowledging and confessing that God alone has become his or her Savior.

As you behold in the Faith the death of the Christ Who is bearing the wrath of God at your sinfulness, and at you personally as a sinner, you begin to call upon Him Who loved you unto death. In doing so, your voice is joined with those of all who have ever, and all who will ever, call upon the Name of the Lord Who alone has become your Salvation, your Savior, your Jesus. That Faith works in you to join you to the communion of the holy ones. The Faith of Christ-crucified for the forgiveness of all your sins, that Faith which turns away the wrath of God at the sinner, moves the individual's song into joining the symphony of the faithful, as our text leads on...

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<sup>4</sup> cf. *Exodus* 15:2.

*And all of you will draw waters in joy from (the) wells of salvation.<sup>5</sup>*

With those words, the text of Isaiah's words moves from the confession of the individual to the joy of the congregation. The Word for today is teaching that the individual saved from the wrath of God is a member, a part, of the community of those who are being saved. Through the waters of salvation, the waters of life which Jesus promised to bring, God cleanses His own. Through the waters of the on-going New Testament Day, God pours forth grace, mercy, and blessing. In those waters, God takes the individual conceived and born under His wrath, and joins him or her, joins you, into the assembly of those whom He has declared Holy by the Blood of Jesus. Through the well of salvation, the sinner becomes one with the saints.

His or her – your -- voice is added to the song of salvation, the confession of the faithful. All who sing the song of God's salvation are called into the assembly of the faithful, not to walk alone with Jesus, but to stand with, alongside, and under your brothers and sisters in the Faith. One voice is joined to the many. The symphony (speaking with one voice) of salvation sounds forth.

This song of the united began when God led His new Exodus. That started afresh in the era when He began to call out from under His wrath those whom He is leading into the eternal Promised Land. Through Isaiah, God declares of the community of those whom He leads:

*for you all will say in that Day:  
Cause to give thanks to YHWH, cry into His Name;*

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<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 12:3.

*cause to make known His deeds in (the) peoples;  
cause to proclaim: "His Name is exalted!"  
Sing praises to YHWH, for gloriously He has done;  
cause this to be made known in all the earth!  
Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion;  
for great in your midst (is) the Holy One of Israel!<sup>6</sup>*

In the death of Christ which turns the Father's wrath from you, you sing out with all the faithful to all those who will be of the Faith. One voice of one saved is joined to all the voices of all who are being saved. You, those who have been saved with the payment of the ultimate price, sing out in thanksgiving to the Great YHWH.

As you all call out, the song of salvation continues to be His means to teach of His merciful turning from His anger, the gift that is for all peoples. You are His vocal instruments to lift up His saving Name – Jesus! – unto the ends of the earth. All of the faithful, joined into one song of the Faith, sing praises to the Lord. The song of one becomes the song of all as we together declare His victory over sin, death, and the grave, and...His turning away His wrath from those who are being saved. It does not matter whether you individually are called into the mission field or not, as your voices are joined in the song of salvation, God joins you into His mission. We believe, teach, and confess:

*Through the Word and the sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it pleases God, in those who hear the Gospel.<sup>7</sup>*

The Church, singing with one voice, causes to make known in all the earth, through God's Word and Sacraments, His New Exodus. We declare that the *the Holy One*

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<sup>6</sup> *Isaiah* 12:4-6.

<sup>7</sup> Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The Augsburg confession : Translated from the Latin*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

*of Israel is great in [our] midst* through those means of His grace. In partaking of them, we declare the New Song of Salvation. In our united confession of the Truth contained and delivered in God's mysteries, the Holy Spirit joins us in one confession, one song of the Faith. From that song of Salvation, God sends forth His Word to declare his greatness in this generation and into all the generations which may follow us until the Last Day.

Amen! Christ is risen!

**The peace which passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus**

Resurrection V (*LSB* One-year series)

Isaiah 12:1-6; James 1:16-21; John 16:5-15

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*Pastor Michael A. Morehouse*

**Soli Deo Gloria**