

Isaiah 63:7-14 (NKJV) June 30 Read Psalm 25 in call to worship

7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD *And* the praises of the LORD, According to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, And the great goodness toward the house of Israel, Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.

8 For He said, "Surely they *are* My people, Children *who* will not lie." So He became their Savior.

9 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; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.

10 But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, *And* He fought against them.

11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses *and* his people, *saying*: "Where *is* He who brought them up out of the sea With the shepherd of His flock? Where *is* He who put His Holy Spirit within them,

12 Who led *them* by the right hand of Moses, With His glorious arm, Dividing the water before them To make for Himself an everlasting name,

13 Who led them through the deep, As a horse in the wilderness, *That* they might not stumble?"

14 As a beast goes down into the valley, *And* the Spirit of the LORD causes him to rest, So You lead Your people, To make Yourself a glorious name.

Remember last week? We saw Christ as the wrath giver, walking into the city of God stained with blood from His vengeance on wickedness. What a wonderful contrast we see this week. Last week we saw what the people of God **deserve**. This week we see what **we get**.

Now, how do you describe **how** you became a Christian? How do you describe **why** you came to Christ? We often talk about **our experiences** or **what we wanted** or **what we feared** when we talk about coming to Christ. We might say, I was afraid of hell. Or we might say I just wanted to be loved. Or we might say we **thought about** Christianity and it made more sense than everything else. And those may very well be our experiences. So it isn't that we are lying. But it certainly isn't **the full truth**. The important question is, how does **God** describe how people come to Christ?

Verse 7 gives us the perspective of **how** those in the city **are saved**.

7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD *And* the praises of the LORD, According to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, And the great

goodness toward the house of Israel, Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.

The salvation of the people of God is couched in the idea of lovingkindness. It is a masculine noun indicating kindness, lovingkindness, mercy, goodness, faithfulness, love, acts of kindness. This aspect of God is one of several important features of His character: truth; faithfulness; mercy; steadfastness; justice; righteousness; goodness.

Complete Word Study Dictionary, The - The Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament.

I want to read Psalm 136 from the Young's Literal Translation.

Psalm 136:1-26 (YLT)

- 1 Give ye thanks to Jehovah, For good, for to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 2 Give ye thanks to the God of gods, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 3 Give ye thanks to the Lord of lords, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 4 To Him doing great wonders by Himself alone, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 5 To Him making the heavens by understanding, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 6 To Him spreading the earth over the waters, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 7 To Him making great lights, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 8 The sun to rule by day, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 9 The moon and stars to rule by night, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 10 To Him smiting Egypt in their first-born, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 11 And bringing forth Israel from their midst, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 12 By a strong hand, and a stretched-out-arm, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 13 To Him cutting the sea of Suph into parts, For to the age *is* His kindness,**
- 14 And caused Israel to pass through its midst, For to the age *is* His kindness,**
- 15 And shook out Pharaoh and his force in the sea of Suph, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 16 To Him leading His people in a wilderness, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 17 To Him smiting great kings, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 18 Yea, He doth slay honourable kings, For to the age *is* His kindness.**
- 19 Even Sihon king of the Amorite, For to the age *is* His kindness.**

- 20 And Og king of Bashan, For to the age is His kindness.**
- 21 And He gave their land for inheritance, For to the age is His kindness.**
- 22 An inheritance to Israel His servant, For to the age is His kindness.**
- 23 Who in our lowliness hath remembered us, For to the age is His kindness.**
- 24 And He delivereth us from our adversaries, For to the age is His kindness.**
- 25 Giving food to all flesh, For to the age is His kindness.**
- 26 Give ye thanks to the God of the heavens, For to the age is His kindness!**

We see God's lovingkindness here in nearly everything He has done. It is a quality of who He is. What we just read displays that God showed His kindness in Creation. He showed His kindness by providing the Exodus from Egypt. And He displayed His kindness to His people by destroying their enemies. Isn't it interesting to see God's kindness to His people associated with destroying their enemies? When Romans tells us to consider the kindness and sternness of God, it means it. The blood drenched warrior from last week was displaying his kindness to His people, among other things. It is very dangerous to not walk in the assurance that faithfulness to Christ provides us. We will be exploring that in 1 John.

David depends upon God's lovingkindness. That is what He appeals to after He sinned with Bathsheba in **Psalms 51**. He comes to God depending upon God's strong warmth toward him. We too can depend upon His lovingkindness to His children. Now we cannot trifle with this. We cannot sin depending upon God's lovingkindness to cover it. We know that God also gets angry. He has more than one emotion. But it is **wonderful** when we desire closeness and reconciliation to God. We have something to work with. We have something in God to appeal to. God is **full of lovingkindness, warm intense emotion toward His children**. Do you see God this way? We should. It is accurate. To think of Him without this trait would be a skewed picture of God. Lovingkindness in our text draws us to put our trust under the shadow of His wings, to trust in His provision for us.

Let's read that first verse again. **7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD And the praises of the LORD, According to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, And the great goodness toward the house of Israel, Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.**

Isaiah understood the basis of our relationship with God. And the basis is

God's attributes, not ours. The basis of their salvation is not that the people **responded** to God's goodness. The basis is that there was something **to respond to** in the first place. God's lovingkindness is what has brought all this about. It is the character of God to draw people to Himself, and in drawing them, sealing the deal for them. God bestows His salvation upon His people because of His loving kindness. **1 John 4:19 (NKJV)**

¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

Moving on to verse 8.

⁸ For He said, "Surely they *are* My people, Children *who will not lie.*" So He became their Savior.

This is not a verse describing God making up His mind by saying, I am picking these guys because they won't lie. No. The language surrounding this is **covenantal love**. God has bestowed his mercy, His lovingkindness on a people that He has chosen. Now He emphasizes this fact and says surely they are my people. He is saying of a certainty these people are mine. And it is not that God puts up a hopeful **wish** that **they won't lie**, or **picking** these people because **they won't lie** or because **they haven't lied**. No. This is like when we tell a child **you will not go out on that highway to play**. It is forbidden to do so. Another translation is that they will not deal falsely.

Wow. I think we need to stop for an application. Are we people who will not deal falsely? Will we deal truly, only based on what is true?

If we quickly respond, "why yes, of course," we probably don't know ourselves at all. If we assume that our motives are good and all our behavior is defensible, we are not dealing truly. 1 John tells us

1 John 1:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

The assumption in the Christian life is that we are all struggling with our sin natures. It is never a safe assumption to think that our reactions and responses are without sin. Scripture does not assume such a thing.

Or do we present theories for our behaviors? Do we present what must have been true because it was **us, after all**, who did such a thing and we would never do an awful thing.

There is often a vast distance between our theories for why we did a thing and the reality of why we did a thing. And our theories are almost always overly optimistic. When we examine our lives and our behaviors and our thoughts

and our reaction, we and those who love us will only gain a benefit if we will throw our fears and pride aside and look at the truth. And then reveal that truth no matter how it makes us look. Now I am talking about situations where this is appropriate and safe. We aren't responsible to be this kind of transparent to everyone. But with those people who are dealing with the real us, we have got to do this in order to foster fellowship.

Sin blocks relationships. Dishonesty blocks relationships. Not dealing with truth blocks relationships.

Do you lack the closeness in relationships that you so desire. While there could be many reasons for that, dealing falsely, not accurately telling the truth about ourselves is one sure way to make people keep their distance. People will only allow themselves to trust you, over time, to the degree that you are real with them. No one has fake close meaningful relationships.

And if we deal falsely, we definitely will not have a close relationship with God either. Our sin will keep us from enjoying His fellowship.

Now look at the last phrase in our text- So He became their Savior. **Why** did He become their Savior? It is because **He first declared them His people**. In our text the passage may be referring to a temporary salvation from the circumstances they were in. But eventually this would be an eternal salvation from sin. Christ died for those who were elect from the beginning of time.

Ephesians 2:4-10 (NKJV)

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,

⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Now on to verse 9

⁹ 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; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.

This is amazingly wonderful. This is one of those things that you will never see in another religion. God did not save these people because these people **earned** it. There was nothing special about them. No. He saved them because it **is like Him**, because **He is love**. He took upon Himself the afflictions they were afflicted with. There is one sense that He as a Father felt the afflictions of His children like they were His own. We who have children know how that feels, and those who don't probably know this as well. Our love creates an empathetic bond. This may be what this verse is referring to. In verse 10 we see that these people of His **rebel**. So this might again be a temporary salvation. But in a deeper sense it also may be pointing to **the acts of our Savior taking upon Himself our sins**. There is no greater affliction than the affliction of sin when in the presence of a Holy God. Christ took upon Himself our sins. And the Angel of His Presence is most likely referring to Christ. It is the angel or messenger with the face of God.

In Christ's love and pity He redeemed us by taking upon Himself the wrath of God in our place. And until Christ came, these sins were borne in expectation of what was to come. Remember that the sins that Christ took upon Himself were the sins of every person who would ever come to Him by faith, past, present and future.

Here is our wonderful new testament salvation in the pages of the old testament Bible. Here is just one more prophesy of what Christ would do for us. Let's go on.

¹⁰ But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, And He fought against them.

Isn't it hard to read first and second Kings and Samuel? Don't you find yourself saying over and over again, NO don't do that. You know where it is headed. You know those idols will make God angry. You know those choices will only make your life miserable. But on they go in their **wicked choices**. And then, there they go again with **God's judgment**.

But look here how that process is worded. They grieved His Holy Spirit. This is also a new testament concept.

Ephesians 4:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Here is what John MacArthur has to say about this.

A powerful motivation for putting off unwholesome talk is that not to do so will **grieve the Holy Spirit of God**. All sin is painful to God, but sin in His

children breaks His heart. When His children refuse to change the ways of the old life for the ways of the new God grieves. **The Holy Spirit of God** weeps, as it were, when he sees Christians lying instead of speaking the truth, becoming **unrighteously** rather than **righteously** angry, stealing instead of sharing, and speaking corrupt instead of uplifting and gracious words.

Whatever violates the will of God and the holiness of the heart will **grieve** the third Person of the Trinity. Grieving can lead to quenching ([1 Thess. 5:19](#)) and to a forfeiture of power and blessing.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary - Ephesians.

Our choices have an effect on God. They do not change God. They do not surprise God. They will not harm God's plan. But they **grieve** Him. I wonder how it is that we can be so cold and callous to **knowingly choose** to do faithless actions when we know that we will cause our Savior grief. Scripture makes it clear that when we do this we are sinning against our Savior, personally. And what does this Savior deserve? All Christ deserves is pleasure from those He died to save. Gratitude and obedience and praise He deserves. And so aren't we good at coming up with excuses? But there are exactly **zero** that are good excuses.

Where did we cause the Holy Spirit to grieve this week? Where did we go against what we knew was the right thing to do? Where did we **know what was right** and didn't do it? Where did we **know what was evil** and **did it anyway**? How can we do such a thing in the face of what Christ did for us. How can we **hurt** Him who endured such pain already for us? How can we do such a thing?

Well our passage this morning lets us know we better not think that this is just some emotional game like we might play with a lover or a spouse. This is God's response. You see, God is never a victim. He does not play games by getting a kick out of one day being a Savior, the next day being a victim, and the next day being a persecutor. No. God is not playing any game.

So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, And He fought against them.

We saw this in the books of Kings and Samuel over and over again. God does not play games with Sin. He cannot be jerked around by us as if He has no power. His power to **do us good** and His power to **do us harm** are the same. For those who are not believers, His harm over them will be eternal. For those who are His children, His discipline can be very secure, sometimes leading to death. It is a fool who sins thinking that God's grace will immobilize Him. That is never the case. God is never a victim to the people He loves.

And God is very very good at getting the attention of people that He wants the attention of.

**11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying:
"Where is He who brought them up out of the sea With the shepherd of
His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them,**

**12 Who led them by the right hand of Moses, With His glorious arm,
Dividing the water before them To make for Himself an everlasting
name,**

**13 Who led them through the deep, As a horse in the wilderness, That
they might not stumble?"**

The best thing we can do in life is to **remember immediately** who it is who has delivered us in the past from all the bad stuff in life. When bad things happen to us, particularly as a result of our sinful choices, we do well to stop in our tracks and think about our lives. Where did we **find love** in the past? Who **reached out to us** when we had nothing to offer? Who provided a path to good things when only bad things were approaching? Who provided the things **we most needed** when we had no idea where to go next? Who protected me from those things that surely would have destroyed me in ways I could have never predicted and probably didn't even choose? We are amazingly dense to **forgetting** the One who has loved us in every situation. We whine and complain and act like **our misfortune is completely undeserved** when in reality we **deserve** far worse than the misfortune we experience. And even the bad things God is using for good things.

Are you facing hard times? The first question to ask is, have I been committing a sin that is inviting God's discipline in my life? Is there an idol in my life that I worship and orient my life to more than the one true God? Have I been choosing to do something that I know is wrong? Have I been exhibiting faithlessness in my life?

Have we considered that maybe what we are facing is a discipline of God? Have we considered that maybe there is a consequence for our sinful behavior? God does not play the games we play. He takes sin seriously. If this is the case, look at it, confess it, and ask God what you can do to make it right. Confession to Him is always the first step. Sometimes confession of your sin to those that your sin has harmed is the second step. Have you considered doing this? Will you call your sin what it is? Will you confess it to those you have harmed?

Sometimes the pain we face is designed to cause us to do just this. The discipline may be aimed at getting us to publicly admit that we have made choices that have been dishonoring to God and now is the time to bring them

out into the open to those we have sinned against. And that may well be the first step in getting to where our text takes us.

Then we can remember that it is God who delivers us. It is God who provides the **good solutions** and the **real solutions**. It is God and God alone that we can really trust to take us through the path of deliverance in the most impossible fashion.

What deliverance do you need this morning? Where do you need a path through a sea to escape your enemies? It is only God that can provide such a thing. There is no other source.

14 As a beast goes down into the valley, And the Spirit of the LORD causes him to rest, So You lead Your people, To make Yourself a glorious name.

Here we see the kind of deliverance God offers to His people. The picture is of a beast making his way down into the valley where he has water and safety. That is the kind of escape the Lord provides.

Are you in a situation where you are looking for rest for your soul? This is where you will find it. God promises to lead your soul, too, into the place of safety and rest. He promises to take you to the good places. And why? What is the end that He desires? He desires to make for Himself a glorious name. Remember that all of our life is for the **glory of God**. It is not for **our pleasure**. It is not for **our comfort**. It is not for **our ease**. It is not for lots of things we might prefer. It is for **the glory of God**.

Is that what you are trusting God for? Are you trusting that what He is leading you in is for **the glory of God**? Or do you want all the other things? Is comfort or convenience more important to you? Are there places in your life where you are telling God that His plan is faulty? That He must not have considered the effect that this this thing would have on you?

We make huge mistakes when we evaluate the plans of God in a critical fashion. We show how little we truly **trust our God to provide for us** and guide us and lead us. We show that what we want most really is not the glory of God. What we **really** want is **the stuff we want**. And that is a very sad state for us.

We have seen wonderful truths this morning that should compel us to run to our Lord. We have seen His lovingkindness that we can call upon and trust. He know that if we draw near to God He will draw near to us. This is all held out to us in order for our relationship with God to grow deeper and more life changing. It is there for the receiving, provided to us through a God who has made a covenant with His people. How will we respond this week accordingly?