

Give Thanks

Bible Background • ISAIAH 12
Printed Text • ISAIAH 12 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 92:1-8

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: UNDERSTAND that we should praise God for His mighty deeds; EXPRESS a willingness to praise God; and OFFER praises to Him for His mighty deeds.

In Focus

Monique couldn't help smiling as she watched her grandmother move about in preparation for the family celebrations tomorrow. Every year they got together, ordered from the Black-owned BBQ place down the block, and spent time laughing and catching up. But Monique's favorite part was what her grandmother always shared. Standing at the bedroom door, she saw Grandma Jean flip through old albums, some with pictures and others with tattered papers of faded handwriting.

"Ah, yes. This is the one," Grandma Jean said out loud. Every year during the family's Juneteenth gathering, she made a point of reading a poem passed through her ancestors in commemoration of slavery's end in the United States.

"What's that?" Monique asked, already knowing, but anxious to hear the story all over again. Hearing it in her family's stories made it more real than the lectures in her African-American studies classes. She'd learned that the celebrations that began June 19th, 1865, occurred two-and-a-half years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Still, nothing topped the history of how her family marked knowledge of their new-found freedom over the years. Making herself comfortable on the bed, Monique waited to hear the familiar words.

Festivals and celebrations are a great way to acknowledge and express gratitude to God for His many wonderful blessings.

Keep in Mind

"And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted" (Isaiah 12:4, KJV).

Focal Verses

KJV **Isaiah 12:1** And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

5 Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.

6 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

The People, Places, and Times

The Prophets. God commissioned the prophets to fulfill a particular role—to be “servants of the Lord.” The prophets conveyed God’s message to men and women. They had special abilities to carry out their tasks: As interpreters, they explained God’s acts; as seers, they saw what was hidden from others; and as mouthpieces, they voiced God’s truth.

The prophets encouraged God’s people to trust in God alone and not to bow before human strength or military power. They firmly believed that God is the almighty ruler of the universe, the moral governor of the world and the covenant of Israel. He controls all things for the good of those who love Him. Therefore, God’s people should obey Him and not fear the empty threats of men.

The prophets encouraged God’s faithful people regarding the future. Moses had prophesied that God would cut off His people and send them into exile (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). Yet they received encouragement from God. Exile was not the end for them because God would restore His faithful people, and through them, He would send the Messiah (Isaiah 51:11; 54:10).

Background

The great reign of Christ on earth (Revelation 20:1–6) is referred to as the “millennium,” meaning a thousand years (*mille* is Latin for “thousand” and *annus* is the Latin word for “year”). Many Old Testament prophets, including Isaiah, predicted this 1,000-year period. The prophet Isaiah said, “The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (9:6, NLT). Isaiah also prophesied: “In that wonderful day when the Lord gives his people rest from sorrow and fear, from slavery and chains” (14:3, NLT).

Of course, Isaiah was not the only prophet who was blessed with a vision of the reign of Christ on earth. The prophet Micah was given a glimpse of that time and joyfully wrote, “Everyone will live in peace and prosperity, enjoying their own grapevines and fig trees, for there will be nothing to fear. The Lord of Heaven’s Armies has made this promise!” (Micah 4:4, NLT). Zechariah, another Old Testament seer who served in Jerusalem after the exile as both priest and prophet, also looked forward to that great day and wrote: “And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord—his name alone will be worshiped” (Zechariah 14:9, NLT).

At-A-Glance

1. Praise the Lord (Isaiah 12:1–3)
2. Sing and Shout to the Lord (vv. 4–6)

In Depth

1. Praise the Lord (Isaiah 12:1–3)

Imagine a single day in which no one dies, no one gets sick, no war is waged, no crime is committed, every belly is full and all hearts are filled with joy and peace. Since the beguiling in the garden of Eden, not only has there never been one single day like this but not one single moment. Yet our Lord encourages us to anticipate not just one such day but also many glorious days. At that time all the effects of sin such as poverty and pain, death and destruction, and selfishness and sorrow will be completely eliminated. Isaiah looked at this day and his heart overflowed with song and praise for the Lord.

Isaiah compared the return of the people of Judah to the exodus experience at the end of chapter 11: “like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt” (Isaiah 11:16). At that time, Miriam led the Israelites to sing a beautiful song exalting God’s greatness and praising Him for His victory over their oppressors. In the future reign of Christ, God’s people will again praise Him for the final restoration of Israel and unification of His divided and scattered church. “In that day” (12:1), the unified church of Jew and Gentile with one voice will say, “I will praise (Him).” Isaiah was so sure of the fulfillment of this promise from God that he composed this song of praise thousands of years before its future fulfillment.

He praises God for His great love, which causes God to turn away His anger toward disobedient people and instead bless them with divine favor. When we call out to Him in sorrow

and repentance, He not only turns away from judgment; He becomes a source of comfort. His awesome power comforts those in danger. His omnipresence consoles the lonely. His infinite love is a comfort to all who seek Him, and His faithfulness comforts all that trust Him.

On that day, all God’s people will say with wonder, “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid” (v. 2). He not only has saved us, but He continually rescues us from the perils of life and death through the wisdom of His Word, the indwelling presence of His Spirit and the unceasing intercession of our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ. Because we are surrounded inside and out and defended in the physical and the spiritual, we can trust and not be afraid.

Trust implies three things: security, confidence, and hope. We are secure in our knowledge of God’s infinite love for us. We have absolute confidence in God’s ability to meet every need, overcome every obstacle, and guide us along paths of right living. So rather than dwelling in the trials of today, we look forward in hope to the triumphs of tomorrow.

Yes, “the LORD Jehovah is my strength” (v. 2b). In all things, God’s people are more than conquerors because we depend on strength greater than our own (see Romans 8:31–37). As God declared to the prophets of old, He proclaims to His people today and into all eternity, “It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit” (Zechariah 4:6, NLT). Because we can depend on His strength, our hearts are merry and they burst forth, “singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, making music to the Lord in your hearts” (Ephesians 5:19, NLT).

2. Sing and Shout to the Lord (vv. 4–6)

What’s in a name? In today’s modern Western world, people tend to be concerned with how a name sounds rather than with what it means.

This was not true of the ancient biblical world. In those days, parents' names for their children would reflect the future they hoped for their children, the character they desired for them, or maybe something that occurred during the birth of their children. As it is with the children of those ancient parents, the name of the Lord is packed with meaning. God's name signifies His eternity, His infinite presence, and the holiness of His character.

In that day when Christ reigns on the earth, people will express their heartfelt gratitude for their deliverance from the defeated kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of the Son. They will express this gratitude by calling on His name, making His exploits known to the world, and proclaiming that His name is to be exalted. The Holy One's presence among His people will cause them to sing of His glorious deeds and shout for joy. What a glorious time that will be when all God's people can shout out in complete victory: "The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and he will reign forever and ever" (Revelation 11:15, NLT).

Search the Scriptures

1. What two acts did God perform that caused Isaiah's heart to burst forth in praise (Isaiah 12:1)?
2. Aside from praising God with his lips, what three acts did Isaiah promise to perform in gratitude to God (v. 4)?

Discuss the Meaning

Contemplation of God's goodness to us serves two vital purposes: First, it causes us to take our minds off the things that trouble us and focus our attention on how blessed we are. Secondly, and most importantly, it brings joy and comfort to our hearts that causes us to sing and shout praises to His name.

Liberating Lesson

How do you show your thankfulness to God? Isaiah expressed his gratitude by being both active and inactive. In his inactivity, he got alone with God, shut out the world, and thanked Him. In his activity, he sang songs of praise to God and made Him known to others. We live in a time that features an avalanche of information and activities—so much that our fast pace can distract us from taking the time to be thankful. What can you change so that you can come before God with thanksgiving?

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Sources:

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Say It Correctly

Jehovah. jih-HOH-vuh.
Zion. ZI-uhn.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

Giving Thanks Is Good
(Psalm 92:1–8)

TUESDAY

Coming into God's Presence
with Thanksgiving
(Psalm 95:1–7)

WEDNESDAY

Remembering God's Wonderful Works
(1 Chronicles 16:8–13)

THURSDAY

Giving Thanks and Praise to God
(1 Chronicles 29:10–18)

FRIDAY

Receiving God's Goodness
with Thanksgiving
(1 Timothy 4:1–5)

SATURDAY

Where Are the Other Nine?
(Luke 17:11–19)

SUNDAY

Giving Thanks to the Lord
(Isaiah 12)

Notes
