

**Text: Isaiah 62:1-5**

For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns. <sup>2</sup> The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the LORD will name. <sup>3</sup> You shall also be a crown of glory In the hand of the LORD, And a royal diadem In the hand of your God. <sup>4</sup> You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For the LORD delights in you, And your land shall be married. <sup>5</sup> For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.

**The Security of Being Loved by God**

I don't know if there is a better feeling in the world than to know that you are loved by another person. Children feel secure in knowing that their parents love them. Adults crave to be loved as well, whether it is from our spouses, siblings, children, friends or whoever. We have a whole lot more confidence and security in knowing that we are loved. When we realize that there is someone in this world who knows our flaws, and yet chooses to intentionally overlook them, this changes our outlook on life.

Today our text focuses on the perspective of what it means to be loved by God. When the holy, perfect God who knows us inside and out – including our darkest thoughts -and loves us anyway, that provides us with an incredible amount of security and confidence to go through life. He will not let anything stand in the way of His love for us. In this love He rejoices over us as a groom rejoices over His bride. Today we'll examine, then, what exactly this means to us. May the Holy Spirit open our hearts to receive His message.

**1. God lets us nothing get in the way of His plan to love us**

The first verse of our text indicates the Lord's dedication and desire to have the righteousness of His people shine forth. He wants the world to see our salvation. *For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns.* In order for this to happen, we have to be changed from the inside out, changed from our natural state of sinfulness to reflect the holiness of our God. That could only happen by the power and love of God.

The obstacles to God's plan of salvation were numerous. We'll focus on three today. First of all, there is the fact that we are very unlovable. You have probably heard the phrase: "He has a face only a mother could love." We could apply that to us in that we have souls that only our God could love because we are so ugly on the inside. We are literally as ugly as sin. From God's holy view we are obnoxious, rebellious, ungrateful, and stubborn. Yet God said, "I am still going to send My Son to save you."

That undeserved love of God is a wonderful thing. We call it grace. The more we realize how sinful we are and how far apart from God's standards we are, the more we will appreciate the fact that He chose to love us. Human beings have a great capacity to love, but God's love goes beyond that of any human being. He was willing to love His enemies even to the point of sacrificing His Son for them.

Another obstacle is the fact that even after we know that we are loved by God and know the consequences of sin and unbelief, we have the awful tendency to wander away. Old Testament Israel gives us a great example of God's people wandering and God's reaction. In spite of God's warnings, they allowed other nations to influence them with their idolatry. Time and time again they wandered away and God called them back. There were times that He did so by sending His prophets. Other times He would send other nations to plague them, including sending the nation of Babylon to take them into captivity. All of this was an effort to call them back.

The Lord continues to operate the same way today. When we stray, He will send people to us with His Word. He will send adversity into our lives because He loves us. This is the way in which He overcomes the influence of the unbelieving world upon our gullible souls.

The Lord also will not let the archenemy of His people get in the way of His love for us. Satan is on the prowl trying to prevent the spread of God's Word which is able to change hearts and minds. The devil works tirelessly to not only discourage you, but to keep you from seeing God's love in His Word. He will try to take away the security and confidence that you have in God because you know He loves you.

God says, *I will not hold My peace* (I will not keep silent). *I will not rest*. He wants the world to know the work of Jesus because that work of redemption and sacrifice shows the nature of God's love. Until Jesus returns, God's Word will be going out. Parents will be training their children, not just dropping them off for Sunday School or church, but also working with them in their homes. Christians of all ages will reflect God's righteousness and tell the story of Jesus' love.

The love of God for us is what should be reflected by us. We are to be shining lights, glorifying our God who has done great things for us. God's love changed our eternal destination and sustains us day to day. As we glorify Him, we draw others to His love.

## **2. God rejoices over us as a groom rejoices in his bride**

We have a comparison of God's love in the second half of our text. *You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For the LORD delights in you, And your land shall be married* Instead of being forsaken, we are told that God delights in us (Hephzibah), and instead of being called Desolate we are called Beulah (married).

There are great benefits to being the bride of Christ (Beulah). In Ephesians 5 we are told of the sacrificial love that Christ has for His bride. A husband is supposed to put the needs of his wife above all others, even those needs of His own. Certainly Jesus did that. He sacrificed in a way that we cannot imagine, putting Himself literally through hell in order that we might go to heaven. He was willing to give up His throne in heaven and have a manger for a bed. He was willing to set aside His glory and become a servant, in order that we would become priests and kings of God.

If we are not the bride of Christ, it doesn't mean that we're not married spiritually speaking. If we are looking elsewhere than Christ for the spiritual benefits that we receive from the Lord, we are still married. We are in a destructive spiritual relationship with another god. That idol in our heart may not have a name like Allah, but everyone has someone or something in that number one position in their heart. If God does not occupy that spot, then an idol does. How much better to be loved by Christ and receive the blessings of that sacrificial love, than to be in a harmful relationship with a god of our imagination.

The other name we mentioned earlier was "Hephzibah," which literally means, "My delight is in her." This is exemplified in verse 5: *For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.* Think of a couple on their wedding day. The groom has a delight in his bride. As he waits for her to walk down the aisle, he is feeling very blessed. She is the love of his life, and he wants to spend the rest of his life with her. As time goes on and love grows, it is a joy for him to make sacrifices for her and to protect her.

Now think of this in the context of God and us. The Lord of all creation takes delight in you, a sinner. What an amazing concept! There's no rational explanation for this, yet it's true. Of all the things that God could do, He chose to love you. He wants you to have joy, not superficial, temporary joy, but the joy of heaven. He wants what is best for you. That should give you an extreme amount of security. The love of people can waver, but God's love does not.

Knowing of God's love for you will get you through any crisis. If you feel all alone in this world, or feel unloved, know that your Lord loves you. Even if every relationship on this earth would end by death or distance or by other causes, God delights in you. He rejoices over you. It doesn't get any better than that.

It is a great thing to be loved. It changes our outlook on life. It gives us confidence and security to know that we have people on this earth to back us up. It is even greater to know that you are loved by God. Be secure in that knowledge. Amen.