

# The Ransomed of the Lord taken to Zion

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[ 0 : 01 ] I'm going to resume my public worship of God by singing some verses from Psalm 89, Psalm 89 and from verse 13 down to verse 18.

Thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might, and thy right hand exceedingly exalted us in height. Justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place. Mercy accompanied with truth shall go before thy face. O greatly blessed the people are the joyful sound that know in brightness of thy face, O Lord, they ever on shall go.

They in thy name shall all the day rejoice exceedingly, and in thy righteousness shall they exalted be on high, because the glory of their strength doth only stand in thee, and in thy favour shall our horn and power exalted be. For God is our defence, and he to us doth safety bring. The Holy One of Israel is our almighty King.

Canst du in this verse, Psalm 89 from verse 13 to it, thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might.

Thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might.

[ 1 : 44 ] Thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might.

Thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might. Mercy accompanied with truth shall go before thy face. O gripply blessed the people are the O greatly blessed people, the joyful sound that know.

And brightness of thy face, O Lord, they ever on shall call.

Then thy hymn shall all the day rejoice in me.

And in thy righteousness shall be exalted be on thine.

[ 3 : 39 ] Because the glory of their strength does only stand in thee.

And in thy favour shall our Lord and power exalted be.

For God is our defense, and he to us just save, keep bringing.

The Holy One of Israel, who is our almighty King.

Let us join together in prayer. Let's pray. Lord our God, you bear the name, the Holy One of Israel.

[ 5 : 00 ] And Israel were your chosen people. Indeed, it is probably true of them that they still bear that name.

Even though they have forfeited the right that includes blessing and your favour.

And until such time as they repent of their sin and return to you as their God.

In and through the person of Jesus Christ. The Messiah, the Prince. The one that they denied and despised and rejected.

Until such time, then the blessing that is declared concerning them will be kept from them.

[ 6 : 04 ] But you are God and King. Whatever your chosen people or any who bear your name in this world do.

However much they go off the path of obedience and follow their own sinful inclinations.

You are still King. You are still King. And you have the rule over every one of us. Your scepter is the scepter of righteousness.

And your crown is the crown of eternal glory. That you are King. That you are King. That you sit forever on the throne. And your Son, Jesus Christ, has been granted that privilege to sit at your right hand.

And our Lord, we give thanks for his interest in us as the Prince of Peace. We give thanks for him as the great intercessor of his people.

[ 7 : 20 ] As the advocate with you, the Father. the one who is the great high priest of his people he secured salvation by way of the cross by offering himself a sacrifice for sin to satisfy divine justice and so reconcile us to you our God we give thanks for all who have a measure of understanding and appreciation of what that act of reconciliation involved and who are beneficiaries offered in their life and we bless your name for all that we derive by way of comfort in knowing that that intercession is a continual intercession that there is no heart in it there is no time in which he is distracted or caused to look elsewhere for his interest is rapt and his concern is for his people we pray Lord for your blessing upon each one of them thankful for those of that number who belong to the congregation here those who bear his name who bear testimony to it for the blessings that they have enjoyed and for the interest that they have in him and even them we pray for all who belong to the church of Christ the world over thankful that the number is without measure only the God of heaven alone knows who belongs to that number but that number is known to you their names are writ large in the book of life the Lamb's book of life and we give thanks that all who are contained within that book are assured of salvation eternally we remember your saints especially those of that number who are being persecuted for their profession of faith there are many parts of the world where that is the lot of your people to declare an interest in Christ is a sure and certain way to expose them to the enmity that is in the heart of man against your great name in a measure it is experienced within our own community those who would seek to make their interest in Christ known is sure to carry with it the heartless pleasure of those who who have no interest in God as far as the salvation of their soul is concerned but nevertheless they are avidly interested in the things of God if only to deter and to dismay your people we pray for the preservation of the testimony of the saints that they would not be forced to contemplate drawing back for your word reminds us that you that you will have no pleasure in those who draw back from their faith so hear us oh lord on behalf of your people that we may uphold one another

even at the throne of grace that we may remember all of that number even those that we have no knowledge of we pray for your blessing upon the preaching of the gospel and that through it that you would add to the number of those who would be saved so encourage your people to persevere in prayer to ensure that we are ever found at the throne of grace soliciting the help of heaven that your word would have free course amongst us and that it would not return unto you void even as you have promised bless the preaching of the word and those you have sent out to preach those who are in the pulpits of our own island we pray for every congregation and also pray for the congregations that are currently without a pastor and ask that you would direct their attention to one of your own

Jews even throughout our denomination and beyond those who are sincerely seeking to set Christ and him alone as the saviour of sinners we pray that their labour would prosper and that they would be kept faithful in their testimony to the gospel of free grace we remember in your presence this evening those in need of special mention in prayer those who are unwell some we know some within our own congregation here some in hospital and some confined to homes for the elderly we remember them all to you we pray for those who are sorrowing and those whose griefs are reasoned and ask Lord that you would assuage their sorrow and bind up their wounds and make your presence felt to them so that they may know that they are not forgotten we remember to you the needs of our nation a nation that is guilty of their election of their duty with regard to God because we are a nation favoured by you in generations past but now we have abandoned the testimony of the saints and we have chosen our own gods and we have followed their ways and the idols of our own making will prove themselves to be false gods and their promise will prove futile and empty so we pray

Lord that we would turn again to you with spirits that are moulded to the truth and with penitent hearts that recognise the awful reality of sin so continue to pour out your blessing upon this sin sick world we know that there are parts that have known your favour in recent days and that many have been added to the number of the saved there is one day coming when the truth of that will be proved perhaps a past generation knew much of the blessing of God here in this island community and we know that to be the case and now that is not so much in evidence but we give thanks for those that we hear of our turning to God and we pray for the same to be true some here that they would turn to God and that they would trust in

God and that they would yield their lives to your keeping and your preservation we pray Lord that you would remember us now the short time that we're together blessing the needy in this world that we live in those who are weak and infirm those who are frail and elderly those who are young and all manner of awful experiences by reason of war and the natural calamities that assail nations from time to time may the eyes of our understanding be opened to your ways that we may hear your voice in all these things forgive sin in Jesus name amen we're going to sing now verses from psalm 138 psalm 138 psalm 138 psalm 138 from the beginning thee will

[ 16 : 39 ] I praise with all my heart I will sing praise to thee before the gods and worship will toward thy sanctuary I'll praise thy name even for thy truth and kindness of thy love for thou thy word has magnified all thy great name above thou didst me answer in the day when I to thee did cry and thou my fainting soul with strength didst strengthen inwardly all kings upon the earth that I shall give thee praise O Lord when as they from thy mouth shall hear thy true and faithful word yea in the righteous ways of God with gladness they shall sing for great's the glory of the Lord who doth forever reign though God be high yet he respects all those that lowly be for as the proud and lofty ones of narrow knoweth he and so on

Psalm 138 verses 1 to 6 thee will I praise with all my heart thee will I praise with all my heart I will sing praise to thee before the cross and works happen toward thy sanctuary I'll praise thy name in for thy truth and kindness of thy love for thy word has marked me right all thy great name above thou teach me and surrender the day when

I hear thee cry and thy might be so with strength did strengthen it worldly all kings upon the air that shall shall give thee praise O Lord when I say from thy heart shall hear thy true and faithful word ye in the righteous ways of

God with gladness they shall sing for grace the glory of the Lord who doth forever reign though God be high yet he respects all most that low he be where else the broken lost he wants a power of no with thee we're going to hear

God's word this evening as we find it in the Old Testament scriptures the book of the prophet Isaiah chapter 35 the book of the prophet Isaiah chapter 35 read the whole chapter the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it the excellency of Carmel and Sharon they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees say to them that are of a fearful heart be strong fear not behold your

[ 22:17 ] God will come with vengeance even God with a recompense he will come and save you then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing for in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert and the parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water in the habitation of dragons where each lay shall be grass with wreaths and rushes and highways shall be there and a way and it shall be called the way of holiness the unclean shall not pass over it but it shall be for those the way fading men go fools shall not care therein no lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast shall go up therein it shall not be found there but the redeemed shall walk there and the ransomed of the lord shall return and come to

Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sigh shall flee away amen and may the lord add his blessing to a reading of this passage from the scriptures let us sing now verses from psalm 107 psalm 107 and we're singing from the beginning to verse 9 psalm 107 from the beginning praise god for he is good for still is mercy's lasting be let god's redeemed say so whom he from the enemies handed free and gathered them out of the lands from north south east and west they strayed in deserts pathless way no city found to rest for thirst and hunger in them faints their soul when strays them press they cry unto the lord and he them frees from their distress them also in a way to walk that rife this heated guide that they might to a city go wherein they might abide oh that men to the lord would give praise for his goodness then and for his works of wonder done unto the sons of men for he the soul that longing is doth fully satisfy with goodness he the hungry soul doth fill abundantly we can sing these verses 1 to 9 of psalm 107 praise god for he is good for still his mercy lasting be praise god god he is good for still his mercy lasting be let let those redeemed say slow to me from the enemies and to free and gather them out of the lands from north south east and west this great desert that less way no city found who rest for thirst and hunger and praise their soul when stress them prays they cry unto the

Lord the King and free from their distress them also in a way to walk that right to seek and guide that they might to die of city gold when in the might die oh that meant to the Lord would give praise for his goodness then and for his words of wonder turn and to the sands of pain for he the soul that longing is

God fully satisfy with goodness he the hungry soul God fill up and to blame for the short time that we are together this evening can we turn back to the prophecies of Isaiah chapter 35 and we can read again at verse 8 and on highway shall be there and away and it shall be called the way of holiness the unclean shall not pass over it but it shall be for those the wayfaring men though fools shall not hear that in nor lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon it shall not be found there but the redeemed shall walk there and the ransomed of the

Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sigh shall flee away particularly the last verse there the ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy we've often said that the name that is given to the prophecies of Isaiah is the gospel in Isaiah because it is so full of the gospel and he's called by some the evangelical prophet because he is so interested in Christ he has so much to say about Christ you can turn to pretty much any part of the prophecy and you will find reference to the

[ 30 : 45 ] Lord Jesus in some way shape or form chapter 28 for example therefore thus saith the Lord God behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone a precious corner stone a sure foundation he that believeth shall not make case these words are prophetic words that speak to us about the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ Isaiah 32 behold a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment and a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest as rivers of water in a dry place as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land and of course perhaps the best known passage that we frequently turn to and to find

Christ spoken of in his sufferings Isaiah 53 the prophet is a prophet who is intent on bringing Christ to the attention of those who are his hearers that is his ministry there is of course a danger when you find so much of Christ in any part of the scripture particularly the Old Testament that you might find yourself looking for them where he is not to be found and some have fallen paid to that interpreting certain passages of prophecy in a particular way that really does not speak to us about Christ or what he is to accomplish or achieve but

I think for the most part we would probably be safe enough in reflections on much of what the prophet has to say to us that we can find him at least with Christ at the heart of his thinking this passage that we're looking at this evening is a passage which has in it reference to in the first instance the return of God's people from their sojourn in Babylon they are returning to Zion they are coming back under God's hand from exile and without question that is part of the prophecy looking forward with anticipation to the time when God will restore his people to their own lands but almost without explanation or without any elaboration there are verses here that cannot be understood in that way with that light they are instead looking forward to the gospel era looking forward to the passion of the

Lord Jesus Christ and what he is to do these words in verse 5 for example the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped these have been applied to the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ by none other than himself but then there is also the third part root something that applies not to the present but to the future that applies not to the gospel generation but to the realization of the promises that belong to God's people once the world is behind them once the provision of God is in their possession salvage for there there is the description that is given to us of who are going to be in heaven and the ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion the ransom of the Lord secondly their destination they are going to come to Zion and thirdly how they are going to arrive in Zion is described to us they will come with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads and what they can anticipate upon their arrival they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow on sighing shall flee away so four things that we can speak of arising out of the text they are described as the ransom of the Lord and the word ransom is all important when it comes to speaking about the fruit of the gospel the word ransom itself is very suggestive it means to secure the release of a person who is imprisoned and the release of that person is by payment of a price a ransom price and we know from the scriptures that that is how Christ describes his own role he speaks of what he is going to do before he does it for example in the gospel of Mark he describes himself in this way who even the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many couldn't be plainer than that this is why he came into the world to give his life a ransom for many and he understood that he expected others to understand it also

Paul writes his epistle to Timothy and well of course there are many references that we could turn to but from Paul's perception the work of Jesus Christ is the work of a redeemer somebody who is going to pay the redemption price 1st Timothy chapter 2 verse 5 there is one God and one mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time Paul Jesus anticipates what his role will secure and Paul looks back and he is quite clear in his own mind that this is what has been the outcome of his death a ransom price has been paid and not only is the fact of payment declared to us within the New Testament and within the scriptures there is the nature of that payment different ways we could think of you know the question is asked by some who is the ransom price paid to and some mistakenly think that the ransom price is something that was paid to secure salvation from the hands of the devil that is not right

[ 40 : 02 ] Jesus came to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God the transaction carried out by him was between himself and his heavenly father but Paul says to us about the ransom price that there is nothing like it nothing like it can be conceived of by the mind of man this price was a price beyond reckoning you are bought with a price he says and by that he means not just a statement and saying there's a cost involved but the cost is the ultimate cost you're familiar I'm sure with the words of the apostle Peter and Peter tells us quite plainly what he thought of what Jesus did for as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot a redemption that was by way of Jesus

Christ that ransom paid and it couldn't be more explicit than that so that's the first thing that we have to understand it's a simple statement of fact nobody will belong to the Zion of which this passage speaks nobody will enter into the Zion of this of which this verse speaks if the ransom price has not been settled if payment has not been made returned and that word return you know that's probably why most people would some people would look at this passage and say this whole chapter has to do with the restoration of Israel to its own territories its own land to

Jerusalem brought back from being estranged from where they rightfully belonged but whoever it is that experienced the ransom price of God of Christ being paid for them it is a return because we have all gone away from God and there is no way back to God except the way that God has revealed to us in his word as we spoke about it briefly this morning the only way to God is by way of the cross and the only reason why the cross ensures access to God is that the ransom price has been paid the blood has been shed and God is pleased with the sacrifice and we have got all as the prophet says elsewhere all of us have gone astray like sheep we have gone astray each one going to his own way and the only way back to

God is by the way of the gospel by the way of the ransom price that Christ has paid and the ultimate end for all for whom that ransom has been paid is that they will not only return to God but they will come to Zion that's true for everyone maybe some of you have been to Jerusalem which bears the name Zion but all of you who are the lords will come to the new Jerusalem all of you who have been redeemed by the ransom price of Christ's shed blood will go to the new Jerusalem and be found there and that's what this passage tells us that's the destination Zion is the heavenly Jerusalem and it is often spoken of as the community of the redeemed of

God perhaps we need to understand something of what that means for example if we listen to the apostle John who under the hand of God was given access to glory itself a vision of glory his eyes were directed to the heavens and what he saw there he recorded for us just a little of what he saw and he saw the heavenly Jerusalem he saw Zion the glory of God and he saw the sins of God engaged in their heavenly activity and this description is such that we can hardly conceive of all that is involved there their heavenly worship is beyond description in each just for example to go to the words of the apostle in

[ 45 : 47 ] Revelation chapter 7 after this I beheld and lo a great multitude which no man could number of all nations kindreds and people and tongues stood before the throne and before the lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands and cried with a loud voice saying salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the lamb and all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God saying Amen blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God forever and ever Amen just a glimpse given to this man of God as the spirit allowed him access into heaven he saw the activity of the church glorified before the throne of God in union with the angels of heaven and the saints glorified truly wonderful words can you think of a fellow saint someone that you knew in this world who is now experiencing that activity for themselves you are still in this world and you maybe think well this is what will be true of me but think about those that you know who have left this world and who are in glory and this is what they're doing even as you are sat here listening to

God's word this is true of them now and if you are one of God's children if you are a redeemed saint of God if you have been ransomed by the blood shed by Christ Jesus this will be what awaits you singing the song of the redeemed and perhaps it will have in it the words of verse 6 and 7 of chapter 1 of the revelations praising and magnifying the name of the lamb that is slain of the words that fill your mouth you come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head it's hard to imagine is it not the moment that you enter into glory that your mouth will be sung filled with some praise perhaps somebody who had no songs to sing not that they couldn't have songs but their voices could not sing the praises of

God they complained during their lifetime that they couldn't sing that they didn't have a singing voice the moment you enter glory that will be behind you I'm sure they are singing not only the praises of God but they will join in the praise as they arrive with those who sing I think that's awesome when the Old Testament pilgrims entered into Jerusalem on the festal days it is recorded for us that they approached Jerusalem with songs that they had particular songs of praise that they sang collectively but that is just a foretaste of what will be true of the saint who is redeemed songs of joy we are told and gladness but what does it mean the third thing that we have here that they are saying that they come with everlasting joy upon their heads they come with everlasting joy upon their heads and I think

I know that Professor John L. Mackay in his commentary thinks this and I don't disagree with what he is saying that the imagery that is there for it conforms to the passage that we are looking at here where it speaks about the joy and the gladness and sorrow and sigh flee away because when a person is in this world part of their experience is the experience of sadness and sorrow the griefs that this world brings our ways and amongst these griefs there are these sorrows that are associated with sin and when those saints of the Old Testament were truly penitent when they understood their sin they came to God with sackcloth and ashes their head clothed with the ashes to show that they belonged to the dust and they belonged with their heads bowed and that is the picture that we are given here instead of that because of the experience that they have of being redeemed they enter glory with everlasting joy upon their heads it's not just joy it's everlasting joy a joy that will never end when the context encourages us to think such thoughts when you think of the experiences that that brought to our attention in the scripture of times of celebration that the

Lord's people enjoy take for example on the banks of the Red Sea when God took them through the Red Sea dry shot then they joined together when their enemies were drowned in the sea they sang the song of Moses and the Lamb they sang the songs of celebration they sang the songs of Zion and they did so with delight but what are they in comparison to the songs that fill the mouth of those who have experienced redemption at the hand of Christ we have glimpses of glory here do we not we have a foretaste of glory at times privileged entrance into the experience that awaits us but only glimpses only foretastes nothing like the lasting realities that this section of the scripture sets before us they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and

[ 53 : 12 ] Zion will flee away these two things need to be mentioned they shall obtain joy and gladness these two thoughts I wondered well how why does the word obtain feature there and why why is the word flee away why is it descriptive rather than they shall be given or they shall receive joy and gladness and their sorrows will be at an end again it has to do I think with the fact of the matter that the Christ of God is the source of their salvation the Christ of God is the alone saviour of sinners he is the one who has redeemed his people and the word obtain suggests that to us it is something that that they have received not by their own endeavours they haven't obtained it by their own strength or by their own wrestlings or by their own securing of it they have obtained it by virtue of what

Christ has done for them and as for the latter it is forbidden in glory pardon follows ransom and joy accompanies pardon when we think of the experiences of the world that bring joy to our hearts what we need to remind ourselves of these are all fleeting joys they are not lasting joys they are always intermixed they are always blended in with things that are not wholesome or God honoring or glorifying but because of the joy that is spoken of here if you go again to speak of the experiences of God's people there are occasions when it speaks to us of joy that is unspeakable and full of glory it speaks of immeasurable joy that is joy that is you are not able to contain yourself when you experience it but it is not of this world it is not something that you can manufacture or create for yourself it is the joy that is full of glory you go again to the

I believe that the passages in the book of revelations they take us back to these words and they fill the mind of the apostle as he looks into heaven and he says that's what it's all about that's what it's like there will be no more tears God will wipe away all the tears from our eyes joy and gladness will be ours and sorrow and sighing shall flee away these promises that are there before us are sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ they are they are guaranteed by reason of the ransom price that is paid by his hand and for his people and not one of his people will be denied the glory of which this speaks the joy that this speaks of sometimes the enemy of your soul will say to you oh there's going to be these people there there's so and so going to be there but

I'm afraid I fear that I won't be one of them well the truth of the matter is whoever you are if the ransom price has been paid for your sin by Christ Jesus the alone saviour of sinners then there is no price beyond that that will be expected of you and if you think that you think other than that then you are doing despite to the promise of God the people of God are assured of this end and I pray that every one of you will know the power of Christ in your life the grace of God in your heart and the cleansing and the efficacious impact of the blood of the

Redeemer on your own heart and soul God bless to us these few thoughts let us pray Lord our God we give thanks for the simple promises that your word sets before us we make things complicated and we suffer loss because of it there is but one Redeemer for sinners and that is Jesus Christ he has secured pardon for us by the shedding of his blood we give thanks that the blood is precious not only to your people but to you our God and that you have ordained that all who are under the shelter of that blood those who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ will know that that righteousness is unspotted unsullied and that you are content with it so hear our prayers and enable us to flee to that



[ 59 : 49 ] Christ and trust in him for the salvation of our souls in his name we ask it Amen we're going to conclude from the same psalm that we had before psalm 107 psalm 107 and we're singing from verse 26 down to verse 30 psalm 107 at verse 26 they mount to heaven then to the depths they do go down again their soul they faint and melt away with trouble and with pain they reel and stagger like one drunk at their words and they be then they to God in trouble cry who then from straits doth flee the storm is changed into a can at his command and will so that the waves which raged before now quite are and still then are they glad because at rest and quite now they be so to the haven he then brings which they desired to see these verses psalm 107 verse 26 they mount to heaven then to the depths they do go down again they mount to heaven then to the depths they do go down again their soldiers filled and melt away with trouble and with pain they dream and struggle like on throne at the which ended be then they took all in trouble die who then from state the free the star is changed into the camp at his command and clear so that the way which free people may quiet and still he and hear in sud in

Ai he peace so For to the heaven he embrings, with his peace I would sing.

May I make grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you, all now and always. Amen.