

## Isaiah 62:1-12

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. <sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. <sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. <sup>4</sup>You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. <sup>5</sup>For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

<sup>6</sup>Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest, <sup>7</sup>and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. <sup>8</sup>The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have laboured; <sup>9</sup>but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts.

<sup>10</sup>Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. <sup>11</sup>The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." <sup>12</sup>They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken."

It is not always clear in some passages within the Bible as to who the speaker is. In these verses from Is. 62 the first 7 verses could be God speaking directly, the Prophet on behalf of God, or a person challenging God's inactivity and silence.

Regardless of who the speaker is there is a promise that Salvation is on its way and the people of God will be seen as vindicated by God through faithful living.

There are many occasions in the Old Testament when God's people felt let down. We only have to read the stories of the time 40 years of wandering in the wilderness to realise this. The Psalmist regularly declares a feeling of unhappiness with how things are going. God's people felt that being chosen gave them privilege rather than responsibility; comfort rather than times of hardship.

Despite the Scriptures we read and the stories we have of Paul and the early disciples enduring hardship suffering and even martyrdom we can expect an easy life too.

When things are not going well for us as individuals, congregation or church we can feel let down by God and begin to tell God what we think of him. There is no reason why we should not do so for God knows our heart and mind and a bit of honesty can be a good thing as we air our frustration and then listen to what God says in return. God is big enough to take our shouting and stamping our feet; what parent does not expect that behaviour at sometime from their offspring?

In recent months we may have felt like screaming and shouting and expressing frustration – well let us do it. When we do it God listens and we then need to listen to what God says in return. The shouting and the stamping of feet may not change the situation but we may feel better for having done it and having got it out of our system.

Another dimension from this passage can be a challenge to pray for a fresh empowering of the Holy Spirit that the glory of God shall be seen in and through his people. Much of the book of Isaiah is a reminder that God desires a people who are fully devoted to him; we cannot feign devotion to God for God knows our heart, he knows if we speak and live with integrity. If we are to be such a people we need to be a people of worship where worship is about whole life commitment to the ways of God. Where such life is found the blessing of God will follow and be found. To be such people we need the presence and the power of the Spirit with us we cannot do it on our own.