

Real Joy in the Journey

Isaiah 43: 1-7

Let me begin by asking; are you happy in the Lord today? Is there joy in your heart because of your relationship with Jesus? It is often easy to lose our joy as we focus on the problems of life. God's people ought to be joyful. If anyone has a reason to smile, we do! We have a hope that is out of this world. There is much for the child of God to rejoice about.

These verses were given to the nation of Israel concerning their captivity. They are specific to Israel, but there is a great application for the church as well. I trust as we look at the [lessons](#) in these verses, we'll find encouragement in the Lord and realize that it is possible for us to have: [Real Joy in the Journey](#). This involves our:

I. Reflections of the Past (1) – [But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.](#) Notice this 1st verse is spoken in a past tense. Each of us has a past. No doubt there are some things we wish we could forget, some things that should never have happened. (If God is willing to forgive and forget our past, shouldn't we be willing also? We will never have joy today if we are unwilling to forgive ourselves of past mistakes.) For the child of God there are some things in our past that we can rejoice about. If you are saved, your past has some wonderful aspects worth reflection. Notice:

A. Our Sovereign – Did you recognize who was speaking in the text? It was God Himself, the LORD Jehovah! He was reminding Israel, as well as us, just who He is.

- There are times when I try to reflect on the awesomeness of God. He is far bigger than I can comprehend. He is the God of creation. [John 1:3 – All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.](#) All that we see and know is of God, including ourselves. We are the handiwork of the Master Potter. God created us; He formed us!
- As I look upon my past, I am reminded that I am a creation of God. That makes me somebody in Him! He made me for a purpose; I am His. None of us are here by chance or mere luck. God has a plan for our lives. God gave each of us life. That in itself is a significant part of our past. [Jer.1:5 – Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.](#) God put all the pieces together to make you who you are. We are His creation!

B. Our Salvation – [for I have redeemed thee](#). I am also reminded of my redemption. God created me, but I was born in sin, separated from Him. He loved us enough to provide a means of our salvation. Consider the love of God, the price that was paid for our redemption. Before man was ever created God knew he would sin and need a Savior. He sent His Son to be that Savior.

- Of all my past, the day I accepted Jesus was the best! I have had some good experiences in life, but none compare to the day I met Jesus. How can I reflect upon my past and not have joy in my heart. I am redeemed today by the blood of Christ. He took my sin and gave me righteousness. God no longer sees the sin of my past, but the blood of Jesus. My sin is eternally forgiven.
- If you are saved, rejoice in your past. Praise God for His plan, for a willing Savior, and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

C. Our Separation – [I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine](#). We are also reminded of the change that has taken place in our lives. We are not what we used to be. There is a beautiful illus. of this in [Gen.32:24-28](#). Jacob was a schemer, a trickster, but when he admitted who he was and recognized God, he was never the same.

- I was once called by the name of this world; a sinner, a child of the devil, lost and undone. But thank God I got a new name! My name is now written in heaven. I am saved, a child of God, redeemed! [II Cor.5:17 – Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new](#). Thank God I have been separated unto Him, a new creation in Christ Jesus!

I. Reflections of the Past (1)

II. Reassurance for Today (2) – [When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee](#). God had reminded Israel of their past, but He also reassured them of what they possessed right then. I'm glad that He didn't save me and leave me to make my own way. Life may be hard, but we can have real joy today. We don't have to wait until we get to heaven. God is making provision for us right now. Notice:

A. God's Presence – [When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.](#) This is a reminder of the mighty miracle at the Red Sea. God had made the way and led them across. God was there in their midst. He is assuring Israel, that as He was with Moses, so He would be with them.

- We can rejoice in that same promise. He will never leave us, nor forsake us! [Ps.46:1 – God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.](#) God is always near. Aren't you glad for the presence of God in our daily lives? He is mindful of you!

B. God's Power – [and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.](#) This is a reminder of when Israel crossed Jordan into the Promised Land. The mighty Jordan was out of its banks at that time. It stood between them and their victorious life. The Lord's power held back the river so that they might safely cross.

- Our lives will have many occasions of difficulty and distress. There will be times when it appears more than we can bear. We may even think that we would drown in our river of trouble. Listen, God has promised, by His mighty power, that the river shall not overflow us!

- There will be some "Jordans" that we cannot cross in ourselves, but if we'll stay close to God, He will lead us through. Have we not all experienced His mighty power in the past? Has He not brought us safe thus far? Rejoice in the power of the God you serve!

C. God's Protection – [when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.](#) I'm glad for the reassurance of His protection. There may have been times when we set out on our own, crossing a Jordan alone, and God, in His mercy, allowed us to keep our heads above water. But, there are times that we would have surely perished had it not been for His protection. We can't walk through the fire without God. We are here today because of the hedge of protection He has set about us. We face a determined adversary who would love to "snuff out" our lives, silencing us.

- The Hebrew boys didn't even have the smell of smoke upon them. This was all because of the 4th Man in the fire. God will keep those who belong to Him to fulfill His purpose.

- I'm not encouraging you to be foolish about things, tempting God, but we will be here as long as God pleases. He has put a hedge about us that Satan can't break through. God had Israel consider His hand of provision for previous generations. He had never failed them. He was well able in Moses' day; He remains able today. Rest assured in Him today!

I. Reflections of the Past (1)

II. Reassurance for Today (2)

III. Reminders for our Future (4-7) – Keep in mind the context of the passage. Israel faced captivity, but God had promised it wouldn't last forever. He was reminding them of their future with Him. We too have hope for a glorious future. [1 Cor.15:19 – If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.](#) This life of trouble, heart ache, and pain isn't all there is for the child of God. Notice:

A. Our Position (4a) – [Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee:](#) They were [precious](#) unto the Lord and [loved of Him](#). The word [precious](#) means “*to esteem, be prized, and highly valuable.*”

- There was a great price paid for our redemption. The church is valuable to the Lord. We are secure in Jesus, [John.10:28-29 – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. \[29\] My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.](#)
- The saved have a glorious position in Christ. This life may be filled with disappointment. Others may not see much value in you, but God has a place reserved for you in heaven. We are just one breath away from claiming the position we already possess. The saved are as good as there! Rejoice in your position in Christ.

B. Our Presentation (4b-7a) – God promised to one day gather the nation of Israel again. He would do just as He promised.

- There will also be a gathering of the church as we are presented as the bride of Christ. One day the Bridegroom will call for His bride. We will march into the celestial city of Jehovah, presented at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. What a day that will be to stand in that great number, received and accepted before God. Lift up your head Christian, our wedding day is approaching. We shall all be there, all of God's saints, [V.7a – Even every one that is called by my name.](#)

C. Our Perfection (7) – [Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.](#) God reveals that man was created for His glory.

- A life of service gives God glory and honor, but only in part. One day as we stand before Him, He will receive the glory that He is due. These bodies of sinful flesh will have been traded for a new, glorified body as we worship and praise our King! There will be nothing in heaven to defile. All will be perfect as the redeemed gather around the throne to lift praises to the Lord of glory.

I hope you have been encouraged in your walk with Christ. Our lives don't have to be lived in constant sorrow and dread. We can have real joy for the journey because of what God has done, what He is doing, and what He will do! Rejoice in your salvation today.

If you are lost, your past, present, and future is grim, but that can change in Christ! He has already purchased your redemption. Won't you come and receive it?