**Daily Prayer & Encouragement Friday 25th December -** Karen Scarfe

Isaiah 12: 1-6

In that day you will say:

"I will praise you, O Lord.

Although you were angry with me,

your anger has turned away

and you have comforted me.

Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust and not be afraid.

The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my song;

he has become my salvation."

With joy you will draw water

from the wells of salvation.

In that day you will say:

"Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name;

make known among the nations what he has done,

and proclaim that his name is exalted.

Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things;

let this be known to all the world.

Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,

for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."

Today we remember in celebration that glorious day that Jesus was born – the day God became man – Immanuel, God with us. For me, these songs of celebration from the book of Isaiah, speak of what occurs when a believer in Christ is brought out of darkness into his marvellous light, when they are delivered from a spirit of bondage to sin and death and led by the Holy Spirit to become a child of God, to be born again into a freedom that is found only in Christ.

These songs are set "In that day", a day when God's power will be seen by all, a day of great comfort to those who know the Lord. At Christmas we remember Jesus coming as a baby, coming to save people from their sins, coming to call us out of darkness into his light, coming to bring life. But we are also called to remember that Christ is coming again, coming not as Saviour but as one who will judge the world according to his righteousness.

In this year of Covid-19 our world has been shaken. Life has been turned upside down and many of our liberties have been taken away, or restricted. For many it has been a very difficult time, a lonely time, a time where loss has come in many different forms. The world is looking to the vaccine as its hope, its salvation, its deliverer. For a time, it may bring these things to some people, but our true hope, our eternal hope, can only be found in Jesus. In these songs of praise we see that it is the Lord who is our comfort, our strength, our song, our salvation, our joy, and we his people are called to sing songs of thanks and praise, to make known among the nations the glorious things he has done.

Coming back to this passage in Isaiah you will notice it says, "In that day YOU will say". This reminds us that it is never a day of grace, never a day of salvation for us as individuals until we take ourselves aside, on our own, before God and come to accept him as our personal Saviour. We need to understand that God is asking each of us to make a choice - a choice whether to accept God's precious gift of Jesus or to reject him. I urge you this Christmas to seek to know Jesus personally, to truly know him as Immanuel, God with you, so that you will be able to say with confidence what we read in verse 1, "Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me'. Dwell on this as you listen to the song in the link below. The song speaks of a sign from God being given in Jesus and it asks, "What will be your answer, will you hear the call?" I hope and pray you will. We're here to help you find Jesus, to help you understand more about him. Why not get in touch with us, we'd love to hear from you.

If you already know and love the Lord Jesus, then give thanks this Christmas for everything he has done for you, celebrate afresh the joy of knowing that God is with you, and proclaim his great and glorious name among the nations.

**Prayer**

Heavenly Father,

We rejoice this CHRISTmas day that you sent us the most precious gift of all, your own dear son, Jesus Christ. How astonishing that you, the creator of the universe, should step down in humility to put on flesh and be born a human baby. How even more incredible that one day you would grow to become a man who would sacrifice your life on a cross, to make a way for each of us to come into the presence of God clothed in your righteousness. Lord, my earnest prayer is that you would call by name those who do not know you, that they may have ears to hear and a heart that is open to receiving your love, your touch of forgiveness and new life. For those who are my brothers and sisters in Christ, melt our hearts afresh, let not familiarity with the Christmas story cause us to miss the beauty of this moment that we celebrate, and let us be filled afresh with your Holy Spirit to go out and proclaim to the world the wonders of your grace and the glory of your righteousness.

Amen

This is the link to the song:

<https://youtu.be/YKQE-7tJ36E>

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