

MIGHTY TO SAVE

ISAIAH 63:1-3

Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? -

“I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”

“Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?” “I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes.”

On our last trip to Israel we got a panoramic sense of the second coming of our Lord Jesus and the final battle.

We started our tour in the Valley of Megiddo - where the Bible says the armies of the world will rally to fight against the Lord and launch an attack on Jerusalem.

At the midpoint of our tour we found ourselves in the holy city itself, walking in the Kidron Valley - where we're told the blood of the slain will rise to the horse's bridle.

And the last day of our journey took us to the land of Bozrah or Edom - to a cave in the rock city of Petra where the Jews will flee from the invaders, and wait for Messiah to come to their defense, and slay their enemy.

Though it's often called “[Armageddon](#)” we know the final battle will be fought throughout the whole land.

The enemy camps in the north... Jesus returns in the center to defend Jerusalem... And hostages flee to the south where Jesus ends up coming to their rescue...

And here in Isaiah 63, the prophet sees our Lord Jesus at the end of the battle! The forces that opposed the Lord have been annihilated. The Jews who fled Jerusalem, have been rescued... The revolt that raged for ages between sinful man and a Holy God has been decided! *The coup struck down.* King Jesus has won!

And Isaiah says proudly of God's champion, "*Look at Him!...*" "*Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength?"*

You can hear the pride and praise in Isaiah's voice!

Jesus is a conquering hero *and He looks the part...*

"Glorious in His apparel." That's another way of saying to a soldier - "*you're a credit to the uniform.*"

He's also *"traveling in the greatness of His strength!"*

I picture Jesus marching boldly - nothing cocky, no strutting - but He strides with confidence and strength. He carries Himself with dignity, and virtue, and honor.

Then Isaiah asks Jesus a question, "*Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?"* Jesus is fresh from battle. He's been to the winepress. His robe is covered in a reddish stain.

Have you ever spilt wine or grape juice on a white shirt or blouse? You can forget ever getting it completely out. Expect a permanent stain. The wine is almost like a dye.

But there's one substance that stains worse than wine, and that's blood. There are companies today that specialize in cleaning crime scenes and removing blood.

And Jesus has gotten bloody. Isaiah notices the stains on His garments. He's been to the winepress of judgment. He's trampled the bodies of faithless men.

And understand, Jesus offers no apologies. He issues no disclaimers or justifications for His decisive actions.

Only modern man is fuzzy about God's judgment.

We are the one's who've excused our sin, and denied our sin, and renamed our sin, and ignored its penalties, and have convinced ourselves that God doesn't care, even though He's warned us that He very much cares.

Jesus answers Isaiah, **"I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury..."** *And it got messy. "their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes."*

But here's the main point of our lesson... Look closely at what else Jesus says at the end of verse 1, when Isaiah asks Him, **"Who is this who comes from Edom?"**

Jesus, the conquering hero, identifies Himself. He says, **"I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."**

Here He is, King of kings and Lord of lords. He's just proven His supremacy. He's beaten all challengers. He's conquered all rivals. Every uprising has been put down.

And there's no shame in His heart. Though His robes are splattered with the blood of men, not one drop is innocent blood. He bears no guilt. His judgment is just.

He has defended God's people, and God's honor.

When Isaiah inquires, the Messiah answers, "(This is) **I who speak in righteousness...**" Jesus is just back from battle, but it's clear He's done right in every instance. In all that He's performed, and in all that He has spoken, Jesus has acted justly, and fairly, and righteously...

But notice, when the fighting ends, and Jesus speaks words for which He'll be remembered, He doesn't stress *His glorious victory*, or *righteous warring*, or *long-awaited judgment*, or *His vindication of God's holiness...*

When the final chapter is written, Jesus identifies Himself, not as *mighty to judge*, or *mighty to conquer*, but "**mighty to save.**" This is legacy He wants to leave - not His skill to fight, or judge - but His ability to save!

Recall in Isaiah 9, the prophet lists a whole repertoire of names for the Messiah, "**Wonderful, Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,**" even "**Mighty God.**"

But when it's all over, Jesus doesn't focus on being "**Mighty God,**" He relishes having been "**mighty to save.**"

Isaiah 42:13 also speaks of Jesus, "**The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war.**" He is "**a mighty man.**" *He's mighty in war.*

Yet when He refers to Himself it's *“mighty to save.”*

Read through the Gospels and you'll discover Jesus was mighty in a million ways... He was **mighty in wisdom** - Jesus corrected the scholar, confounded the skeptic, comforted the sinner, and taught the disciple.

Jesus was **mighty in power**. He calmed the stormy sea... and walked on water... and multiplied the fish and bread... and healed the sick... and raised the dead.

He was **mighty in spirit**. He resisted the Tempter at a point of great weakness... He loved His enemies... He kept His composure when tried before Pilate... Even on the cross He asked the Father to forgive His accusers...

He was **mighty in discernment**. With the woman at the well Jesus steered the conversation into deeper truths and uncovered her real needs... He read the hearts of the men - often knowing their very thoughts...

And He was **mighty in the Scriptures**. Jesus had a command of God's Word. He spoke simply, yet powerful. He spoke like no one else - with an authority from God.

But in Isaiah 63, at the end of the age - after all His glorious accomplishments - Jesus doesn't identify Himself as **mighty in wisdom**, or **mighty in power**, or **mighty in spirit**, or **mighty in discernment**, or **mighty in the Scriptures** - rather, He calls Himself *“mighty to save.”*

This is the heart of Jesus. Here's what makes Him tick. If you're looking for a motive... *of this He's definitely guilty, Jesus*

is mighty to save! He loves saving people, and at it, He's the best. There's no one He can't save!

Remember Zacchaeus, the short man with a long list of sins. He was a tax collector - an enemy collaborator.

He cut his ties with God's people - burned his bridges.

He decided to go out on a limb... and that's where Jesus found him. He called Zacchaeus down from the tree, and invited Himself to dinner. Later, the man was forgiven. He paid restitution. Jesus is **mighty to save**.

Take the woman who was caught in adultery, in the very act. She was naked and angry, and fuming as they threw her at Jesus' feet. Yet He stared down the cruel intentions of calloused men to show this woman mercy and give her a brand new start. He was **mighty to save**.

What about the lame man who was lowered through the roof, Jesus not only healed his crippled legs, but forgave his sins. Again, Jesus was **mighty to save**...

And Mary Magdalene. She'd been a hostel for seven demons, yet Jesus, **mighty to save**, evicted them all.

Or what about Saul of Tarsus? He was a Jewish rabbi who hated all things Jesus - especially His followers. He was in pursuit when Jesus appeared to him by the road.

It was as if, Jesus sat down in heaven, and picked out the most unlikely convert he could find. He saw this Saul, **"breathing threats and murder"** says the Scripture.

This would be like Jesus picking the Chief Imam in ISIS, or its top terrorist. Just to show off His amazing grace Jesus

intercepts Saul, and in one glorious moment He chooses Him, and saves Him, and calls Him.

In fact, years later, *Saul* now called *Paul*, explains that is exactly what happened. He writes to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:15, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief... (And) for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him...”

With Paul, Jesus set a precedent. He picked out the biggest bully on the block and whipped him, saved him.

Paul says, “*Jesus came to save sinners, and to prove from the start that He’s mighty to save... He saved me!*”

I want you to know my eyes have seen miracles. I’ve seen the most unlikely people saved by God’s grace.

People who’ve been drug through the dregs of this world - who had fully embraced the dark side and shook their fist in God’s face - mean people - people addicted, and shameful, and perverted, and greedy, and hateful - I’ve seen people like this *get gloriously saved by Jesus!*

Never think that anyone is a hopeless case - that he or she is beyond the reach of Jesus’ grace. They’re not!

This week I was speaking with my friend, Lloyd Pulley, pastor of a Calvary Chapel in New Jersey. Lloyd was telling me about visiting his friend, David Berkowitz.

The name sounded familiar. I asked Lloyd, “*Isn’t that the Son of Sam serial killer?*” He said it was. Berkowitz is still in prison - knows he’ll be there until the day he dies.

But he's received forgiveness from Jesus, and is growing as a Christian. He even helps new convicts.

Lloyd became his friend when David contacted him after listening to Lloyd's radio program. Today, they talk frequently. Lloyd is convinced of the genuineness of Berkowitz's faith. He knows that Jesus is *mighty to save*.

Understand, saving sinners is in Jesus' wheelhouse.

Salvation is His specialty. If a person is truly sincere, and genuinely desires to change, and trusts Jesus with His whole heart - there IS nothing Jesus won't forgive!

Sometimes when you find a forgiving soul, it's actually an evidence of weakness. People can be push around.

Some folks would rather ignore an offense, than deal with a legitimate injustice. They have no moral fortitude.

Forgiveness can be a pathology - a sickness. They'll say they forgive anything just to avoid facing it down.

Believe me, this is not Jesus! He speaks and does what is right. There is no weakness in Him. Recall *"(He's) glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength."* Jesus is never manipulated or conned.

One day, He'll trample sinners in His fury. There's no need for me to soften these words. They're in your Bible. It is what it is. *Our Lord Jesus is nobody's pushover.*

*When you give Him **NO** choice - when you reject His overtures of mercy - and harden your heart - and stubbornly go your own way - He isn't queasy. He has a heart to save, but He also has the stomach to judge.*

Rest assured, Jesus forgives not from weakness, but from strength. Because He loves, He is *mighty to save*.

Despite our rebellion, God continues to see His image in us. For some reason we're still the object of His love.

He planned our salvation before time began. It was Jesus' job to carry it out. *And He has done so in earnest!*

Through His arrest, the brutal scourging, the mock trial, He bore pain and indignities fitting for us - not Him.

On the cross Jesus took the burden of our sin on His strong shoulders, and willingly laid down His life for us.

And our text tells us, this is what will characterize Jesus until the end of time - **that He is mighty to save.**

And realize, this prowess to save doesn't just mean Jesus is able to reach low - to the slimy sinner - bottom fish, *so to speak*. Jesus **can** save the man in the gutter.

But that's not all this means. To say Jesus is *mighty to save* means His salvation extends *from the gutter-most*, but *to the uttermost*. Hebrews 7:25 declares, "(Jesus) is able to save to the **uttermost** those who come to God through Him." It's not just about the extent *from which* Jesus saves, it's about the extent *to which* He saves.

Realize, when you get to heaven you'll never hear anyone comment, "Whew, that was close. I got in by the skin of my teeth." No way! **Nobody barely gets saved.**

Jesus is *mighty to save* - that means the person He saves is *genuinely*, and *eternally*, and *fully*, and *freely*, and *deeply*, and *lavishly*, and *unequivocally* saved!

If you're forgiven by the blood of Jesus; you're as forgiven as you can get. God doesn't assign parole or offer probation. He only passes out complete pardons.

It's like a pregnancy. You can't be *partially pregnant* or *barely pregnant* - and likewise you can't be *barely saved*, or *partially saved*. You're either saved or you're not.

Our Lord Jesus is *mighty to save* - that means He covers all the bases. He's attentive to all the details. Nothing slips through the cracks or escapes His notice.

His Salvation is comprehensive and guaranteed.

For example, Jesus forgives **all our sin**: *past sin, present sin, even future sins* we haven't yet committed.

Certainly, we need to live in faith and repentance, but even our future sin has been washed by His blood.

Jesus paid for it all. His salvation is comprehensive coverage - it includes *forgiveness, acceptance, peace, restoration, healing, joy, wisdom, the baptism and power of His Spirit, spiritual gifts, streets of gold, riches untold.*

It's all in the policy. If you're not experiencing a full and free salvation you're living below your privileges. Jesus provides for your victory. Our agent is *mighty to save!*

On a overseas flight two men - a Christian and a Hindu - were sitting next to each other. They stirred up a conversation. It eventually came around to religion.

At one point the Christian asked him, "*Can you give me a single sentence, a one-liner, that captures the essence of your*

faith?" The Hindu said, *"Yes, we are all part of the problem, and we are all part of the solution."*

The Christian thought for a long time about the man's answer. Finally, he said, *"Would you like to hear a one-liner that captures the essence of the Christian faith?"*

The Hindu answered, *"Yes."* The Christian replied, ***"We are all part of the problem, but there is only one man who is the solution and His name is Jesus."***

It's interesting, what Jesus says to Isaiah when He comes up from Bozrah, ***"I have trodden the winepress *alone*, and from the peoples *no one was with Me.*"***

The fury He unleashes - the righteous anger Jesus demonstrates will be very personal. No one will be with Him. When He brings judgment, He will do it all *alone*.

All along, Jesus has taken our rebellion personally.

And what an irony, the millions upon millions of cries for justice that've been ringing in God's ears for centuries will finally be satisfied by the One who is ***mighty to save.***

Jesus can be trusted with God's judgment because He and He alone has proven to be ***mighty to save.***

While on earth Jesus went out of His way to get other people involved in His work. When He healed the sick, He often recruited the help of others... When He raised Lazarus, He had other folks move the stone... When He multiplied loaves and fish, He used a little boy's lunch...

Jesus was always involving others in His exploits.

But there are two things Jesus chooses to do solo. He hangs on a cross to author our salvation - and He treads out the winepress to bring God's ultimate judgment!...

Jesus did the **former** so He could minimize the **latter**.

I hope you never tire of participating in communion.

The bread speaks to us of His broken body - the wine of His poured out blood - *never take either for granted*.

For one day, when Jesus returns to right all wrongs, and put sinners in their place, and usher in His Kingdom of righteousness. Even in the midst of it all Jesus will still *and for always be known* as He who is *mighty to save*.