

OT LESSON 37

# “THOU HAST DONE WONDERFUL THINGS”

By Ted L. Gibbons

**READING:** Isaiah 22;24-26; 28-30

**INTRODUCTION:** What is the best thing anyone ever did for you? Have you experienced an act of service or sacrifice so stunning that you could not stop speaking of it. Have you ever used the word “wonderful” to describe such goodness?

I got a call from Comp USA a few years ago. They invited me to come to the store and collect my new 21" computer monitor. I was gratified at the invitation but assured them that I had not ordered a monitor.

“Mr. Gibbons,” the clerk explained, “someone did. It was ordered for you and paid for by someone else. It’s yours. It’s paid for. Come and get it.”

“Who paid for it?” I asked. The clerk could not and would not tell me. When I asked for the retail value, I was told that it cost \$1021.00.

I wish I knew who paid for it. I would like to tell them that they did a wonderful thing!

Isaiah recognized in the mission and ministry of Christ a multitude of wonderful things the Redeemer had done for him and for all of us. He must have felt impelled to share his thankfulness with his readers. In celebration he wrote, “Thou has done wonderful things!” (Isaiah 25:1) In Isaiah 12:5, Isaiah says “Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.” How many *wonderful* and *excellent* things has the Savior done for you? The presentation of these remarkable things the Savior has done fill the book of Isaiah, ascending again and again from the pages of his testimony to reverberate in our own hearts and souls. We will have a look at several of them in this lesson.

## **1. THE SAVIOR OPENS THE DOOR TO HIS HEAVENLY FATHER’S PRESENCE.**

And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open (Is. 22:22).

What doors has the Savior opened for us that no one has the power to close? The Savior has opened the door to his Father's presence. He has opened the grave. Read the following from Revelati0n:

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it . . . (Rev. 3:7,8).

## **2. THE SAVIOR SHOWS MERCY FOR THOSE IN SPIRIT PRISON.**

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited (Is. 24:21,22).

The willingness of the Savior to visit and offer redemption to those in spirit prison is powerful evidence of his mercy and his love. What does Isaiah 42:7 say the Savior will do for some who are in prison? If he brings them out, where will they go?

In Moses, as Enoch learned about the flood, he was also taught a wonderful lesson about the Savior's love for those of that generation who would perish for their iniquities:

But behold, these which thine eyes are upon shall perish in the floods; and behold, I will shut them up; a prison have I prepared for them. And That which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that my Chosen shall return unto me, and until that day they shall be in torment . . . (Moses 7:38,39).

The Savior pled before the Father for those who would drown in the floods,

and suffered for their sins in accordance with their repentance.

### **3. THE SAVIOR IS A STRENGTH AND A REFUGE.**

For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall (Isaiah 25:4).

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man [the *man* is the *king* in verse 1] 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 (Isaiah 32:1,2).

I think most of you who are reading this lesson have turned to the Savior during personal, cataclysmic storms. He is the ultimate hiding place; a place of security into which no storm can penetrate.

### **4. THE SAVIOR WILL PREPARE A FEAST AND DESTROY THE VAIL.**

And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations (Is. 25:6,7).

The “mountain” in this passage is almost certainly the temple. What sort of feeling does Isaiah want to communicate when he discusses our experiences in this mountain as a “feast of fat things”? What do we feast on in the temple? (See 2N32:5) What vail is “spread over all nations” that will be destroyed in the temple? How does the experience of the temple help us recall and respond to our pre-existent experiences? How does it help us penetrate the vail between us and that eternal world where God dwells?

The temple also destroys the “the face of the covering cast over all people.” While this phrase is certainly a chiasmic form, it does seem that there is a second source of obscurity and darkness cast over all people.

And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced (Moses 7:26).

How does the temple experience assist us in detecting and resisting the enticements of satanic darkness?

## **5. THE SAVIOR WIPES AWAY OUR TEARS**

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it (Isaiah 25:8).

Imagine an end to tears, to sadness, to misery. This is precisely what Christ will do for the righteous.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely (Revelation 21:4-6).

Can you comprehend a being of such limitless power as to be able to put an end to sorrow, tears, death, crying, and pain? He declared here and in many other places that he is “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.” What else is he the “end” of? What is he the “beginning” of?”

## **6. THE SAVIOR WILL BRING THE RESURRECTION.**

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead (Is. 26:19).

*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust!* Do you think that our joy at the

resurrection will move us to anthems of praise? D&C 138 is pretty clear about the sense of captivity we will feel without our bodies. Speaking of those awaiting and experiencing the advent of the Savior into the world of Spirits, President Smith said,

I beheld that they were filled with joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand (D&C 138:15).

They were assembled awaiting the advent of the Son of God into the spirit world, to declare their redemption from the bands of death (D&C 138:16).

While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful . . . (D&C 138:18).

For the dead had looked upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage (D&C 138:50).

Notice in the passage below that the spirits sang praises in anticipation of their redemption.

And the saints rejoiced in their redemption, and bowed the knee and acknowledged the Son of God as their Redeemer and Deliverer from death and the chains of hell. Their countenances shone, and the radiance from the presence of the Lord rested upon them, and they sang praises unto his holy name (D&C 138:23,24).

My body went bad on me 10 years ago. I have things wrong with me now were I did not know I had things when I was forty. But Amulek promises more than a return to our bodies at the time of the resurrection. He promises that we will be resurrected to or with a perfect frame. (Alma 11:43,44). Speaking as a man with bad eyes and bad ears and a bad back and a bad leg and a inconsistent heart, this seems to be to be a wonderful thing!

## **7. THE SAVIOR IS OUR SURE FOUNDATION.**

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste (Is. 28:16).

The progression of images in this verse is instructive. Christ is a stone. He is a tried stone. He is a precious cornerstone. Finally, he is a sure foundation. The four images overlap, but also suggest four different things he can do for us.

I had a friend who was standing on a low overhang looking at the ocean near San Diego when the ground beneath his feet gave way. He fell amid a cascade of dirt and rock and slid toward a 40-foot precipice above jagged rocks and the pounding surf of the Pacific. He arrested his descent within only a few feet of the edge and a fall to serious injury or death. His foundation gave way. They all will, all but this one foundation—the sure foundation, “a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Hel. 5:12).

What are some of the foundations upon which men try to construct their lives? I know a young man who played professional football. His income was staggering and his hopes were bright, until an unforeseen injury caused him to be cut from the team. His foundation gave way. Others have offered us a *piece of the rock*, but Christ offers us perfect security, a rock against which all other elements and events are powerless.

## **8. THE SAVIOR WILL RESTORE THE GOSPEL TO THE EARTH.**

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid (Is. 29:13,14).

The story of the restoration in Isaiah 29 is sufficiently clear to offer me an excuse not to examine it carefully here. Most of you know what happens,

but there is a lesson about the goodness of the Savior also.

I got hopelessly lost one night in the outskirts of Las Vegas, searching for a chapel where a couple of hundred people were awaiting my arrival for a Know Your Religion presentation. I drove frantically up and down the streets trying to orient myself with what I remembered of the directions I had received. Finally, I stopped and asked for help. A kind man in a convenience store drew me a map that led me safely to my destination.

How lost would you and your family be without the Restoration. What hope would you have of finding any worthwhile destination on your own, or by the uncertain light of your own intellect or of manmade creeds?

## **9. THE SAVIOR KNOWS OUR TRIALS AND DIRECTS OUR PATHS.**

For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left (Is. 30:19-21).

The Sermon on the Mount makes it clear that storms come to the lives of the obedient and the disobedient.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it (Matt. 7:24-27).

Everybody gets a portion of the “bread of affliction. and the water of

affliction” The difference is not in the storms that come, but in the way we are able to deal with the storms. In your own lives, what has it meant to you to be able to seek the help and comfort of the Lord when tribulation comes? What does it mean to you to have inspired teachers who can instruct you when the hard times come? How valuable has the sweet and quiet voice from that invisible source (the one behind you)—the one telling you what to do and how to find the way—been in your life?

**CONCLUSION:** As mentioned in the introduction, in Isaiah 12:5, we read these words: “Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.” Wonderful things . . . Excellent things . . . We have examined 9 of them. But there are so many more. Why not have a family home evening and invite those of your household to make a list of the wonderful things and the excellent things the Lord has done and will do for you? Perhaps at the beginning you could show a clip from the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. You know the part I mean, where Dorothy and Toto start down the yellow brick road while the Munchkins are singing, “You’re off to see the Wizard, the wonderful Wizard of Oz”

Why make the trip?

“Because, because, because, because, because . . . Because of the wonderful things he does.”

Let us be off, as well—off to see the Savior, for the very same reason.

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