

## THIS DAY IS A DAY OF GOOD TIDINGS

*preached by Rev J. O. Soyinka  
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**"Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household" (2 Kings 7:9).**

**This day is a day of good tidings.** The reason for our evening meeting is to propagate the good tidings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We tell the good tidings of joy, the good news of peace, the good news of deliverance, to those who are still in their sinful state. The text tells of what four lepers who had been afflicted with trouble, problem, anxiety, and particularly famine, were discussing. These four lepers dwelt in Samaria. At this time, the city had been tightly besieged by Benhadad, king of the Syrians. The inhabitants of Samaria could neither enter nor go out of the city. All the produce of their farms which they should have harvested and used for their benefit could not be harvested because of the enemies that surrounded them. Eventually, the food that was in the city got exhausted, and they started to eat dove's dung; they started to kill and eat their own children. The problem was extremely great! It was in this bad situation of sorrow, heartache, and grief that the city of Samaria was.

At this time, the trouble was so serious that it affected the king, the nobles, and the common people. The crisis spared no one, not even these lepers. They could not work for themselves. It was what the citizens gave them, that they ate. But even the citizens had nothing to eat, therefore, the problem was very severe for these lepers. What happened to these lepers that made them say, 'This day is a day of good tidings, this day is a day of joy, this day is a day of victory?'

What happened was that God had fought for Israel without their carrying a spear or an arrow. God had driven Benhadad and his army away. They abandoned their camp, with a lot of treasures. This was how these four lepers quietly entered the camp of the Syrians. They entered with fear and trembling. When they got there, they discovered that nobody was there. They ate to their fill, and gathered plenty of goods. It was in the process of carrying away their loot, after being well fed, that they discussed among themselves that, 'We are no more hungry, here is silver, here is gold, here are clothes. We shouldn't be selfish, we ought to tell the city dwellers that God has provided food, God has given them victory, and has driven away the Syrians for them.' Maybe you are wondering about those brothers and sisters who are testifying of what God has done for them. It is true, it is what God has done for them that they are saying. The choristers are saying that there is a way that we can be delivered from troubles, problems, and distresses. There is a way out, as there was for Samaria at that time.

Before long, the good news reached the king; and the king, the chiefs, and the citizens started to have enough food and to spare. Why? Those who knew of this good news took it to them, and they believed it. We are also praying that this Gospel which is offered you



tonight. God will let you embrace it. If you accept it, the blessing of God will be yours. The condition of the Samaritans then, is the condition of the world today. The people of Samaria were in famine, so also the world is in famine today. What we call famine is lack of those things which are beneficial to our body and soul. To- day, the world is suffering from famine: lack of peace, lack of joy, lack of satisfaction, lack of the power of God in their lives; and lack of the hope of eternal life.

Immediately Jesus was born, the angel appeared unto the shepherds and told them not to be afraid; because 'I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day... a Saviour.' The good tidings, which Jesus Christ brought is to solve our problems of sin, lack, troubles and afflictions. There- fore, just as these lepers told members of the king's household and all the citizens, God has also sent us to tell it in song, in testimony, in our daily living, that the Gospel of Jesus is the Gospel of peace. It is the Gospel which delivers us from the troubles and afflictions of the world and in particular, from sin.

On one occasion Jesus said,

**"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).**

This is the Gospel. A life without Jesus is a life of labour, a life of affliction, a life of sorrow, a life of misery. Jesus Christ saw the people in their condition of sorrow, loss and helplessness, and He called them, saying: **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden."** We all know what a burden is. But do you know it is the burden which sin puts on a person that causes that person's mind not to be at rest? It causes one to have restlessness and fear.

The Word of God says:

**"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop" (Proverbs 12:25).**

So it is not the lack of money, or the lack of job; but the transgression of the Law of God, that causes sorrow. Consider the girl who said she was being tormented by nightmares. Who would have nightmares and wake up and be happy? Who would have night- mares: sinking in the water, being pursued by masquerades, being chased by cockroaches, and wake up, and be happy? That is why the Bible says that sorrow in the heart of a man causes him to be downcast. Tell me, who is that person, who had been sick for a long time, who had gone to the hospital, and the herbalist, and had not been healed, and would be happy? He would be downcast. Who is that person who works and is paid, but has no belongings, as if he is earning money into a leaking purse, and would be happy?

We want to read about a man in the olden days who had such a heavy burden.

**"And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,**

**"Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:**

**"Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.**

**"And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones" (Mark 5:2-5).**

Oh, this is a heavy burden! The world cannot remove it, no doctor can remove it, only Jesus Can remove it. That man was not born like that, it was sin that placed the burden on him. It was sin that enslaved him, and he was obeying his master. Wherever sin, which was his master, asked him to go, there he went. If it asked him not to wear clothes, he would not wear them; if it said that he should not eat, he would not eat. Many times, it would tell him not to sleep at home, he would sleep outside. Oh, it was a heavy burden, it was a load of sorrow. Not for him alone, or do you think what was happening pleased his relations? Not at all. That is why it is said that sorrow in a man's heart causes his head to hang low. We do not know for how many years or months this man had been in this trouble and distress. But the Gospel met him on the way; the Gospel of peace, the Gospel of victory, the Gospel of redemption. Jesus met him and asked, 'You this man, who are you?' He said, **"My name is Legion: for we are many."** The spirit that **tells** you to wander around is an evil spirit; the spirit that says you should cut yourself with stones, is an evil spirit. In Apostle Paul's testimony in Romans 7, he said, he knew it was not good to sin, but he sinned. It was not his wish to commit sin, but something pushed him.

Maybe you have been struggling to overcome sin, to overcome the world, and to overcome the flesh; you can't do it by yourself. Look at this man, many times they had bound him with fetters, they had imprisoned him, but they could not tame him at all, they could not deliver him. Consider how many days you have been making resolutions that you wish to stop smoking; you have ground the cigarette into powder, you have poured it into water, you have drunk it intending never to smoke again, but soon after that, you have resumed smoking. Don't you know the number of times you have said you won't take alcohol again, but before long you are among those drinking? You are covetous; you commit adultery. You cannot deliver yourself. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ that can deliver you. It is Jesus Christ Who can deliver you.

As this man stood before Jesus, Jesus told the evil spirits that were tormenting the man to get out. Immediately, the evil spirits went out from him.

**"And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and in his right mind: and they were afraid"( Mark 5:15).**

Glory be to God. That is good tidings! He could not be tamed in the past. It is the power of Jesus Christ **that** can break the bondage of sin, the world, and the flesh.

**"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24).**

Listen to the answer.

**"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).**

Glory be to God! Can you see what befell Saul of Tarsus that made him cry,

**"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24).**

"I am done for, what shall I do?" As he was crying like that, the Spirit of God spoke into his heart, "Jesus will deliver you."

It was after Jesus had delivered him that he said, **"Thanks be to God, which giveth**

**us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."** That is what the Gospel does for us.

If that is truly the case, what day will you let Jesus deliver you?

**'From this day will I bless you" (Haggai 2:19).**

From this evening henceforth, come and receive your own blessing. Receive your own deliverance and receive redemption. Come and receive the Gospel for your own peace. The blessings of God are for you. Jesus is ready to remove your mountain of problems.