

## Thought for the Day – 21st May 2020 – from Janet Lindley (All Hallows)

Readings: Isaiah 52: 7-15 and Hebrews 7:26-28 (The Message)

The Old Testament reading for today will be so very familiar to people who have been to church at some point in their lives or have watched Songs of Praise on the telly. Just reading those words “how lovely on the mountains are the feet of him” makes me want to burst out in song.

But before we get carried away with a zoom sing-a-long, let’s take a moment to look at these words. A messenger has run through difficult territory, the mountains, to deliver urgent breaking news. Not only that, but the news is good - “all’s well!” There’s no way you couldn’t get the message - they’re shouting in unison, as loud as thunderclaps. And the beautiful feet? Well, anyone who’s donned trainers for their daily exercise knows, feet are rarely pleasant after a run - you want to keep well away. They are only made beautiful by the swift (and maybe sweaty) running, that means the good news gets here faster. Sweet feet indeed.

And what is this news that the writer is talking about? This one of the times in the Bible where the writer is saying something about the now, but also plays the movie forward to point to the future. Just before this joyful exuberant sweaty-feet-good-news passage, there is a reminder of the ‘now’ that the writer is referring to, when the Israelite people were led out Egypt after centuries of servitude, led to a new life of freedom. But it doesn’t just speak of that one-off rescue from slavery, it points forward to a time when God will intervene in a way that everyone will see his saving work of liberation. God’s servant in this passage is Jesus, the Christ, literally meaning ‘one who saves’. God brought about that sweet salvation to all people through Jesus. As the writer to the Hebrews (in the Message) puts it – “he’s done it, once and for all: offered up himself as a sacrifice”.

Oh how we need to sing songs like this right now. Songs of hope that remind us good news is on its way. Hopeful songs telling of a time beyond the current gloom. Songs that talk of the God of love comforting his people. Songs to focus our eyes on the one became flesh and made his dwelling among us.