GOD’S ANGER HAS TURNED AWAY

March 31, 2019 Isaiah 12:1-6

 Dear Friends in Christ: The text for today should be familiar to you by now. These are the words for the Old Testament Canticle on pages 261, 262 of the Service of Prayer and Preaching in our hymnal.

 A Canticle is a spiritual song, psalm or hymn, taken directly from Scripture to be used in our liturgy to sing our praises to God. Other Canticles are the Gloria Patri, the Gloria in Excelsis and the Nunc Dimitis. You will always see a Bible verse next to a Canticle.

 The Canticle in Isaiah dates from about 700 B.C. We can only understand why Isaiah writes what he writes in Isaiah 12 by going back to chapter 1.

 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken; Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey knows its master’s crib, but Israel does not know, My people do not understand.

 Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.

 When did this rebellion start? About 1440 B.C. That’s over 700 years ago! Remember when Moses went up Mt. Sinai to receive the 10 Commandments from God? He was gone for 40 days and the people, not content to be without a leader, fashioned a golden calf to be their god.

 They did this, after witnessing the great miracles in Egypt and crossing the Red sea with walls of water on each side as they crossed over on dry ground. They grumbled and complained against God. God sent poisonous snakes to punish them. They cried to God and He had Moses put a bronze snake on a pole and whoever was bitten and looked at that bronze snake, didn’t die.

 When the people feared to go into the promised land because the people who lived there appeared to be unbeatable giants---God made the people of Israel wander for 40 years in the wilderness until all the grumblers had died.

 This relationship between Israel and God was on-a-gain, off-a-gain. For centuries. What patience God has. Prophet after prophet was sent to scold and warn the nation to turn back to God. Finally, seeing no results, God brought in the Assyrians in 722 B. C. to defeat and end the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Then in 587 B.C., the Southern Kingdom of Judah is destroyed by the Babylonians. Many Israelites are taken into captivity in Babylon. They are so distraught, they cannot even sing.

 Does God have good cause to be angry? Just like a parent whose child refuses to listen—who disobeys the parents at every turn. But, just as a child is always the child of the parents, one is to care for and love, no matter what, God is, in the final analysis, a God of Love.

 His great love for man would not let Him turn His back on the sinner. For hundreds of years God pleaded and warned His wayward people thru the prophets—turn back and live. Why would you die, o Israel?

 Still today, God is pleading and warning the people of earth to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of their immortal souls. On Easter Sunday, this is heard all over the earth---HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

God’s hot and holy anger against sin was absorbed in the beaten and bloody body of His own Son.

 Whoever does not believe this and give Jesus worship and praise; who acts as if this is no big deal and refuses to repent of sin will most definitely burn in hell. The message, the invitation to believe on Jesus and live has gone out to the world.

 There is no way to sugar-coat this message. God will not be mocked. A person either believes and is saved or will pay the price for unbelief.

 The important thing for us all to remember is that God’s anger against you, me, and all has been deflected by the cross of our dear Savior. You know, there are times when our sins come back to haunt us. The thought may run thru troubled minds---am I really forgiven? God hates sin and maybe He hates me too. Remember John 3:16—“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”