

Beautiful Feet

Romans 10.15 reads, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" More than one person came to me asking if that is a reference to my feet, especially since I have flat feet and have even had foot surgery to repair a ruptured foot.

I know they are asking in jest, but I think we do need to understand what Paul is saying. This quote is just part of Isaiah 52.7. Earlier, Isaiah speaks of Babylon taking the children of Israel away as captives. "7 And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." (Isa 39) However, Isaiah also says that God will not forget His people, Isaiah 49.14-15. Eventually they would return to Canaan and rebuild the city and its temple.

Chapter 52 is meant as encouragement to Israel. They would be delivered and know it is God that delivered them. It is at this point we come to verse 7.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news." The feet refer to the messenger. His feet are beautiful because of the message and not the messenger. We are glad to hear good news and maybe thankful to the one that brings it to us. The opposite is contained in the phrase, "Don't shoot the messenger." When news is bad, we may take it out on the one that brings it. Here the writer says the news is good.

Why is the messenger good? He comes proclaiming peace, good tidings, and salvation. What better message could one possibly bring than that of everlasting life in heaven.

In the New Testament we have the Gospel. Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross we can have peace with God. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ" (Romans 5.1). Peace is the right relationship, to have peace with God we must be just, cleansed of our sins, and that is only possible when we obey the Gospel.

Good tidings, according to Homer Hailey, refers to moral goodness. We know Jesus never sinned, Hebrews 4.15. He gave us the perfect example of obedience and service to God. His word contains nothing but the truth. It is through the Gospel we know how to live free from sin.

Salvation is only possible through the work of God. Earlier in Romans, Paul points out that Abraham was not justified by his works, but by his faith, Romans 4:2,3. Those that believe God in the same way that Abraham believed Him, will be saved in Jesus Christ. Keep in mind, Abraham's faith was seen in his obedience to God.

The key is, to believe one must hear the Gospel. It is through the preaching of the Gospel that man can know about Jesus. The apostles were sent out to preach Christ. "And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16) Paul told Timothy to teach other men and then they could teach others. "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2) Once again, the emphasis is not on the messenger, but on the message. But for the message to spread, someone had to preach it. You have to admit, a person that can tell you how to have peace with God, how to live a life free from sin, and how to be saved, would be a pretty good fella.

No, my feet are not beautiful, but the Gospel is. - Dennis Tucker