



ISAIAH

by

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Edited by Paul & Betsy Caram

DEDICATED

To the Lord Jesus Christ, the One
whom Isaiah foresaw as the Light of the world.

And to my dear wife, Audrey,
with whom it has been my privilege to have
preached the Gospel light unto so many nations.

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PREFACE

This book is prayerfully presented in the hope that it may reveal some of the marvelous treasures that the Holy Spirit has given through the prophet Isaiah. We have arranged this book in the following manner:

First there is an in-depth outline of the themes that flow throughout the pages of Isaiah's prophecy. Each line has a scriptural reference so that the reader can find the exposé of any particular subject he desires by turning to the appropriate chapter and verse listed. The outline is followed by a chapter by chapter and verse by verse exegesis of the text of the book.

By this method we trust that the reader will not only acquire an overall understanding and appreciation of this most wonderful and beloved of all the prophetic books, but also a point by point illumination of the truths that each verse contains. It is our prayer that the blessings of this book may become a reality in each of our lives, as well as a means whereby we can share them with others through preaching or teaching Bible study groups. God bless you! - *Brian J. Bailey*

INTRODUCTION

Isaiah means “Jehovah is Salvation.” Isaiah, the prophet, was married to a prophetess, and they had two sons (Isa. 7:3, 8:3-4). Isaiah ministered to the Southern Kingdom of Judah during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. His ministry was during a period when the Assyrian empire was at its zenith, prior to its destruction by the Babylonians a century later. Isaiah, according to tradition, was martyred in the reign of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah.

A brief chronological table of the kings is given in the appendix so readers can easily study the time period in which Isaiah was written, and also have an understanding of the future events of which he prophesied. One of the significant aspects of his prophetic office was his profound revelation and understanding of the life and ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is treated in detail, not only in the outline but also in the text of this book. As Isaiah speaks to us of events ranging from before creation to the new heavens and new earth, it is clear that he had unparalleled revelation. Only John had a greater revelatory span than Isaiah.

Isaiah

Along with Genesis, Deuteronomy, and Psalms, the book of Isaiah is the book most often quoted by our Lord during His earthly ministry. The book of Isaiah is commonly referred to as a miniature Bible. One of the remarkable aspects of this precious book is that it is divided up into sixty-six chapters, which is the number of books in the Bible. The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament contains thirty-nine books and the New Testament contains twenty-seven books. Isaiah is also divided into two main sections. The first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah compose what we call the Old Testament of Isaiah (ch. 1-39), and they relate primarily to the Old Testament period. The last twenty-seven chapters compose the New Testament of Isaiah (ch. 40-66), beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist in chapter 40. Therefore, the apocryphal books (which were added to our accepted sixty-six books) obviously have no place in the canon of scripture.

OUTLINE OF THE MAJOR THEMES IN ISAIAH

I. THE LIFE OF CHRIST

A. HIS EARLY YEARS

1. *His Conception*

- a. Isaiah 7:14 - Behold a virgin shall conceive
- b. Isaiah 8:3 - Isaiah's wife (a type) conceives
- c. Matthew 1:18-21 - Mary conceives by the Holy Ghost.

2. *He is Called From the Womb*

- a. Isaiah 49:1 - The Lord has called me from the womb
- b. Matthew 1:21 - He shall save His people from their sins
- c. Jeremiah 1:5 - The prophet is likewise called
- d. Galatians 1:15 - The Apostle Paul
- e. Revelation 17:8 - So is every saint, too

3. *Named From the Womb*

- a. Isaiah 49:1 - Hath made mention of my name
- b. Isaiah 8:1 - Isaiah's son, Mahershalalhashbaz
- c. Matthew 1:21 - Call His name Jesus
- d. Isaiah 44:28 - Cyrus, King of Persia
- e. I Kings 13:2 - Josiah, King of Judah (2 Kings 23:21-23).
- f. The name signifies character and ministry

4. *His Birth*

- a. Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born
- b. Luke 2:7, 12 - Mary brought forth her firstborn, a babe

5. *His Growth*

- a. Isaiah 7:15 - Butter and honey shall he eat, to refuse evil and choose good
- b. Luke 2:40 - Christ grew, filled with wisdom
- c. Isaiah 53:2 - A root out of dry ground (Galilee of the nations)

6. *Christ—the Arrow of God*

- a. The point - His mouth and His word - Isaiah 51:16; 59:21; Luke 2:46
- b. Hidden in the shadow of God's hand - Isaiah 49:2; 51:16; Hebrews 5:8
- c. Polished - His humanity
- d. The quiver - The waiting process - Psalm 105:17-19

7. *The Son is Given*

- a. Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a son is given
- b. The mature, tried, tested, and the only begotten of the Father

B. HIS MINISTRY

1. *The Vessel*

- a. Isaiah 9:6 - A son is given, contrasted with a child is born - Formed
- b. Isaiah 11:5 - Righteousness—the girdle of His loins / Faithfulness—the girdle of His reins - Tried
- c. Isaiah 11:1 - A branch shall grow out of His roots / Isaiah 52:13 - Prudent / Isaiah 9:6 - Wonderful, Counselor - Mature

2. *The Call*

a. Geographical

- 1.) The land - Isaiah 9:1 - Zebulun and Naphtali (Galilee of the nations) - Mt.4:13-17
- 2.) The people
 - a.) Israel - Isaiah 49:5
 - b.) Gentiles - Isaiah 42:6

b. Ministerial

- 1.) To preach good tidings - Isaiah 61:1
 - a.) Forgiveness - Isaiah 1:18; 43:25; 44:22
 - b.) Salvation - Isaiah 45:22; 17:10
 - c.) Joy - Isaiah 44:23 - Singing that follows forgiveness (Isa. 12:1-3)
 - d.) Righteousness - Isaiah 59:1-19
 - e.) Peace
- 2.) Bind up the broken hearted
- 3.) Proclaim liberty to the bound
- 4.) Opening of the prison house - Isaiah 42:7, 22
- 5.) Healing the sick - Isaiah 53:5

3. *The Anointing*

- a. The seven spirits of the Lord - Isaiah 11:2
- b. The baptism of the Holy Spirit - Isaiah 28:11; 44:3

4. *The Grace of God*

a. His graciousness

- 1.) Isaiah 30:18 - In waiting
- 2.) Isaiah 40:11 - In gathering and carrying the lambs

b. His ability

- 1.) Isaiah 63:11 - To bring up from the world
- 2.) Isaiah 63:13 - The progressive walk
- 3.) Isaiah 51:18 - To guide those who have no leaders

C. HIS SUFFERINGS, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION

1. *His Sufferings*

- a. The purpose of sufferings in God for the Christian are:
 - 1.) To bear the punishment for personal sins - Leviticus 26:41
 - 2.) To learn obedience - Hebrews 5:8
 - 3.) To suffer for others, vicariously

* Since Christ was the sinless Lamb of God, only # 's 2-3 apply.
- b. To learn obedience - Hebrews 5:8
- c. The vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ
 - 1.) The principle that suffering is in the will of God
 - a.) Philippians 1:29 - It is given to you to suffer for His sake
 - b.) Romans 8:17 - We are joint-heirs with Christ if we suffer with Him
 - c.) I Peter 4:19 - Suffer according to the will of God
 - 2.) This revelation has to be given by God
 - a.) Isaiah 50:5 - The Lord God hath opened mine ears (Psa. 40:6,8)
 - b.) Isaiah 50:5 - I was not rebellious; I set my face like a flint (Isa. 50:7)
 - c.) Isaiah 50:5 - Neither turned away back
 - d.) Isaiah 50:6 - I gave my back to the smiters—a voluntary offering (Psa. 129:3)
 - 3.) The shades and forms of the sufferings of Christ
 - a.) Physical
 - 1. The back
 - 2. The cheeks
 - 3. The face - Isaiah 52:14
 - 4. His form
 - 5. Wounds in His hands, side, and feet - Zechariah 13:6
 - b.) His soul - Isaiah 53:3
 - 1. Despised
 - 2. Rejected
 - 3. A Man of Sorrows
 - 4. Acquainted with grief
 - 5. Travail
 - c.) His spirit
 - 1. Unbelief - Isaiah 49:4
 - 2. Forsaken

2. *His Death - Isaiah 53:8*

- a. Taken from prison
- b. No justice
- c. Cut off from the land of the living
- d. Made His grave with the wicked
- e. Numbered with transgressors

3. *His Resurrection*

- a. Isaiah 26:19 - Thy dead men shall live together with my dead body
- b. Isaiah 24:23 - He shall reign before His ancients gloriously
- c. Isaiah 53:11 - He shall see His seed
- d. Psalm 49:15 - God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave

II. ISRAEL

A. INTRODUCTION

1. *The name "Israel" applies scripturally both to:*

- a. A people who are the descendants of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. Jacob's name was later changed to Israel, and his sons form the twelve tribes of Israel.
- b. To a land
 - 1.) Promised
 - 2.) Occupied
 - 3.) Forsaken twice
 - 4.) Partially re-occupied in our days

B. ISRAEL VIEWED HISTORICALLY

1. *The Beginnings*

- a. Genesis 15:18 - Land of Israel promised by covenant relationship to Abraham
- b. Joshua 1:11 - Occupation commenced
- c. 1 Chronicles 14:17 - Fulfilled in David

2. *Their Captivities*

- a. Foretold
 - 1.) Deut. 28:15-50 - The siege by the Babylonians (v. 55)
 - 2.) Deut. 28:64 - Scattered among the nations
 - 3.) Deut. 28:68 - Egyptian Captivity
 - 4.) Deut. 29:23 - Their land burned
 - 5.) Deut. 32:21 - Cut off and the Church replaces them (Rom. 10:19-21; Isa. 65:1-2)
- b. Historically
 - 1.) 722 B.C. - Israel taken captive by Assyria
 - 2.) 605 B.C. - King Jehoiakim of Judah, partial captivity (Daniel taken also)
 - 3.) 597 B.C. - King Jehoiachin taken captive (Ezekiel taken also)
 - 4.) 586 B.C. - The Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon. King Zedekiah taken captive (Jeremiah remains in Jerusalem with a remnant)
 - 5.) 70 A.D. - Titus, the Roman general, destroys Jerusalem

3. *Isaiah foretells of:*

- a. Assyrian domination
 - 1.) Its siege of Jerusalem - Isaiah 1:8-9; 22:1 (2 Kgs. 20; 2 Chron. 32:3-4)
 - 2.) God's purpose - Isaiah 10:12
 - 3.) Destruction of the besieging army - Isaiah 10:25,27; 30:31; 31:5,8 Fulfilled in Isa. 37:34-38 and 2 Chron. 32:8
- b. Babylonian Empire
 - 1.) Its rise - Isaiah 13:1-5 (Their origin - Nimrod - Genesis 10:10)
 - 2.) Used to judge Israel - Isaiah 39:7
 - 3.) They will show no mercy to Israel - Isaiah 47:6
 - 4.) Filled with astrology (Isa. 47:12) and idolatry (Isa. 46:1-2)
 - 5.) Their destruction by the Medes - Isaiah 13:6-18; 14:22-23; 21:9; 41:14
 - 6.) The siege of Babylon - Isaiah 21:2,9; 44:27
 - 7.) The king of Babylon likened to Lucifer - Isaiah 14:4-21

4. *The Reasons for Israel's Judgments*

- a. Rebellion - Isaiah 1:2; 30:1
- b. Laden with iniquity - Isaiah 1:4
- c. Sodomites - Isaiah 1:10; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13
- d. Offering vain oblations to the Lord - Isaiah 1:13; 29:13
- e. Whoredom - Isaiah 1:21
- f. Loving bribes and rewards - Isa. 1:23; 5:23
- g. Their leaders caused them to err - Isa. 3:12; 9:15-16
- h. Their women were vain - Isa. 3:12 - 4:1
- i. They lacked the knowledge of God - Isaiah 5:13
- j. They refused to turn to God - Isa. 30:8-9

5. *The Purpose of Israel's Judgments*

- a. Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth - Hebrews 12:6
- b. The Assyrian—the rod of God's anger - Isaiah 10:5 (c.f. Prov. 20:30)
- c. To purge the iniquity of Israel - Isaiah 27:9 But the people turned not to Him that smiteth them - Isaiah 9:13

6. *The First Restoration*

- a. Go forth from Babylon - Isaiah 48:20
- b. Jerusalem to be rebuilt by the decree of Cyrus - Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-3
- c. The ensuing time of learning foretold - Isaiah 29:24; 30:21 - Fulfilled in the time of the translation of the Septuagint (LXX) in Egypt, and prior to that, by Ezra, the teaching priest.

7. *Various Nations*

- a. Ethiopia
 - 1.) Judgment (Isa. 18:1-6), given into the hand of the Assyrians (Isa. 20:4)
 - 2.) Millennial turning to the Lord - Isaiah 45:14; Psalm 68:31
- b. Egypt - Isaiah 19
 - 1.) v. 4 - Given over to Nebuchadnezzar
 - 2.) v.18-22 - A turning to God under the Ptolemies
 - 3.) v. 23-25 - Millennial restoration
 - 4.) Isa. 20:4 - Given into the hand of the Assyrians
- c. Tyre - Isaiah 23
 - 1.) Ceases from being a city and undergoes 70 years of judgment during the Babylonian period - v. 14-15; Isaiah 29:17
 - 2.) Restored after this period - v. 15-18

8. *The Little Apocalypse of Isaiah - Ch. 24*

- a. The Lord maketh the earth empty
- b. The earth is defiled because it has:
 - 1.) Transgressed the laws
 - 2.) Changed the ordinances
 - 3.) Broken the everlasting covenant
- c. The earth will reel to and fro

9. *The Judgments upon Judah and Israel*

- a. The scattering of Israel - Isaiah 26:15
- b. Jerusalem's desolation - Isaiah 27:10
- c. The young King Zedekiah's reign foretold - Isaiah 3:1-8

C. ISRAEL VIEWED PROPHETICALLY

1. *The Second Captivity - AD 70*

- a. Foretold in Isaiah 65:11-16
- b. They are those who refused the outstretched hands of the Lord in the early N.T. period - Isaiah 65:2

2. *The Second Restoration*

- a. Isaiah 11:11 - He will set His hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people that shall be left.
- b. Isaiah 66:8 - A nation shall be born at once (1948).
- c. Jeremiah 30:1-8 - But it is a time of trouble and not of peace.

3. *The nations who will trouble Israel in the last days*

- a. Egypt
- b. Syria
- c. Lebanon
- d. Assyria and Babylon (Modern-day Iraq)
- e. Persia (Modern-day Iran)
- f. Ethiopia
- g. Moab and Ammon (Modern-day kingdom of Jordan)
- h. Edom (Jordan)

4. *Jerusalem Besieged*

5. *Millennial Restoration of Israel*

- a. Israel shall become righteous - Isaiah 1:25- 27; 4:4; 26:1-4
- b. They will become priests and ministers - Isaiah 61:6
- c. Jerusalem will become a praise in the earth - Isaiah 62
- d. The center of teaching - Isaiah 4:2-3
- e. The land will be transformed - Isaiah 35:1-10 f. Peace and no wars - Isaiah 4:4; 66:12; 65:25
- g. No sickness - Isaiah 33:24
- h. Longevity - Isaiah 65:20
- i. Assyria, Egypt and Israel - Isaiah 19:23-25
- j. Zion - Isaiah 51:11
- k. Yet sin will still exist - Isaiah 26:10; 65:20
- l. An open pit will show examples to all throughout the Millennium - Isaiah 66:24

III. THE CHURCH IN ISAIAH

A. INTRODUCTION

* When viewed prophetically, there is a general rule of thumb to determine whether prophecies apply to the Church or to Israel.

1. *If the prophecies are judgmental in nature, they apply to Israel.*
2. *If the prophecies are blessings, they apply to the Church in the last days and to Israel during the millennium.*

B. THE FOUNDATION STONE - ISAIAH 28:16-17

C. THE WELLS OF SALVATION - ISAIAH 12:3

D. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

1. *Isaiah 28:11 - Stammering Lips*
2. *Isaiah 44:3 - Outpouring of the Spirit*
3. *Isaiah 43:10 - To be witnesses*
 - a. That ye may know
 - b. Believe Me
 - c. And understand
 - d. That I Am

E. THE PEOPLE THAT SHALL SHEW FORTH THE PRAISES OF GOD - ISAIAH 43:21

1. *A light to the Gentiles*
2. *A covenant to the people*

F. I WILL DO A NEW THING - ISAIAH 43:19

1. *Glory - Isa. 60:1-2*
2. *Power*

G. PERSECUTION - ISAIAH 60:15

H. A TREMENDOUS END-TIME HARVEST - ISAIAH 60:5; MATTHEW 13:47

DIVISION I

PROPHETIC CHAPTERS

1:1 - 35:10

Part One

THE GREAT INDICTMENT AGAINST ISRAEL FOR HER SINS

(1:1 - 5:30)

CHAPTER 1

The Plan of God

In Isaiah chapters 1-2, the Lord shows us how He deals not only with Israel, but also with His rebellious children in the Church. The plan of God throughout all ages is seen in God's dealings with Israel, which is illustrated in Isaiah chapters 1-2. Here is a brief outline of chapters 1-2:

- 1.) God complains that Israel has gone backward from Him (1:4)
 - a.) The faithful city has become a harlot. (1:21)
 - b.) God says, "Let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (1:18)
- 2.) God says that He will turn His hand upon them and thoroughly purge away their dross. (1:25)
 - a.) "I will restore thy judges as at the beginning. The city shall be righteousness, the faithful city." (1:26)
 - b.) Zion shall be redeemed with judgment. (1:27)
- 3.) In the last days after its restoration, Israel will become the teacher of the nations. From Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (2:3)

4.) God deals with individuals as He does with nations.

Example: Their king, David. After his restoration, David became Israel's shepherd.

a.) Purge me. (Psa. 51:7)

b.) Restore me. (Psa. 51:12)

c.) "Then shall I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." (Psa. 51:13)

1:2 - *"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me."* I have used this verse to console many Godly parents who have mourned because one of their children has backslidden. There was never such a perfect father as the Heavenly Father, yet consider His lament.

The often quoted verse concerning the raising of children is Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Yet this truth is also dependent upon the child. He must respond to the training of his parents. Also, this verse suggests that it is when he is old, not necessarily in his formative years, that he will not depart from the ways of God and will return

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to Him. As in the story of the prodigal son, the one who has been rightly trained will return to the old ways that he was taught in his youth when he is older. Thus it shall be with Israel.

Although as a nation she has grievously strayed from the ways of God, Israel will return to the follow the Lord and walk on His paths in the last days. This chapter illustrates the history of Israel in capsule form, showing not only her rebellion, but also her return to God in the last days. How wonderful it is to know that the promises of God are “Yea and amen” unto all who believe unto the glory of God.

1:3 - *“The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”* In other words, the nation of Israel does not know to whom they belong spiritually. Regretfully, so many people today are in this same state. They wander from idol to idol, from religion to religion, and from one philosophy to another; they are ever learning, yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Why? Because they are as it says in Isaiah 1:4:

1:4 - *“Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.”* It is good for us to realize the effects of sin, especially some sins in particular.

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Hosea 4:11 says, “Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.” Immorality and drunkenness take away the heart from its desire for the Lord. We would do well to heed the admonition of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:17-19, where Paul tells us that a person can become insensitive and be given over to all forms of uncleanness because of sin.

The natural reaction of a parent toward a disobedient child is to punish him in order that he might turn back from his wickedness. In reality, this is what the Lord does with His rebellious children. Punishment is both punitive and redemptive. However, there may be times when natural parents are no longer convinced that their child will turn through their correction. Therefore, they give him up and permit him to go his own way. So it is with the Lord as He asks in verse five, “Why should ye be stricken any more? [The result will only be] that ye will revolt more and more.”

1:5-6 - *“Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither*

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mollified with ointment.” The Lord likens the state of the nation of Israel to a sick person whose whole body is covered with sores. There is no soundness or completeness in them.

1:7-9 - *“Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.”* Although these verses are prophetic, they were also fulfilled in Isaiah’s lifetime at the time of the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib (during the reign of Hezekiah).

This will be the subject of much of the prophecy of Isaiah in later chapters. It was a period when the Assyrians overran the land of Israel, not only the ten northern tribes, but the southern kingdom of Judah as well. All that remained at the end of the kingdom was the capital city of Jerusalem, which was besieged and surrounded by about 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. Sennacherib’s captain, offering to give Hezekiah 2,000 horses, challenged him by asking if he even had enough men to ride them (Isa. 36:8).

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1:10 - *“Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.”* For the second time the Lord now addresses the rulers of Jerusalem as He did the rulers of Sodom. It must be clear to all of us that one of the most important reasons why the judgments of God were falling upon Israel was that there were practicing Sodomites in the land, even among the rulers of the nation. Homosexuality is an abomination to God! God’s judgments come upon any land that permits sodomy to be practiced. He will especially judge the Western nations who are today legalizing sodomy because they have far greater light and truth than some of these other heathen nations. We should also be mindful of the words of Jude, the Lord’s brother, in this respect. He said in Jude 1:7, “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Yet, those who were practicing homosexuality were offering up to the Lord the required sacrifices according to the Levitical law.

1:11-15 - *“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of*

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lamb, or of the goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting [I cannot bear your evil assemblies]. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.”

Even though they were committing terrible sins, they were still offering up sacrifices to God. So many people who turn from God and go into gross immorality and sin continue to carry out their religious practices. However, God says to them, “To what use is that? How can I delight in your sacrifices?”

In verse thirteen, He told them not to bring their sacrifices to Him any more. There are so many people who have backslidden and are living in sin, and yet they still come to church and lift up their hands in praise to the Lord. In one service that my wife and I were attending, my wife had a vision. She saw the congregation lifting up their hands in praise to God, but only about nine out of the whole congregation had “*white gloves*” on their hands. These nine were the only ones who were pure in that

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whole congregation. God then emphasized to my wife, “I do not accept praise from everyone. I only accept the praise of those who are pure in My eyes.” It is also evident from the last phrase in verse fifteen that they were guilty of shedding innocent blood. The Lord’s remedy is seen in Isaiah 1:16:

1:16 - *“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil.”* There is only one way to wash ourselves spiritually, and that is through obedience to the Word of God, and by the blood of the Lamb. The Apostle Peter states in First Peter 1:22, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.” The Lord also tells us to cease from doing evil. However, it is not sufficient to simply cease from doing evil. We must always do those things that are right in the sight of the Lord and pleasing to Him, as outlined in the next verse.

1:17 - *“Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”* These succinct acts of righteousness are often repeated by the prophets. Of King Josiah the prophet Jeremiah says, “He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord” (Jer. 22:16). The Lord was pleading with the rulers of Jerusalem

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at this time to change their wicked ways. May God grant that many who are reading these verses will do likewise.

1:18 - *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”* In this often quoted verse, familiar to so many evangelicals, the Lord at first gives a most gracious invitation by encouraging us to come to Him and reason together with Him. Oh, the humility of God! He invites poor sinful creatures to be on a par with Himself and to commune with Him concerning our woeful plight; and yet He holds out to us such wonderful hope that, even though our sins are as scarlet, they will become as white as snow.

This is the wonder of the Godhead—that God can forgive and forget. It is expressed in Micah 7:19. “He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”

1:19 - *“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”* The Lord then continues by giving what we might term an *on-going* promise. There is in this promise the thought that the Lord is

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not just satisfied with saving us and cleansing us from our sins, but He also wants us to inherit the land. Now remember, He was speaking to His chosen nation, Israel, at this moment in time. Therefore, He was saying that they would inherit the Land of Promise, or the land of Israel as we call it today. However, it is not necessarily a geographical place that the Lord is promising to us, although it could be. It could be the land of our adoption, the land to which we are called as missionaries, or it could simply be the church which we attend.

The Lord said in John 8:34-35: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever.” Those who do not obey the Lord will not always remain in the house of God. Also, they will not come out of spiritual darkness, as Solomon states in Proverbs 21:16, “The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.”

Therefore, considering these scriptures as well as others, we see that our response to what the Lord is telling us to do determines whether or not we continue in God’s purposes for our lives and whether

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or not we possess the inheritance that He has for us. We not only have to be obedient, but also willing. We must say with David in Psalm 40:8, “I *delight* to do thy will, O my God.”

1:20 - *“But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”* Regretfully, Israel did not heed this warning. They rebelled against the Lord and His commands and hardened their hearts. Therefore, centuries later they found themselves in captivity, first to the Assyrians and later to the Babylonians. This subject is dealt with in detail by Isaiah in later chapters.

1:21 - *“How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.”* Now the Lord cries out concerning the spiritual state of the city of Jerusalem. He declares that Jerusalem is full of adulterers. This is very symptomatic of our day, which we could certainly designate an adulterous generation. The city, which was once full of righteousness and judgment, is now filled with murderers. This reality we see in Israel should be cause for concern, as we see city after city in America reporting murders on a daily basis.

Isaiah

Concerning the days just prior to His coming, the Lord stated that they would be similar to the days of Noah just before the flood (Lk. 17:26). The days of Noah were days of violence (see Gen. 6:12). All flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. There was also great immorality. That which we see in Isaiah, although speaking expressly for his days, also vividly portrays in no uncertain way the end times just before the Lord's second coming.

1:22 - *“Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed [or diluted] with water.”* The merchants were unscrupulously mixing base metals with their silver and watering down their wine, and this was indicative of their degenerate spiritual state.

1:23 - *“Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts [or bribes], and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.”* The princes of Israel were rebellious and there was no justice in the city. The people were perverting justice for gifts and bribes. Unfortunately, this is seen in many places today. However, the Lord will not permit evil to rule forever.

Isaiah

1:24 - *“Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.”* The Lord might be longsuffering, but there comes a time when He rises up in judgment.

1:25 - *“And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin.”* The Lord comes to purify us as a refiner who purifies the dross, even as Malachi eloquently portrays Him in Malachi 3:3. *“And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.”*

1:26 - *“And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.”* After the purging comes restoration. This is one of the ways of God, and it is one that we need to understand. God is the God of restoration; but in order to be restored, we must first submit to the purifying fires. This purging process may take many forms.

Isaiah

We find an excellent example of this spoken of by King David in Psalm 6:1-4: “O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies’ sake.” Then in Psalm 23:3, David said, “He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” Thank God for His mercy and restoration!

Here we see God’s plan throughout all ages capsulized. Israel was faithful, but then they turned away from God. Therefore, God severely judged them, which served to purge them from their sins. After being purged, Jerusalem is called “*the city of righteousness*” again. God wants all those who have gone astray to be restored to purity and righteousness.

1:27 - “*Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.*” The glorious message of restoration continues now in verse twenty-seven. It is judgment that redeems and restores. Let us understand that this is the message that flows through the Word of God for the

Isaiah

repentant sinner or saint who has fallen by the wayside or into a terrible pit. The same glorious deliverance that David experienced, as described in Psalm 40:1-3, is available to all:

“I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.”

1:28-31 - *“And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed. For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.”* Yes, there is restoration and deliverance with the Lord. However, a certain fearful judgment mentioned in Isaiah 1:28-31 comes upon those who do not repent but continue in their wicked ways, and upon those who know the Lord but then forsake Him.

Isaiah

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke of this judgment three times in Mark 9:44, 46, and 48, “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Incidentally, the prophecy of Isaiah terminates with a similar account of the eternal damnation of the wicked. Isaiah 66:23-24 tells us in vivid detail, “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”

CHAPTER 2

The Mountain of the Lord's House (v. 1-5)

2:1 - *“The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.”* How did Isaiah prophesy? We see time and time again in Isaiah that the prophet saw what happened and then prophesied of it (cf. Isa. 1:1; 2:1; 6:1; 13:1). Isaiah had a vision of the things that were going to come to pass. That is why he could describe them so vividly, because he actually saw them take place right before his eyes. This is the ministry of a prophet. He sees things that will come to pass in the future.

Isaiah

Although this prophecy is directed to Judah and Jerusalem when mention is made of the last days, there is also a fulfillment of it for the last day Church.

2:2 - *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.”* The mountain mentioned here in its ultimate fulfillment is the mountain that Ezekiel saw in the millennial kingdom of Christ upon earth (Ezek. 40:2). However, it also applies to Mount Zion in the days of the Church Age.

It is the great hope and expectancy in these last days that the Lord will exalt His Church and bring it to spiritual Mount Zion where it will be used to teach the ways of God to the nations. The Church is called to spiritual Mount Zion (Heb. 12:22-23). In Daniel 11:33 we read, “They that understand among the people shall instruct many.” The Church will be exalted in the last days to be the teacher of the nations.

When we are studying prophecy, we must not only consider a natural fulfillment for the nation of Israel, but we must also consider a fulfillment for the Church, the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16).

Isaiah

Therefore, many of the millennial promises for Israel mentioned in Isaiah and in the other prophets have a fulfillment in the last day Church. Thus, we can expect the Church to be exalted in the last days, with nations coming and turning to the Church to learn the ways of God.

2:3 - *“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”* One of the promises the Lord gives for the Church in the last days will be fulfilled during a time of intense darkness. During this dark time, the glory of God will be revealed visibly through His Church (see Isa. 60:1-2). Therein is the wonderful promise—the people will desire to be taught the ways of God.

So often the reverse is true. Many Christians only want testimony meetings and a light diet of the elementary principles of the Word of God. In one church I pastored, the elders said they did not want to hear the Old Testament preached, nor actually much of the New Testament. They just wanted to hear the Gospel stories. As wonderful as it may be, one cannot hope to grow with the milk of the Word only. We are called to grow into the full stature of Christ and not remain spiritual babes all of our

Isaiah

lives (Eph. 4:12-13). Thus, we see the truth of Isaiah, that the law will go out of Zion. The fulfillment of the new covenant is to have the laws of God written upon the fleshly tables of our hearts; and in the last days the Word of God will flow from the Church unto the nations.

2:4 - *“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”* This verse obviously applies to the second coming of the Lord when He will judge the nations, because wars will cease in the millennium. It will be a time of blessed peace.

As we have previously mentioned, it is so important to understand the time period of a prophecy. If we try to place a prophecy out of its time period, it becomes quite erroneous. The prophet Isaiah said that they would beat their swords into plowshares for harvesting. However, the prophet Joel prophesied the exact antithesis of what Isaiah prophesied. In Joel 3:10 he said, “Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears.” Would we not be confused if we read

Isaiah

Isaiah's prophecy and then read Joel's prophecy? We might think that there is a contradiction, but there isn't because they are speaking of two different epochs in history.

Isaiah is speaking of the millennial reign of Christ, which will be a time of peace. Joel is speaking of the time of the Great Tribulation when all the heathen nations will be called to the valley of Jehoshaphat to besiege Jerusalem. He is speaking of a time of war. We are not living in the millennial period yet. Some people say that we are living in the millennium already, but I wouldn't think much of the millennial reign if this is the millennium. The millennial reign is characterized by peace. Prior to the millennium there is war and tribulation. This explains why the two prophets seem to be saying contradictory things.

2:5 - *“O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”* This section concludes with the exhortation to the nation of God's own people. This is also a very appropriate admonition for the Church of our days. We must walk in the whole light of God's Word. This will make us wholehearted for the Lord—like Caleb, who entered into all of the promises and purposes of God for his generation.

Isaiah

2:6-9 - *“Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots: Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.”* The indictment of the house of Jacob is seen in verses 6-9. Here in these few verses are listed the following sins of God’s people in the time of Isaiah. (These are also the sins of His people just prior to His second coming.)

- 1.) Soothsaying—predicting the future through the medium of evil spirits, like horoscopes.
- 2.) They had joined themselves to other nations and had learned their ways.
- 3.) The love of money had caused them to become excessively covetous, to the extent that they were storing up treasures (such as silver, gold, horses and chariots).
- 4.) Their land had become filled with idols. From the poor to the rich, all were bowing down to these idols. At one point, there was an idol at the head of every street in Jerusalem.

Isaiah

The Day of the Lord's Judgments

2:10 - *“Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.”* This admonition to hide in the rocks is repeated three times in this section alone and is duplicated elsewhere concerning the day of the Lord. It is specifically quoted in Revelation 6:15 concerning the second coming. The day of the Lord is a time of judgment. As the prophet Amos declared, “Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light” (Amos 5:18).

Thus, the Lord will judge the evildoers and bring down the haughty ones. I have seen a vision of the second coming. I saw the face of the Lord appear in the sky. At His second coming, all men will see His face and His eyes, which will be full of anger and fury. Many will run and try to hide from His presence, and will even cry out to the rocks to fall upon them to hide from His face, but they will not escape from Him.

2:11-12 - *“The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon*

Isaiah

every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.”

Judgment will be upon all who are proud. This is seen also in Job 40:11-12: “Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.”

2:13-14 - *“And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up.”* When the people of God sin, judgment comes upon their lands and harvests (see Joel 1:12).

2:15-16 - *“And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.”* Isaiah foretells that their fenced cities will be destroyed, first by Assyria and then by Babylon. The ships of Tarshish, a seaport in Spain where the Phoenicians did a large portion of their trading, refers in general to all commerce which enhanced the beauty of the nation. The pleasant pictures could refer to all kinds of luxurious ornaments. They represent the vanities of this world, and they are so often related to evil spirits.

Isaiah

2:17-18 - *“And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish.”* Thus, we see again the promise that all pride and idolatry will be removed when the Lord rises in judgment. When He judges the world, all idols will be destroyed. This awesome warning of judgment upon the proud should cause us to walk humbly before our Lord all the days of our life as the prophet Micah declared in Micah 6:8.

2:19 - *“And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”* As described in Revelation 6:16-17, this verse reminds us of the last days when men shall say to the mountains and rocks: “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” People will hide from the Lord in the rocks when He comes again. This is the terrible fate of those whose lives have not been totally consecrated to the Lord.

Isaiah

2:20-21 - *“In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”* He repeats again that many of the wicked will hide in the rocks from the Lord when He comes in judgment. How foolish to think we can hide from the Lord of hosts.

2:22 - *“Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?”* The essence of this verse is that we should not have confidence in man.

CHAPTER 3

The rulers of the people are denounced in verses 1-15. Rulers determine what happens to a land. A nation is given a ruler according to the hearts of the people in that country. A leader who is wicked and not God-fearing can only be elected to be president over a nation if the people are wicked and backslidden.

3:1 - *“For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay [or supply] and the staff [or support], the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.”* As

Isaiah

previously stated in chapter 2:13-14, when the people sin, the land suffers. Ezekiel 14:13 says, “Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it.” The Lord takes away all the staple food of a land as an act of judgment. The Lord will not only remove the staple food of bread and water, but also all the able rulers.

3:2-3 - *“The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer [skilled craftsman], and the eloquent orator.”* This is speaking of all the rulers and tradesmen that enhanced the economy of the land. This was actually fulfilled at the time of the Babylonian captivity. Second Kings 24:14 records, “And [Nebuchadnezzar] carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.” The Lord also took away their craftsmen. Only the poor and ignorant were left in the land.

Isaiah

3:4 - *“And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.”* Then, to increase the perplexity of the land, the Lord raised up boy kings (Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoichin, and Zedekiah) to reign over the country. The only one who was a good man was Josiah. We need to cry out to the Lord to give us godly rulers over our countries and cities.

3:5 - *“And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.”* Verse five makes it clear that all the commandments of God concerning respect for the elderly would be broken, and their children would be their oppressors. This is certainly the case in many of the cities in America today.

3:6-8 - *“When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand: In that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be an healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people. For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory.”* The situation in Israel became so terrible that there was no one

Isaiah

capable of ruling and upholding the country. Those who had a resemblance of prosperity were pressured to become rulers, but they refused because they said that they did not have the means to care for the people. Jerusalem was completely ruined. This happened again when Babylon overran the city under Nebuchadnezzar during the reign of Zedekiah. It must be regarded as a warning for our days too. Society collapses when the judgment of God comes upon a country.

3:9-11 - The difference between the righteous and the wicked in judgment is now described in verses 9-11: *“The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.”* They were openly sinning. They were not ashamed by all their wickedness. And regretfully, these were the people of God.

The Lord assures the righteous that in the time of judgment they will be protected. Yet, the wicked are told that they will receive the reward of their doings. This is very reminiscent of the writings of the

Isaiah

Apostle Paul in Galatians 6:7, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” The Word of God constantly warns, even until the final judgment in Revelation 20:13, that every man will be judged according to his works.

3:12 - *“As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.”* It is a historical fact that the boy kings, with the exception of Josiah, oppressed the people. The women who ruled over them were the queen mothers, who were noted for their cruelty and wickedness. One in particular, Hamutal, is likened in Ezekiel chapter nineteen to a lioness whose two whelps (Jehoahaz and Zedekiah) became kings. It is a historical fact that no nation has ever fared well with women as its political leaders. It is quite clear that God never intended women for that office.

The boy kings led their subjects in the path of evil, and drunkenness was the rule of the court. Jeremiah 13:13 gives further evidence of this fact, “Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David’s throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness.” Also, idolatry

Isaiah

replaced the true worship of Jehovah, as seen in Jeremiah 11:13, “For according to the number of thy cities were thy Gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal.” Drunkenness, idolatry, robbery, and injustices of all kinds reigned during the times of these boy kings. Surely, if a ruler hearkens to lies, all his servants will be wicked.

3:13-15 - *“The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.”* Thus, the Lord stands to plead for the poor of His people who have been oppressed and trodden down by their wicked rulers. There comes a time when the Lord says it is enough, and He removes the wicked as He removed each of these wicked rulers. They were all removed at an early age, the oldest being only in his thirties, while the others were removed as teenagers.

Isaiah

The Haughty Daughters Of Zion - 3:16-23

3:16-23 - *“Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton [or seductive] eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet [with their ankle ornaments]: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls [headbands], and their round tires like the moon [crescent necklaces], The chains [earrings], and the bracelets, and the mufflers [veils], The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs [ankle chains], and the headbands, and the tablets [or perfume bottles], and the earrings, The rings, and nose jewels, The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples [cloaks], and the crisping pins [handbags or purses], The glasses [hand mirrors], and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.”*

Amidst this sea of iniquity, we have here a description of the vanity of the daughters of Zion during the reigns of these evil kings. All they thought about was their own fleshly beauty. It would have been good for them to hear the admonition and counsel of the Apostle Peter in First Peter 3:3-4: “Whose

Isaiah

adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” May this scripture serve also as a warning to us, lest we be seduced into the same folly of vain living as the daughters of Zion in the time of Isaiah. It is the inner man that must be beautified with a quiet and meek spirit, while the outer man must be covered with humility and modesty.

3:24 - *“And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher [fine dress clothing] a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.”* God’s judgments are always tailored to fit the offense. God judged them in the very area in which they were vain. This was their state during the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

3:25 - *“Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.”* Because they were trying to influence the men by an outward show of beauty, the Lord declares that their men will die by the sword when the Babylonians besiege Jerusalem.

Isaiah

3:26 - *“And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.”* In actuality, this was the background (or basis) for the book of Lamentations, which was written by the prophet Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem about two hundred years later. They would mourn and weep and be desolate.

CHAPTER 4

4:1 - *“And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.”* This verse is a continuation from the previous chapter and describes the plight of the daughters of Zion. Their men are reduced to dismal numbers so that the ratio of women to men is seven to one. Consequently, the daughters of Zion just wanted to be married and called by their name in order to take away the shame and reproach they experienced for not being married. However, they did not want to be accountable to them and submit to them. Rather, they preferred to “eat their own bread, and wear their own apparel.”

Yet, there is also a spiritual significance to this verse, because women represent churches in the Word of God. Many churches want to come under the covering of a fellowship or a denomination. However, they want to eat their own bread—their own doctrines. They also want to wear their own apparel—their own spiritual coverings. They want to be associated with you, but not really flow in the same vision that you have. We have seen this so many times all over the world. This is a very subtle snare. Beware of this if you are ever responsible for a work.

4:2 - *“In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.”* Now we have God’s plan for the nation of Israel after His second coming in the millennium. The Branch is one of the titles of the Lord Himself, as well as of the nation of Israel (cf. Psa. 80:15, Isa. 60:21). In Zechariah 6:12 we read, “...Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.” This is clearly referring to the Lord, as well as in Jeremiah 33:15. “In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.”

Isaiah

Therefore, those who escape the last day judgments of Jerusalem and its final siege will be called holy. This is clearly mentioned in Zechariah 12:2. “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.” Then the spiritual state of those who are left is described in Isaiah 4:3:

4:3 - *“And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.”* The thought of those who are left being holy at the second coming is contained symbolically in Zechariah 14:20. “In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD’S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.” God wants holiness. Why? Because He is holy. He says in First Peter 1:16, “Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

4:4 - *“When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.”* Before this process of holiness takes place, there will be a purging of those in Zion and Jerusalem as seen in Isaiah 4:4. Those who are left are made holy by the spirit of judgment coming

Isaiah

and bringing conviction of sin, followed by the purifying fires of the Holy Spirit. They are purged from defilement of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

This is what happens in times of revival. In revival, God comes in the spirit of judgment as shown in the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). Their deceit cost them their lives. There is also the spirit of burning in revival. John the Baptist said that Christ would baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire (Mt. 3:11). Today we see the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but we don't see the fire. Yet, be assured, the fire is coming with revival; and this spiritual fire purges from sin! This is the spirit of burning spoken of in Isaiah 4:4.

4:5 - *“And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”* The Lord promises that every spiritual dwelling place upon Mount Zion will be covered with the glory of God and fire by night.

This reminds us of the time when Israel was led by fire during their wilderness sojourn in Exodus 13:21-22: “And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by

Isaiah

night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.” This verse has a fulfillment in the millennium. However, I believe that there will also be a significant realization of this promise for the Church in the last days, to the extent that the glory of God will be seen in the churches and congregations dwelling in spiritual Zion.

4:6 - *“And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.”* Spiritually, there will be safety in the Church during the last days, even though violence will be everywhere. The Church in the last days will be a place of shelter, comfort, and supply in times of judgment.

CHAPTER 5

The Lord’s Vineyard

5:1 - *“Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.”* Who is the Lord’s vineyard? In verse seven we have the

Isaiah

interpretation, because scripture interprets scripture. Verse seven says, “For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel.” Throughout holy scripture, Israel is identified as the vine of the Lord. This is clearly seen in Psalm 80:8-9: “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.”

5:2 - *“And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.”* Here we have a description of what the Lord did with Israel, the Lord’s vine. This was made very real to me in one of the first visions the Lord gave me.

This vision showed me most vividly how the Lord deals in the life of a Christian. In this vision, I saw a very rough piece of ground filled with weeds and rocks, wholly undesirable to the natural eye. Then the Lord Himself walked upon that ground. He began by building a wall around the ground so that no one could enter. From Isaiah 60:18, we know that these are the *“walls of salvation.”* This is confirmed in Job 1:10, where Satan declares that the Lord had made a hedge about Job and about all that he

Isaiah

possessed. Thus, when we become a Christian, the Lord puts a wall (or a hedge) around us to protect us from the enemy.

However, there are gates in the walls, and these are the entrances to the soul by which the enemy can still attack us. These gates are our eyes, what we look at; our ears, what we listen to; our nose, what we smell; and our mind, which is the most powerful part of our being. Therefore, our mind needs to be guarded with great diligence; for as a man thinketh, so is he (Prov. 23:7). Also, we must guard our mouths, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that a person speaks.

Then, continuing in my vision, just as the verse states here in Isaiah, I saw the Lord start to remove the weeds. I understood this to be the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21. He also began to remove the stones, which represent areas of rebellion in our lives. Then He planted the ground, which now resembled a very pleasant garden with beautiful trees and plants which were the fruits of the Spirit. Isaiah 5:2 mentions *a choice vine*. He plants the fruitful hill with a vine, meaning the nation of Israel. The tower in Isaiah 5:2 reminds us of the necessity to be on the watch for the enemy of our souls, and the winepress makes us realize that the Lord desires wine, not just grapes.

Isaiah

This is a very significant fact, since there is a process between producing grapes on the vine and wine. Thus, the ripe and mature Christian must pass through the winepress to lose his identity and be reduced to nothing so that the pure joy of Jesus can flow from his heart and life. Yet, tragically, this choicest vine that the Lord planted in the land of promise brought forth wild grapes. Regretfully, this is true of many Christians today. I know of several pastors who describe themselves as feisty young rams, or wild stallions. They have been in the ministry for over twenty years and yet they are still wild. What is the reaction of the Lord?

5:3-4 - *“And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?”* He first appeals to the inhabitants of Jerusalem by asking if He could have done anything more for His vineyard.

I fear this is going to be the case when the Lord meets those rebellious children of His who bring forth wild grapes instead of the precious, mature fruit that He desires in their lives. How ashamed they will be on that day when we all must appear before the Lord of glory to give an account of our lives. This

Isaiah

is the question that we must ask ourselves: What kind of grapes (fruit) are we bringing forth? I have known people who have been Christians for thirty years, and instead of bringing forth sweet grapes they have produced wild and bitter grapes.

5:5-6 - *“And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.”* This allegory of judgment is repeated in Psalm 80:12-13. “Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.” The boar, which spiritually speaks of uncleanness, comes into a person’s life when God breaks down the hedges. God will break down our hedges if we do not walk in obedience to His Word, and there are principally two things that come in—drunkenness and immorality.

This prophecy of judgment is repeated in Micah 3:12. “Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of

the forest.” As we have previously stated, this occurred in its fullness when the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem and ransacked the city.

5:7 - *“For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.”* Lest we are under any delusion concerning the interpretation of the allegory, the Lord makes it very clear in verse seven that He is speaking of Israel.

The Six Woes

The First Woe

5:8-10 - *“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! In mine ears said the Lord of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant. Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.”* Here the judgments of God are pronounced upon those who are continually adding to their material possessions. It is very

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reminiscent of the rich fool in Luke 12:16-21, who thought to pull down his old barns in order to build greater ones because of the abundance of his possessions.

The Lord's admonition in Luke 12:15 was, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Christ continued the warning against covetousness in Luke 12:20-21: "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The Second Woe

5:11-12 - *"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret [tambourine], and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands."* Here the admonition is against those who indulge in inordinate drinking, or may we say partying. In First Corinthians 10:7, there is a sad commentary of the children of Israel in

Isaiah

the wilderness, “Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.”

The Lord states that they did not consider the work of His hands. In other words, they were not meditating on the purposes of God for their lives. Rather, they were spending their lives in the pursuit of vain pleasures. Solomon said it well in Proverbs 21:17, “He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man.” The result of all this is seen in Isaiah 5:13.

5:13 - *“Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.”* The kings and nobles who spent their time in the pursuit of pleasure went into Babylonian captivity, but their eternal state was even worse. If they had knowledge, they would not have gone to Babylon.

5:14-15 - *“Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it. And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be*

Isaiah

humbled.” In verses fourteen and fifteen, we see the terrible tragedy of those who live this life without any concern for eternity. All that awaits them is hell and the pit.

5:16 - *“But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.”* In the day of judgment, the One whom they ignored, who in all probability they mocked in their drunken orgies, will be exalted. He will be glorified and honored, but they will fall into the pit with shame.

5:17 - *“Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.”* Also, their possessions will be given to people whom they did not know, instead of to their own posterity.

The Third Woe

5:18-19 - *“Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!”* Here the woe is directed against those

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who mock the very existence of God Himself. People will be given over to reprobate minds—minds that are incapable of sound judgment when they do not want to retain God in any of their thoughts (Rom. 1:28).

The Fourth Woe

5:20 - *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”* It is a regrettable fact that many sinners continue upon the slippery path, even to such an extent that they then make black white, and white black. Sin was so rampant in Nazi Germany that the people who supported this regime entered into the depths of degradation which the system propagated, and in the process, they lost all sense of right and wrong.

While we were in Switzerland, many former members of the Nazi organization came to us for help and counsel after World War II. In particular, I remember a certain lady who told us that salt tasted sweet to her, but sugar tasted like salt to her. Her actual senses had become so depraved that they

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ceased to function properly. Oh, let those that choose to follow evil take heed, for even that which is beautiful will become horrible in their eyes and to their senses.

The Fifth Woe

5:21 - *“Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”* The fifth woe is against those who are wise in their own eyes. The Lord reminds us in First Corinthians 3:18-19 that He will destroy the wisdom of the wise. “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.”

The Sixth Woe

5:22-23 - *“Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!”* Here again we see the effects of strong drink. It leads a person down the path of iniquity and all unrighteousness. May we who are old exhort the young to refrain from all forms of strong drink.

Isaiah

Also, in Hosea 4:11 we are told, “Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.” This depicts the spiritual danger of drunkenness and immorality. Their end shows us that they cast away the law and despise the word of the Lord, and this path of iniquity leads them to a state where they condemn the righteous and justify the wicked. Therefore, the Lord says in verse twenty-four that He will rise up in judgment.

5:24-25 - *“Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.”*

The anger of the Lord will be manifested against His people because of their iniquity; and although the hills may tremble, yet His anger will continue until He brings against them a fierce nation.

Isaiah

Israel was forewarned by Moses in Deuteronomy 28:49-50 that this nation was Babylon. “The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young.”

5:26-30 - *“And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly: None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses’ hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind: Their roaring shall be like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it. And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.”*

This description of the Babylonians is very similar to that of Joel 2:1-11. The Babylonians were the Lord’s instruments to bring judgment first and then purification to His disobedient nation, Israel.

Isaiah

God's methods, however, do not change. We see the Lord repeating what He did with Israel throughout the history of this world in nation after nation. In judgment, God raises up the *goat* nations to punish the disobedient *sheep* nations who have known Him to one extent or another (see Mt. 25:31-46). And may I also say, He raises up *goat* Christians, those who are self-willed and rebellious, to purify and do a work of grace in His *sheep* Christians, those who are pliable and not self-willed.

The Apostle Paul develops this thought in Romans 9:22-23: "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

This was the condition of Israel, which was surrounded by many heathen nations who were bent on their destruction. Yet, at this time, Uzziah, the military genius, was on the throne, so they were protected and at peace. However, when Uzziah died (as we will see in the next chapter), God had to show the prophet Isaiah that He was really their King and that He was the One who was protecting them.

Part Two

THE CALL AND COMMISSIONING OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH

(6:1-13)

CHAPTER 6

Isaiah

6:1 - *"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train [the border or hem of His robe] filled the temple."* This opening statement is very significant because Israel at this time was surrounded by nations that were her enemies. Uzziah, however, had brought her into a place of peace and security because of his military genius (see II Chron. 26:1-15). Unfortunately, Uzziah became proud, and God punished him by afflicting him with leprosy. However, as long as Uzziah was still alive, the people felt a sense of security. They were looking to their king for protection. Upon his death, they were in trepidation, for Uzziah's son, Jotham, although he was a good man, did not possess his father's military capabilities. Thus, the people became very insecure when he took the throne.

In this vision given to Isaiah, the Lord wanted the inhabitants of Jerusalem to understand that it was He who was their true King sitting upon the throne, and that the earthly occupants of the throne of Judah were merely His vice-regents. It was a temple vision showing the holiness of the Lord Jehovah, the glorious King-Priest. To emphasize this, the Lord showed Isaiah the seraphims that surround the heavenly throne of God's glory. The Lord wanted them to realize that He was not only the King of

Isaiah

Israel, but He was also King over the whole earth, and that every nation is under His jurisdiction and rule. Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in this vision (see Jn. 12:41), and His robe filled the temple.

6:2-4 - *“Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.”* The main aspect of the character of God is holiness. Therefore, as His children, we do well to heed His admonition to us, “Be ye holy for I am holy.”

6:5 - *“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”* It is important, even to the most advanced saint, to realize our own corrupt and depraved nature in the light of God’s glory. This is seen even in the life of the great prophet Daniel (see Dan. 10:8), and also in the life of Job (see Job 42:1-6).

Isaiah

It is awesome to realize that the prophet, who was God's messenger, realized for the first time that he was corrupted by the very sin of the people's unclean lips. May God grant that we, as His messengers, ask Him to purge us from all foolishness of speech. Let our lips speak only those words that will bring Him glory. Praise God, He not only convicts by His glorious presence, but He also purifies and transforms us, causing us to become holy.

6:6-7 - *"Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."* May we sing with the song writer, "Purge my lips with coals from off the altar."

6:8 - *"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."* While this obviously applies to the fact that the Lord was asking the question and Isaiah the prophet replied, there is a far deeper interpretation of this scripture, relative to the Lord Jesus Himself. The Word of God is very clear that the Lord was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world (see Rev. 13:8). Therefore, like a picture, this verse shows us what occurred

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in heaven prior to the descent of the Lord, when He became that babe in the womb of the virgin Mary. Those who have had visions of that heavenly scene describe it thusly.

All heaven was arrested by the awesome tones of the Majesty on high when God the Father thundered out from the throne these words recorded by Isaiah: "Whom shall I send?" Contained within this phrase, we see the supreme sovereignty of the Father Himself. Then, in a voice of pathos we hear Him saying, "And who will go for us?" There we see at once the sovereignty and compassion of God the Father. He alone will determine who will go, and we see His concern for someone to go save a lost and dying world.

All heaven was silent. All would gladly have stepped forward to answer the call, but none was able or qualified. Then, from the right hand of the Majesty on high, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, arose and came before His Father saying, "Here am I; send Me."

Both the Father and the Son knew the awesome price both would have to pay for the redemption of lost humanity; but both, in their own way, motivated by their own pure love, freely gave that voluntary offering. They were compelled by love and love alone. From the lips of the Father came the words

Isaiah

recorded in verse nine, “Go and tell this people.” It was also recorded in the words of the Lord Himself in John 3:16. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” At these words, the Lord Jesus divested Himself, degree by degree. He descended down by the heavenly steps until He came to earth, and He became the incarnate Word made flesh in the womb of the virgin.

6:9 - *“And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.”* This verse has a dual application. It applies to the prophet Isaiah, but it also applies to the teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the very reason why the Lord Jesus taught in parables (see Mt. 13:14-15).

6:10 - *“Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”* This verse was quoted by the Apostle Paul when he was teaching the Jews in Rome. He quoted this verse to them in Acts 28:27 after they rejected the Gospel. One may ask why God gave such a commandment. Quoting directly from Isaiah 29:13, the Lord Jesus Christ gives the answer in

Isaiah

Mark 7:6. “Well hath [Isaiah] prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”

The Lord deals with us according to the condition of our heart (Psa. 20:4). With the pure He will show Himself pure, and with the froward He will show Himself froward (Psa. 18:26). The condition of our heart determines whether or not we understand God’s Word. So many people read the Word of God, but so very few can rightly divide the Word of God and open up its mysteries to others.

The key to knowing what is true doctrine and what is error is to be totally committed to doing the will of God. In John 7:17 we read, “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” If people are *not* doing the Lord’s will for their lives and they are in rebellion, they will not be able to discern between what is truth and what is error. Jeremiah 7:28 says, “This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.”

Isaiah

Truth is cut off from us and we can no longer discern between truth and error when we do not obey the voice of the Lord, as it was in the case of the children of Israel in the time of Jeremiah. The ability to understand truth is dependent upon obeying the Lord.

6:11-12 - *“Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.”* Isaiah then asks a question we are so prone to ask when we find ourselves facing a trial—“Lord, how long?” Sometimes the Lord gives an answer, and sometimes He just tells us to trust. Many times we could not bear it if He answered our question, for our hearts would faint.

In this particular time period, the children of Israel would not understand until they were carried away into Babylonian captivity. Upon their restoration and return to Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah, God granted them understanding again. However, when the Lord Jesus Christ came a few centuries later, they were void of understanding again because they had become a hypocritical nation.

Isaiah

Therefore, in its fullest sense, it is not until the second coming that the Jews will fully understand and flow in the plan and purposes of God for them as a nation.

6:13 - *“But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.”* There is always a remnant that is left—a fact that is mentioned by the Apostle Paul in Romans 9:27. “[Isaiah] also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” He repeats this same thought again in Romans 11:5. “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

Part Three

THE BOOK OF IMMANUEL

(7:1 - 12:6)

Now we come to part three of Division I. We have entitled this section, *The Book of Immanuel*. It covers chapters 7-12. This section in the book of Isaiah contains several wonderful truths concerning the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. It speaks of the fact that *God is with us*.

CHAPTER 7

We are introduced in this chapter to King Ahaz, who was the grandson of Uzziah and the son of Jotham. We have skipped over the reign of Jotham, and we have gone from the death of Uzziah in chapter six to the early years of the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, in chapter seven. In order to appreciate the historical background of this chapter and the implications of the prophecies directed toward King Ahaz, we need to first consider his character and life.

Ahaz was the twelfth king of the divided kingdom and ruled from 732 to 715 B.C. He came to the throne at the age of twenty. He reigned four years as the senior partner of a co-regency with his father Jotham, from 735 to 732 B.C., and sixteen years as sole monarch. He was a religious apostate, as seen in Second Chronicles 28:2-3: "For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burned incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burned his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel." Because of this mixture and idolatry in his life, the Lord delivered him into the hand of Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, who came down into Jerusalem and

Isaiah

broke through the walls of the city. They slew 120,000 men of Judah in one day. They also captured over 200,000 of them. Much of this is recorded for us in Second Chronicles 28:5-8.

King Ahaz was very afraid of these two kings, but instead of turning to the Lord for help, he went to Tiglath-Pileser III, the king of Assyria. At this time the Edomites and the Philistines had overrun the land (II Chron. 28:17). Tiglath-Pileser did defeat the Syrians, yet he also distressed Judah (II Kgs. 16:9, II Chron. 28:20). Ahaz was obliged to give him tribute from the house of the Lord as well as from the king's and princes' houses.

King Ahaz then added sin to sin and worshipped the gods of the kings of Syria. He thought they would help him, but they were to his ruin (II Chron. 28:20-25). Upon closing the house of the Lord, he made altars to other gods in every corner of Jerusalem and in several cities of Judah. Because of his great wickedness, his body was not buried with the kings of Judah (II Chron. 28:27). With this short profile of Ahaz and his reign, we will now turn our attention to the text of this chapter and study it verse by verse.

Isaiah

7:1-2 - *“And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.”*

In this section of Isaiah, the historical setting is in the early part of the reign of Ahaz when the kings of Syria and Israel had made an alliance to go up against Jerusalem. The whole of Jerusalem was naturally moved with fear because of this alliance. However, God had Isaiah, His mouthpiece, there in Jerusalem in the midst of all the turmoil and despair.

Isaiah 7:3-9 is very important because it causes us to see that it is the Lord who determines the boundaries of the nations, as declared in Acts 17:26. “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”

Isaiah

7:3-4 - *“Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son [Shear-jashub means “a remnant will return”], at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field; And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.”* When the enemy of our souls stirs himself up to afflict and even destroy the people of God, it is so wonderful to know that the Lord comes forth with His solution.

At this time in history, Isaiah the prophet was the channel. How gracious God was to command the prophet to take his son as a witness to meet the apostate king and say to him, “Take heed and be quiet.” It also serves to remind us of the words of Moses as the children of Israel thought that they were about to be annihilated by Pharaoh’s army, “Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.” The prophet continued by saying, “Fear not, neither be fainthearted.” What a comfort for the believing soul. This is so typical of our God. He bids us not to be as those who regard the things that are visible, but rather to endure as seeing the invisible.

Isaiah

Later, the Lord said in Isaiah 8:12, “Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.” Isaiah is commanded to regard the Lord of hosts as his only hope because He Himself has promised to be the sanctuary of His people. In times of trouble, the Lord wants us to look to Him.

As we have previously stated, this was spoken to the apostate Ahaz. As we will also see later, it is remarkable how God at times extends Himself to the wicked and to those who have left the paths of righteousness. His sole purpose is to seek to draw them back to Himself.

I remember a similar situation in our own lives. At that time I was in Switzerland in a Christian hotel which served also as a Bible School and a conference center. We had a very pressing problem and we did not have the solution. We called for three days of prayer and fasting with the students to seek the Lord for the answer to our dilemma. After only one day, the Lord gave the answer to a little Greek female student through a vision. Immediately she gave us the answer and we knew it was from God. It was the very answer that we had desired.

However, that girl was far from what I might describe as the model student. She not only was giving us problems at school, but also her widowed mother had reclaimed her from a life of sin. Yet, God revealed the answer to our problem in a vision through this backslidden girl. Not only in this case, but also in several other situations, the Lord gave her remarkable visitations that were proven beyond a doubt to be from heaven above. Yet, sad to say, in spite of all this grace, she did not remain on the narrow path for long and backslid again. We lost contact with her; but our only hope is that in the end she may be a branch saved as if by fire.

7:5-6 - *“Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.”* The King of Israel and the King of Syria intended to cut off the Davidic lineage and put in their own king over Judah and Jerusalem. The king they had planned to put in was the son of Tabeal. There is no record in secular or Biblical history concerning this man, but he was someone they had selected to reign as a vice-regent for them in Jerusalem. Syria has had a perpetual anger against Judah, even unto this very day; and Israel, the northern kingdom, was very

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envious and antagonistic toward their brethren, Judah. But praise the Lord, God does not let the enemy have his own way!

7:7 - *“Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.”* The enemy does not have the last word here. Thus, it was not the Lord’s will to give Jerusalem into the hands of either the Syrians or Northern Israel.

It is God who determines the boundaries of the nations. This truth was made real to us personally in a very vivid way during the time of the Cambodian revolution. We were in Bangkok, Thailand during the very week that the capital of Cambodia was falling. We were having a seminar for church leaders, and some of the registrants were overseers responsible for missionaries in those Asian countries. There was also a general apprehension that the Communists would turn their attention toward an invasion of Thailand. In fact, the concern was so great that, prior to each morning session, those in attendance were reading their newspapers instead of their Bibles to find out what was happening. The Lord was gracious, and He gave me a word of comfort for them. It was simple, yet direct and to the point. He said, “The communists are in My hands, and I am not going to bring them into Thailand

at this time.” When I gave that word, peace settled over the conference. Finally, they put their newspapers away and got out their Bibles. After all, everyone knew the news in advance. Praise the Lord!

7:8 - *“For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people.”* (Ephraim is another name for Northern Israel because the tribe of Ephraim was the leader of the ten rebellious tribes. Samaria was the capital city.) Damascus was the capital of Syria. Rezin, the king of Syria at that time, was coming against Judah with Pekah the King of Israel. However, what was Rezin’s judgment for doing this? Well, he and his kingdom of Syria were cut off in 732 B.C., when Damascus fell to Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria. This was only a very short time after Rezin came against Jerusalem.

Another important factor in this prophecy is the time period of sixty-five years that is given. The sixty-five years refers to the Assyrian deportations which took place in the reigns of Esarhaddon (681-669 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (669-627 B.C.) *after* the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. (Ezra 4:2, 10). The prophecy of “Ephraim being broken that it be not a people within sixty-five years” could not refer to its

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fall in 722 B.C. because this prophecy was given only a decade or two before its fall. Rather, it refers to future deportations of its inhabitants by the kings of Assyria.

Although they had no king after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., the northern kingdom of Israel still remained a colonial state until the final deportations when they really lost their national identities (see II Kgs. 17). This has lasted virtually until our days, and certainly in the time of Jesus. There were large areas in northern Israel which were avoided by the pious Jews in His time because they did not wish to become contaminated by the Samaritans. These people had themselves experienced deportation from their own lands of Babylon and beyond and were placed in Samaria. Thus, when Nazareth, the home town of Jesus, is spoken of as *Galilee of the nations*, it is because there was so much interracial breeding in that area that there were very few pure Jews living there. In fact, we might term the majority of the population of those areas foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel (cf. Eph. 2:12).

7:9 - *“And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.”* Samaria was the capital of the northern kingdom (Ephraim), and the king at this time was Pekah, the son of Remaliah. We have a very important

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spiritual truth here. Ahaz was told that if he did not believe what God spoke to him through the prophet Isaiah, he would not be established by the Lord.

This truth was spoken many years before by the godly King Jehoshaphat in the positive sense when he stated in Second Chronicles 20:20, “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.” Prophecy is given so that we can be established in God’s ways. Thus, it is very important when God speaks prophetically to us, that we believe His words to us, and that we remember and cherish them until we see them fulfilled in our lives. The result for Jehoshaphat and Judah in that situation was that God gave them a promised victory against Moab, Ammon and a great multitude of their enemies.

The Virgin Birth

7:10-16 - *“Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive,*

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and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.”

The Lord communicated a message through Isaiah to Ahaz telling him to ask a sign of Him, but this wicked king said he would not tempt the Lord. This was *false* piety, because the Lord truly desired Ahaz to ask a sign of Him. He wanted to reveal the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God. When God tells us to ask Him for something, let us be quick to ask. The sign granted to this apostate and wicked king is renowned throughout history. It was nothing less than the prophetic declaration of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ—Immanuel, which means, “God with us.” Ahaz received the declaration of the sign in spite of his wickedness. There is, however, a double fulfillment of this prophecy. The first fulfillment was the birth of a son to Isaiah and his wife, who was a prophetess (Isa. 8:3). The incarnation of the Lord Jesus as the babe of Bethlehem was the second fulfillment.

This prophecy cannot apply exclusively to the birth of Christ, which took place about seven hundred years later, because the birth of Christ would not meet the need of Ahaz at this time. Therefore, this

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prophecy speaks of the birth of Isaiah's son, and also of the birth of the Son of God in Bethlehem many years later. One is a type of the other.

Thus, the child spoken of in verse sixteen is the son of Isaiah, but foreshadows the coming Christ. Having been nourished upon butter, meaning the abundance of the Word of God, and honey, representing the Holy Spirit, this child would know how to refuse the evil and choose the good. This is a lesson for all of us. If we feed on the abundance of the Word, we will have discernment. Parents who are wise teach their children from an early age to read the Word and pray that they may be proper children. However, the immediate sign to Ahaz was that with the birth and nourishment of Isaiah's son, both these kings would be removed from their thrones before the child could even know right from wrong.

It is said that a child knows how to choose between good and evil when he is about two years of age. Therefore, with the time of conception and birth (about a year), and then two years for the child's raising, we have a time frame of about three years. This is exactly what happened. Rezin, King of Syria, was slain by Tiglath-Pileser III, King of Assyria, in 732 B.C. Pekah, King of Israel, died about

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two and a half years after this prophecy. Thus, we see the fulfillment of this prophecy in verse sixteen. When we are studying the prophets, we have to be aware that a prophecy can have two and sometimes three fulfillments.

The Assyrian Invasion Prophesied

7:17-20 - *“The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father’s house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes. In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.”*

Although he was chastised by God through Ephraim and Syria, Ahaz did not repent. Both he and the nation of Judah turned to idols for help. Therefore, the Lord said He was going to bring upon them the king of Assyria, who is likened to a swarm of stinging bees. (See Deut. 1:44, Psa. 118:12). The Lord

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also said that He was going to bring the Egyptians upon Judah. The Egyptians are likened to the fly because of their great numbers. Those who have visited Egypt know that the whole country is overrun with flies. The Assyrian invasion that was started with Tiglath-Pileser was followed by Sargon, and then was continued by the formidable and proud Sennacherib, of whom much is spoken later on in Isaiah. The Egyptians came against Judah principally in the latter part of the kingdom under the invasion by Pharaoh Necho in the days of Josiah.

7:21-25 - *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land. And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns. With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns. And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock [hoe], there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of [smaller] cattle [such as sheep].”*

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The land would become so decimated and reduced to poverty under the Assyrian invasion that a man would only have enough pasture to nourish one cow and two sheep. The population would be so low that they would eat butter and honey in abundance. It would become a vast hunting terrain for hunters using bows and arrows. Even the land that was tilled would have no protection against the cattle, and the rest would be covered with briars that only the lesser animals like sheep and goats could penetrate. The land would be impassable to man. It is a picture of a land in complete ruin.

CHAPTER 8

The Birth Of Isaiah's Son

8:1-4 - *“Moreover the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man’s pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the Lord to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.”* As we have already mentioned in the previous

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chapter, Isaiah's son was the immediate sign granted to the apostate Ahaz. Before the child would have the knowledge to cry "My father and my mother," both nations that had afflicted Judah (Syria and Israel) would be defeated by the king of Assyria. The child's name, Mahershalalhashbaz, means "the spoil speeds, and the prey hastens." Just two years later, Damascus, the capital of Syria, was taken by Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria, and some time later Samaria was completely defeated by Sargon, King of Assyria, in 722 B.C.

The Assyrians Will Judge Immanuel's Land (v. 5-8)

8:5-8 - *"The LORD spake also unto me again, saying, Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."*

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The waters of Shiloh that Judah refused were in reality the pleasant doctrines and teachings of the Lord. This is similar to Jeremiah 29:19, where the Lord said He had sent His prophets to them, but they would not hear and they would not hearken unto His words.

Also, Isaiah 30:15 says, “For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.”

Instead, they actually rejoiced in their enemies’ way of life. Therefore, as we have already mentioned, the Lord said that He would bring upon them these kings of Assyria—Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and finally Sennacherib. This occurred in the reign of Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz. They would, figuratively speaking, “*flood the land like a wave of water.*”

8:9-10 - “*Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us.*” Speaking to the wicked nations that had evil intentions against Jerusalem, the Lord is saying that all their counsels, planning, and plotting would be in vain because God was

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with His people. Later we shall see glorious promises for the people of God such as this: “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that is risen up against thee thou shalt condemn.” When we walk in the light as He is in the light, even when we are in the midst of trials, we can be assured that the Lord will fight for us and we will come through triumphantly. In our own lives, we have had numerous occasions when people have risen up against us to take away either property or positions that we had been placed in by God. Yet, we have seen through quietly waiting upon the Lord that He has most graciously brought their plans to naught; and in the words of the Psalmist, “Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies” (Psa. 60:12).

The Lord Our Sanctuary

8:11-13 - *“For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.” During this period of extreme uncertainty for Judah, when her enemies were seemingly ready to overthrow her, the Lord spoke very clearly to the prophet*

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Isaiah that he should not be as others who were crying out concerning the confederacy of nations coming against Judah. He was to make the Lord his sanctuary. That is what we should also do in times of trouble and uncertainty. For even as Solomon said in Proverbs 18:10, it is the Lord who is our refuge. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

8:14-15 - *"And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken."* The righteous will be safe in the Lord, but He will be a trap to the wicked and destroy them.

The Key To Victory For The Godly

8:16-17 - *"Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him."* In the uncertain times during the reign of Ahaz, there was a clear message going out to the people of God through the prophet Isaiah. This message is very apropos for every one of the Lord's people today. The message was very simple. In times of trouble, the law of God should be written upon the fleshly tables of our hearts.

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Also, we should wait upon the Lord because He hides Himself at given times only so that we might seek Him more earnestly.

8:18 - *“Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.”* This verse could be amplified by looking at the Apostle Paul’s exhortation in Second Corinthians 3:2-3: “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.” The prophets not only declared the message of the Lord, but they were the very embodiment of the message. Their lives and character displayed the message of Jehovah. For example, Daniel manifested the holiness of God, and Jeremiah displayed the compassion of Christ. Isaiah was the evangelist, or soul-winning prophet who had a deep revelation of the life and ministry of Jesus. Paul, as he himself wrote, was ordained to manifest in his body the longsuffering of the Lord. John incontestably manifested the love of Christ. As we seek the Lord, we will also come to understand a particular aspect of the divine nature that He wishes to write upon our

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hearts. This will help us to understand the particular dealings of the Lord in our lives, which have as their ultimate purpose the development of a special aspect of the nature of Christ. We should ask, "Lord, what particular aspect of Your nature do You want to demonstrate through my life?"

8:19-20 - *"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* Many in the days of Ahaz were seeking counsel and guidance from spiritist mediums who were guided by evil spirits. They were hoping for communication with the dead, but this is strictly forbidden by the law (Deut. 18:9-11). The cry of Isaiah is that the living should seek the living God. If any action was not done in accordance with the law it was because there was no light in them.

8:21-22 - *"And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead [distressed or hard-pressed] and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and*

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darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness.” The fate of those who turned to spiritist mediums and horoscopes is seen in verses 21-22. Anguish and darkness will not only be their lot upon earth, but also their eternal habitations. May we learn from Isaiah chapter eight to go to the Lord and His Word in times of trouble instead of looking at situations with our natural eyes.



THE REGION OF GALILEE

(Isaiah 9:1-2)

CHAPTER 9

9:1-2 - *“Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”* This passage is quoted verbatim in Matthew 4:14-16. It refers to the preaching of Jesus who, as the Light of the world, brought light to that region.

This region around the lake of Galilee had known great darkness for centuries, by virtue of the fact that it had been overrun by the Assyrians, who had carried out mass deportations and repopulated the area with Babylonians and Elamites (II Kgs. 17:6, 24). These Gentiles who were brought to Israel became known as *Samaritans*. They were people who had no knowledge of the true and living God (II Kgs. 17:26), as is seen in John chapter four in the discourse between Christ and the woman at the well. Thus, they were people who were in spiritual darkness. Jesus was raised in this area in the city

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of Nazareth. Incidentally, it was in this geographic area where it is estimated that Jesus performed more than seventy percent of His miracles.

9:3-5 - (NIV) *“You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian’s defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior’s boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.”* This passage looks forward to the millennial reign of Christ upon earth. It will be a time when the enemy’s yoke will be destroyed from off their necks even as it was in the time of Gideon’s victory over the Midianites. The nation will be increased with great joy, and they will divide the spoil of the enemy. The warriors will then cease from the land because Christ will usher in a thousand year reign of peace. Verses 1-2 speak of the Lord’s first coming when He was a Light unto the world, and verses 3-5 speak of His second coming at which time He will break the yoke of the enemy from Israel’s neck.

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9:6 - *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”* Here we have in beautiful sequence the chronological survey of the birth, manhood, ministry, and millennial reign of Christ upon earth. His birth was given to us in Chapter 7:14—He would be born of a virgin. He would come as the helpless babe born in Bethlehem’s stables, but He was given as a mature Son to Israel. This depicts the Jordan scene, when at the age of about thirty Jesus was introduced to Israel by John the Baptist. He came as the Governor of the universe. In all encounters, either with man or Satan, it was evident that He was in command of every situation. Christ even said to the devil, who declared that all the glory of the kingdoms were his to give to whomever he desired, “Get thee behind me Satan.” The eight-fold aspect of the incarnate Christ continues by declaring that He will be called:

Wonderful - This word means “a marvelous thing.” He is marvelous and a wonder. Oh Jesus, what a wonder You truly are!

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Counselor - This means that Christ was anointed with the spirit of counsel. He is the One Who is counsel, for He knows all things and all that one should do. He is the One we should go to at all times for direction and guidance because our lives have been pre-planned, and it is He Who has planned them.

The mighty God - He is the Almighty. There is no one besides Jehovah in power or majesty.

The Everlasting Father - He is the One who has lighted everyone who has come into the world (John 1:9). He is the One who gives everyone a conscience.

The Prince of Peace - Christ is the One who said just prior to His crucifixion, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (Jn. 14:27). His peace passes all understanding.

9:7 - *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."* This, together with Daniel 2:44 and many other scriptures, assures us that the Lord will reign when He returns to judge the world in righteousness. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and it will be filled with righteousness.

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This is the thousand year reign of Christ upon earth that is spoken of in Revelation 20:6. It was the hope and aspiration of all the Old Testament saints that at the appearing of Christ, He would usher in the kingdom of God upon the earth. The Jews thought their Messiah would come and set up His kingdom. Therefore, when Christ came they expected Him to break the yoke of Rome and bring in His millennial reign (see Acts 1:6). However, between His two comings is a period of about two thousand years. The disciples did not understand this at first. It is also noteworthy that Christ will sit upon the throne of David. This will be the fulfillment of the promise made to David (see II Sam. 7:12-18, Psa. 132:11). Over the centuries, the people of God have tried to bring in the kingdom, but it is clear that it is only the zeal of the Lord of hosts that will accomplish this blessed hope.

9:8-12 - *“The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel. And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart, The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and*

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join his enemies together; The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.”

This little passage of scripture refers to the Lord directing His word of judgment against the ten northern tribes of Israel which are represented by their most powerful tribe, Ephraim. The capital city was Samaria. Because of their pride and stoutness of heart, they refused to acknowledge God's judgment. Instead, they declared that they would rebuild, in a much stronger manner, all the walls that the enemy had pulled down.

This is the attitude of the proud, who refuse to acknowledge their wrongdoing and the subsequent punishments of the Lord. Therefore, the Lord declared that He would raise up their traditional enemies, the Syrians and the Philistines, against them to devour them.

In spite of this harsh judgment, the hand of the Lord was still stretched out to further punish the nation. How important it is to learn to discern the hand of the Lord when He corrects us. So very often we must go around the same old mountain time and time again or persevere on a road that the Lord has not appointed for our lives before we learn our lesson. This happens because of the lack of

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humility, and because we do not see His loving hand which is seeking to direct us back onto the right path, the path He has chosen for us before the foundation of the world.

9:13 - *“For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts.”*

As we have already said, the Lord punishes and chastises us in order that we will turn to Him. However, because Israel would not do this at this particular time in their history, we sadly read:

9:14-15 - *“Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.”* Therefore, because the children of Israel did not walk uprightly, the Lord cut off the heads of their nation.

9:16 - *“For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.”*

May it be noted that leaders can influence a nation toward righteousness or toward wickedness. They are responsible to declare and explain the laws clearly. Right laws cause people to walk in right paths; whereas laws that promote wickedness destroy nations. We should pray for godly leaders over our countries, states, and cities.

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9:17 - *“Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.”* Again, because of the hypocrisy of the nation, the Lord finds no joy in them. Therefore, He will not even have mercy upon the orphans and the widows, those whom He has ordained in His law to be worthy of compassion. For the second time, He states that His arm is still outstretched in judgment.

9:18 - *“For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.”* Here we have an illustration of the effect of wickedness. Wickedness is like a fire that burns and consumes all those who are unworthy.

9:19 - *“Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.”* God’s wrath upon the land of Israel is likened unto darkness, and the people are the fuel for the fire of His anger.

Isaiah

9:20 - *“And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm.”* The siege of Samaria was so terrible that the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy 28:52-55 was fulfilled. Deuteronomy 28:52 says, “And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.” Deuteronomy 28:53-55 continues: “And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.” The siege was so terrible that they literally killed and ate their own wives and children.

Isaiah

9:21 - *“Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.”* Reverting back to Judah, the Lord promises that He will stir up Manasseh and Ephraim together against the Southern Kingdom. Even with all this, His anger is still unabated because of their great sin against Him. Further judgments are contemplated, which we shall see pronounced in later chapters.

CHAPTER 10

10:1-2 - *“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!”* One of the cries of God concerning His own people in the times of Isaiah was that their rulers were decreeing unrighteous decrees. This is repeated time and time again. It should, therefore, be a warning to us concerning the governments of our day.

We must watch with all diligence that our government representatives do not decree laws that are contrary to the laws of God. If they do, the land will be corrupted and the wrath of God will come in

Isaiah

judgmental power upon the inhabitants. In the times of Isaiah, Israel's rulers were making laws that were contrary to social justice. Therefore, the Lord asks in verse three:

10:3 - *“And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?”* The Israelites had been trusting in their idols. Therefore, they would be helpless in the day of the Lord's judgment; for only in vain could their idols help them against the only living and true God.

10:4 - *“Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain.”* So the Lord pronounces judgment upon Israel. Because they would not walk in His ways, they would be carried away captive by the Assyrians. And for the fourth time the prophet declares, *“For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.”*

10:5 - *“O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.”* In verse five, we see that the Assyrians will be used by God to punish His backslidden nation. This is a very prime lesson in understanding the ways and dealings of God with nations and individuals. When God's people walk contrary to Him and His laws, He raises up someone more wicked than they to

Isaiah

chastise them. However, after they have been chastised and return to Him, He punishes those whom He used to punish His people. This is seen in the case of Israel. Israel went astray from the Lord, so the Lord raised up Assyria, a nation that was more wicked than they, to punish them. Then later He punished Assyria. By remembering that principle, we can virtually understand the whole history of mankind from God's standpoint. Essentially, this is true right down to our days and even until the second coming of the Lord. As in this case, however, it is the Assyrians whom the Lord calls the rod of His anger.

10:6 - *"I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets."* The Assyrians would destroy Israel and Judah town by town, treading them into the mud because they were hypocritical. They honored the Lord with their lips, but their hearts were removed far from Him.

10:7 - *"Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few."* The Assyrians recognized that the Lord had called them to come against

Isaiah

Israel and Judah in particular, as acknowledged by the Assyrian king, Sennacherib. He said in Isaiah 36:10, "...The Lord said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it." Yet, they became extremely boastful and went beyond the commandment of God, bringing upon themselves God's judgment. Sennacherib then proudly says in Isaiah 10:8-9:

10:8-9 - *"For he saith, Are not my princes altogether kings? Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus?"* Here Sennacherib likens those cities that he had already conquered in Syria and Israel to Jerusalem. The cities that he mentions here which he conquered had been unable to resist him when he went against them. He completely overran them. Therefore, he proudly presumes that Jerusalem will also fall to him as these other cities did.

10:10-11 - *"As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria: Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?"* He was boastfully saying that even his princes were as kings, and that he would overrun Jerusalem as he overran Samaria.

Isaiah

10:12 - *“Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.”* The intention of the Lord was not to destroy Jerusalem through the Assyrians. As we have stated before, when the Lord had accomplished His purposes upon Mount Zion and Jerusalem, He would then judge the Assyrians because of their proud hearts that caused them to boast in their own strength.

10:13 - *“By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.”* They were attributing all their victories to their own strength; but in reality, it was God who had given them the ability to conquer these nations.

10:14 - *“And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.”* The Assyrians continued by likening their prowess over the nations to one that collects eggs. However, the Lord responds to their proud and arrogant boastings in Isaiah 10:15 by saying:

Isaiah

10:15 - *“Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.”* The Assyrians are reduced to being simply an ax, an instrument in the Lord’s hand for the sole purpose of punishing the nations and Israel in particular. As we have already mentioned, after the Lord uses a nation to punish His people when they have gone astray from Him, He then punishes with even greater severity that nation whom He has raised up as His instrument of chastisement to punish His people.

10:16 - *“Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.”* As we shall see in subsequent chapters, this judgment is going to be carried out when Assyria besieges Jerusalem.

10:17-19 - *“And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.”*

Isaiah

Now the Lord likens the Assyrians to a forest that will be consumed, leaving very few trees behind. He says that there will be so few trees left that a little child would be able to count them and write down the number of them. It is noteworthy that after the final destruction of Assyria, there was no more mention of the land by that name. Today Assyria is simply a part of modern-day Iraq.

The Remnant

Throughout the pages of holy Scripture, there is a truth that surfaces and resurfaces again. It is concerning the remnant. Although the Lord has a very large multitude of people, He purges and prunes His vineyard so that it may produce fruit, more fruit, and much fruit. This remnant may be termed the *purified portion* of the Lord's inheritance among His people. Thus, there will be a remnant after the Assyrians accomplish God's purposes upon Israel and Judah.

10:20-23 - *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall*

Isaiah

return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.” God is now going to purge the hearts of the Israelites so that they will look to Him and no longer rely on the Assyrians for help and support. They will lean upon their Beloved after they come out of the wilderness, and they will lean upon Him in truth.

The Apostle Paul quotes this passage in Romans 9:27, developing the theme of election by grace. “[Isaiah] also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant will be saved.” The characteristics of the remnant can also be seen in Zephaniah 3:12-13. It is the Lord who determines the boundaries of the nations. Therefore, He can tell His people with an assurance that they are not to fear the Assyrians, because the Lord has decided before the foundation of the world that the Assyrians will not take Zion. This is one of the main historical aspects of the Old Testament section of Isaiah (ch. 1-39).

10:24 - *“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner*

Isaiah

of Egypt.” The Lord confirms that Israel’s affliction by the Assyrians will only be for a predetermined period.

10:25 - *“For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.”* In this verse the Lord is simply saying that His indignation against Israel, manifested through the raising up of the Assyrians against them to punish them, will cease and His anger will be terminated in this destruction. However, it will not be the destruction of Israel His people, but of the Assyrians.

10:26 - *“And the Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge [a whip] for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.”* The Lord foreshadows the destruction of the Assyrians by reminding the Israelites how He helped them in the time of Gideon when He destroyed the Midianites (Jud. 7:25). In the same manner, He destroyed the Egyptians when He brought Israel across the Red Sea. In verse twenty-seven follows a prophetic declaration that concerns the method by which the Assyrians will be destroyed and their power over Israel broken.

Isaiah

10:27 - *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.”*

This is repeated in Nahum 1:13, “For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder.” This beautiful verse is often quickened by the Lord to His true believers today when they are crying out to Him because of bondages in their lives. The Lord so often speaks to them and says, “Your yoke will be broken from off your neck by the anointing.” Thus, we sing that little chorus:

“By the anointing Jesus breaks the yoke,
By the Holy Ghost and power,
Just as the prophet spoke.
This is the day of the latter rain,
God is moving in power again.
By the anointing Jesus breaks the yoke.”

Therefore, we need to major in the anointing. We need to earnestly ask the Lord to anoint us with His Spirit and with fresh oil from the throne.

Isaiah

10:28 - *“[Sennacherib] is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages.”* This refers to the road the Assyrian army took when they came against Jerusalem. They advanced from the northeast.

10:29 - *“They are gone over the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled.”* The Assyrians took up their lodging for the night at Geba, then they proceeded by Ramah onto Lachish and through Anathoth, which is only about an hour’s march from Jerusalem. The prophet Isaiah saw the Assyrian march in a vision.

10:30-31 - *“Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth. Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.”* Isaiah tells the cities and towns that were in the path of the enemies’ advance to make their cries be heard, and he himself laments for them.

10:32 - *“As yet shall he remain at Nob that day: he shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.”* Then the prophet saw the army resting at Nob the next day, a hill just north of Jerusalem overlooking the city. They were gathering strength for the last frontal attack

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against the beloved city of God. There Sennacherib shook his fist against Jerusalem. It seemed at this moment that all was lost, and that none would be able to withstand the Assyrian advance.

10:33-34 - *“Behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.”* The Lord now fights for Jerusalem and lops off the strength of the Assyrian army as one would lop off the bough of a tall tree. Later, we shall see in prophetic utterance and by historical account exactly and precisely how the Lord saved His beloved city, the mountain Zion which He loves.

CHAPTER 11

The Anointing

11:1 - *“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.”* This prophecy refers uniquely to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a descendant of David, whose father was Jesse. Great emphasis is placed in the Word of God on the fact that Jesus

Isaiah

is from the lineage of David. The Lord is also referred to as “the Branch” many times in Scripture. He is that fruitful One who brings forth an abundance of fruit, and thereby glorifies the Father.

11:2 - *“And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”* The seven anointings mentioned in verse two are known as the seven Spirits of the Lord. They are mentioned in particular in the book of Revelation as being before the throne of God (Rev. 4:5). They are the anointings of God. These seven Spirits of the Lord are depicted in the tabernacle of Moses by the candlestick which has seven lamps. These seven Spirits of the Lord are also depicted as lamps in Revelation 4:5.

This mantle of the seven Spirits of God that came upon Christ at the Jordan River (see Lk. 3:21-22, 4:17-19) is different from, and greater than, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Christ’s anointing was far greater than what the disciples received on the day of Pentecost; for the Lord received the Spirit without measure (Jn. 3:34). We must be able to understand the difference between these two experiences.

Isaiah

For example, one of the seven Spirits of God is the *spirit* of knowledge, and one of the nine gifts of the Spirit is the *word* of knowledge. There is a difference between the *spirit* of knowledge and the *word* of knowledge. Solomon is an example of someone who was given the spirit of knowledge. We see in the case of the Queen of Sheba that Solomon was able to answer any question she had because of the anointing that rested upon him. Because of the mantle that was placed upon his life, Solomon's knowledge was a continual flow. Yet, the *word* of knowledge is different.

When the gift of the word of knowledge operates, we will supernaturally know a certain fact. The gift then might not operate for a length of time before it gives us the knowledge of another fact. Sometimes we will get a revelation through the gift of knowledge, and sometimes we will not. But the *spirit* of knowledge is a continuous, abiding anointing of the knowledge of God. This is the anointing that was upon Christ. Jesus knew by the spirit of knowledge who everyone was, spiritually. John 2:24 tells us, "He knew all men." Christ even knew who Judas was, although He did not make it known to anyone else that Judas was the one who was going to betray Him.

Isaiah

Therefore, although we should seek to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and although we should covet the gifts of the Spirit, there is more of the Holy Spirit that we can receive. That is why the Apostle Paul prayed that the Ephesian believers (who were already Pentecostals and already baptized in the Holy Spirit) would receive the spirit of wisdom (Eph. 1:17). We need the anointing of the seven Spirits of God that was upon Christ to help bring the Church to full maturity in these last days. We read in Revelation 5:6 that the Lamb of God had *seven horns and seven eyes*, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. We also want to have the nature of the Lamb of God, so that the seven Spirits of God can flow through us and be sent out to minister to others.

The first of these seven Spirits with which Christ was anointed was the Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord is the anointing to preach, as it says in Isaiah 61:1, “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach.” This anointing, the Spirit of the Lord, is the centerpiece of the candlestick in Moses’ tabernacle. Then from this centerpiece anointing flows out three sets of *two’s*. The spirit of wisdom is the anointing to make right decisions and choices. The

Isaiah

Church is ordained to manifest the wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10), and therefore, we should earnestly seek the Lord for this mantle and anointing of wisdom, especially if we are to be leaders.

The third anointing is the spirit of understanding. This anointing tells us why certain things take place. This anointing helps us to understand God's ways and what lies ahead (see I Chron. 12:32, Lk. 24:45). We need this anointing to teach the Word of God. We have to understand the Word of God if we are going to teach it, and that is only possible through the spirit of understanding. The next two lamps on the candlestick are the spirit of counsel and the spirit of might. The spirit of counsel is the anointing to counsel. It is given to those who are counselors in the body of Christ. When counseling, we must never just tell people principles and recite a lot of scriptures. This is not counseling! Counseling is having the mind of Christ for each situation and telling people what God is saying to them in their particular situation.

The spirit of might is the anointing that was upon Samson when he was able to take the gates of the city of Gaza and carry them about thirty miles up to Hebron, running the whole way! This is the power and might that was upon the Lord Jesus Christ when He overturned the tables of the money lenders

Isaiah

and drove them out of the temple (Jn. 2:15). So much emphasis is always placed upon the Lord's anger here, but the emphasis should rather be placed upon the anointing of power and might that was upon Him. The sixth anointing is the spirit of knowledge. This anointing supernaturally reveals to us facts from the past, present, or future. Christ was able to know the character of Nathanael and also see him under the fig tree by the spirit of knowledge (Jn. 1:47-48).

The purpose of the seventh anointing, the spirit of the fear of the Lord, is to bring conviction, repentance, and revival. This anointing can do much more than just bring one person under conviction. This mantle can come upon a church, a town, or even an entire nation. This is what happens when a great revival comes. People are convicted of their sins, even if they do not know about Christ, and even if they have never been to church.

The saints throughout time have been clothed upon specifically, to one degree or another, with one aspect of the anointing. Samson was clothed upon with the spirit of might; and Moses, Solomon, and Daniel were renowned for their wisdom. We, too, must ask the Lord for the particular anointing that will equip us individually to accomplish the work of the ministry that He has ordained for our lives. For

Isaiah

“it is not by power, nor by might, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.” In the life of Jesus, it was only by the Spirit that He was enabled to offer Himself without spot unto God (Heb. 9:14).

11:3 - *“And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.”* These are the virtues the Heavenly Father endued His beloved Son with during His earthly ministry, enabling Him to glorify the Father and fulfill the foreordained purposes for His life and ministry. To be sensitive to the things which please God is a rare privilege that enables one to walk in the Spirit and thus fulfill, as Paul says, the righteousness of the law (Rom. 8:4). He also judged righteously, not from appearance. It was said of Him in John 2:25, “And [Christ] needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.” We must seek the Lord for this ability to judge rightly in situations, and to know how God views every situation.

11:4 - *“But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he*

Isaiah

slay the wicked.” This speaks of the millennial reign of Christ upon earth when His kingdom will be a kingdom of righteousness. It is then that He will rule with a rod of iron (see Psa. 2:9).

11:5 - *“And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”* One of the aspects of our lives, as in the life of Christ, is that we must be filled and girded with the righteousness of God (see Phil. 3:9). Matthew 5:6 says, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” Furthermore, we need to be like Christ, Abraham and Moses, who were faithful in every aspect of their lives and ministry. Christ is the Faithful and True One (Rev. 19:11). How do we become righteous and faithful? As we set our feet onto any given pathway and we continue on that pathway, the Lord will confirm us on that path and we will receive the fruits of that path. Daniel said, “[The Lord] giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding” (Dan. 2:21). Therefore, if we seek to be righteous and faithful and continue on that path day by day, the Lord will fill us with His righteousness and make us faithful.

Isaiah

The Millennial Kingdom

11:6-8 - *“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.”* The whole of creation fell under the curse when man sinned against God in the Garden of Eden. The animal kingdom took on bad natures after the Fall and became vicious. However, Paul tells us in Romans that they will also be liberated at the Lord’s second coming. In Romans 8:20-21 we read: “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” All His creatures will dwell in harmony when the Lord reigns as King in the millennium. Even the snakes will not bite people any more; and their appetites will be changed. Praise the Lord! (This is one of many proofs that we are not as yet in the millennium, because today snakes will sting you if you get too close to them).

Isaiah

11:9 - *“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”* This is repeated in Habakkuk 2:14. Today, millions of people do not know the Lord, but in the millennium the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

11:10 - *“And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.”* Here with prophetic ease and eloquence, Isaiah passes from the millennial period back to the Church Age as he declares that the Gentiles will turn to the Lord. They will enter into His spiritual rest, of which more will be said as we study Isaiah 28:11-12, which refers to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then Isaiah speaks of that which will happen to Israel before the second coming in the last days of the Church Age.

11:11-12 - *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and*

Isaiah

gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” This is what Jeremiah refers to in Jeremiah 30:3, “For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.”

Thus, as we see unfolding in our days, Israel shall become a nation again, but they shall also endure the Great Tribulation, or Jacob’s trouble, as we see in Jeremiah 30:4-7. Likewise, Isaiah continues to pronounce the second gathering of Israel. The first gathering of Israel occurred after the fall of Babylon with the decree of Cyrus and the return under Zerubbabel. (Later Ezra and Nehemiah called it the *Restoration Period*). However, just as the first restoration, it will take place in successive steps. In the first restoration, there were three main returns to Israel. The first group was under Jeshua and Zerubbabel, the second group was in the time of Ezra, and the third group came with Nehemiah.

The second restoration of Israel will also take place in successive steps. The first step was in 1948 when Israel became a nation again. Since then there have been waves of immigrants returning to Israel. Yet at the very end of this dispensation, we will see a restoration of all the twelve tribes of

Isaiah

Israel. This will then lead to the affliction of the Philistines (or the Palestinians as they are called today), as well as Edom, Moab, and Ammon, which is the modern day Hashemite kingdom of Jordan.

11:13-14 - *“The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.”* Thus, Judah and Ephraim (Israel) will be one stick in the Lord’s hand in the millennium (cf. Ezek. 37:16-22). They will be one nation again, and their king, David, will rule over them. Furthermore, there will ensue the punishment of Egypt.

11:15 - *“And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod.”* The Nile River flows from basically two countries—Uganda and Ethiopia. The Blue and the White Nile join, and then, just before it runs into the Mediterranean Sea, it breaks up into seven main streams. God says that this is where He will smite the Egyptians.

Isaiah

11:16 - *“And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.”* In the last days many Jews will be taken captive again to Assyria, but when the Lord comes, He will restore them back to their land. We see all things culminating after the second coming. I make this point of after the second coming, because President Carter, President Sadat, and Mr. Begin misread at the Camp David Accords the time structure of the flowing together of Assyria, Israel, and Egypt. (This is developed more fully in chapter 19:23-25.) Thus, at the second coming of the Lord there will be the punishment of the nations that have afflicted Israel during the Great Tribulation and then the reconciliation of these three nations—Assyria, Egypt and Israel.

CHAPTER 12

The Songs of Zion's Deliverance

12:1 - *“And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.”* This song will be sung at the second coming when Israel will be restored. The anger of the Lord that came principally at the time of the Assyrian,

Isaiah

Babylonian and Roman periods will have dissipated. In the place of His wrath will be His comfort. The purpose of the Great Tribulation is to purge Israel of her sins. Once they have been purged, the Lord will comfort them.

12:2 - *“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.”* Thus, they will rejoice in the salvation that the Lord Jehovah brings to them from all their enemies. United in spiritual matrimony, He becomes their song.

12:3 - *“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”* The salvation that the Church alone has known during these two thousand years of grace will be reopened to Israel. Paul declares this in Romans 11:25-26. “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

Isaiah

12:4-6 - *“And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”* Therefore, joyously and triumphantly Israel will sing as they are united once again in that bond of holy spiritual matrimony with their Messiah whom they sought after, but rejected. Now with all spiritual blindness removed, the scales fall off their eyes as they behold their Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. They become true “Charismatics” as they cry and shout, “Praise the Lord!” with all the redeemed from every tongue, tribe, and nation. Oh, what a glorious day that will be. This concludes part three: The Book of Immanuel.

Part Four

PROPHECIES AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONS - (13:1 - 23:18)

In Isaiah chapters 13-23, there is a series of prophecies directed against foreign nations. There are basically nine foreign nations upon whom judgment is pronounced. Also included in these eleven chapters are judgments pronounced by the Lord against His own nation, Israel. These nations must

Isaiah

not only be viewed historically, in that they once existed, but also as nations who will rise again in the last days. These nations are the traditional enemies of Israel throughout all generations. In the last days, we will see them rise up one final time against Jerusalem.

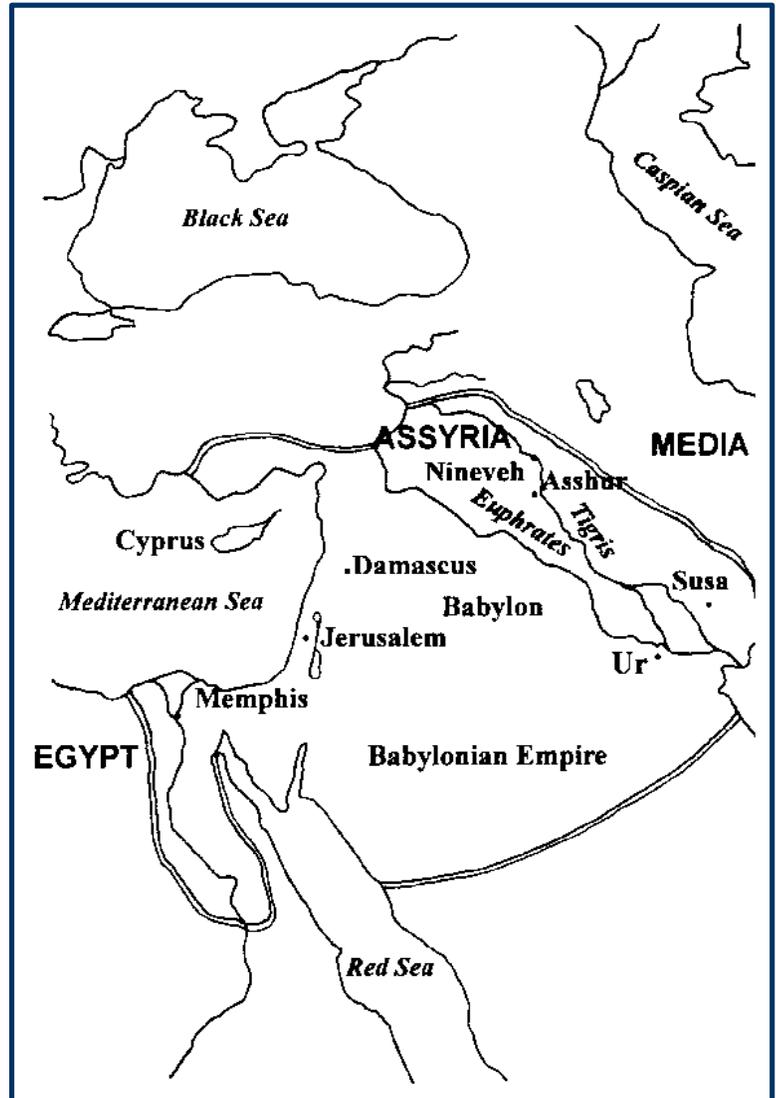
CHAPTER 13

Babylon

13:1 - *“The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.”* One of the remarkable aspects of the prophecies of Isaiah is his unusual ability to predict the destinies of nations. When he pronounced these prophecies concerning Babylon, it was only a colony of the Assyrian Empire. Therefore, Isaiah’s prophecies concerning Babylon as a great empire are all the more remarkable. He saw all this happen years before it came to pass.

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

(626 B.C. - 539 B.C.)



Isaiah

This is like the Apostle John, who was shown the events of the last days while he was on the isle of Patmos. I believe with all of my heart that this ministry of the Holy Spirit is for us today. God desires to show us the things that are going to come to pass upon the earth. The Lord Jesus said in John 16:13, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.” Isaiah was actually watching these events take place before his eyes. That is why he could prophesy with such assurance and authority. Television programs can show us the past and the present, but they cannot show us the future. That is a privilege left only to God and to His saints.

Certainly in times past Babylon had been a mighty empire, primarily under the infamous Nimrod, its founder (Gen. 10:9-10). Then in the Abrahamic era, it came into great prominence once again under Hammurabbi, the famous law giver and codifier. While in school, many of us probably had to learn about Hammurabbi’s code. This was found in its entirety at Susa in 1901. It consists of 282 laws which are engraved upon a stele. Today it is preserved in the Louvre in Paris, France.

Isaiah

After Hammurabbi, the Babylonian Empire declined and eventually became a colony of Assyria at the time Isaiah was prophesying. However, the importance of Babylon is that spiritual Babylon arises again in the Word of God in the last days as the whore, Mystery Babylon the Great (see Rev. 17). Therefore, much of what is depicted in these next two chapters refers to its destruction in the last days. The account of Babylon's destruction commences with a very loud cry to the nations that will be used of God to overthrow her.

13:2-3 - *“Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.”* The sanctified ones are those nations under the command of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia. They were ordained and set apart by God to come against Babylon. This was fulfilled in October of 539 B.C. when they went into the gates of the nobles of Babylon.

13:4-5 - *“The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They*

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come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land." This is really a sublime description of the nations coming to enroll under the banner of Jehovah, so that they may go into the gates of Babylon to bring about her predetermined destruction. We see the armies descending, principally from the mountains of Persia, upon the lowlands of Babylon.

13:6-8 - *"Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames."* In these verses Isaiah depicts the terrible anguish of the defenders and inhabitants of Babylon as these armies descend upon them for their ruin.

13:9-10 - *"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the*

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moon shall not cause her light to shine.” The Lord’s wrath is coming to lay their land desolate. It will be like a starless and moonless night and a darkened day. All nature will seemingly be clothed upon with darkness because of the Lord’s wrath. The Lord then returns to the original purpose of the manifestation of His anger.

13:11-12 - *“And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.”* Because of the evil of mankind, God will punish and bring down the proud. So few of the heathen will be left that men will be more precious than fine gold because of their rarity and scarcity. Ophir is a land that is famous for its gold (see I Kgs. 10:11, Psa. 45:9).

13:13 - *“Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.”* Here the Lord speaks in the same vein as He does through the prophet Joel in Joel 2:31-32, and in Hebrews 12:26-27, concerning the last days

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before His second coming. Although we are studying the judgment upon historical Babylon, there is a sense that it foreshadows the judgment upon the latter-day Babylon.

13:14 - *“And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.”* Then all the Babylonians, stripped of their leader, will flee every man to his own house.

13:15-16 - *“Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword. Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.”* None shall escape from the slaughter. This passage coincides with the prayer of the Psalmist in Psalm 137:8-9 concerning the judgment upon Babylon. “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.”

Specifically now, the Medes are mentioned as the primary leaders of the assault against Babylon. This is reiterated in several other prophecies relative to this period. The Medes, who form part of

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modern day Iran, were feared for their cruelty. Isaiah declares that they will destroy Babylon even before Babylon becomes a dominant power.

13:17-18 - *“Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.”* People take after their leaders and take on their characteristics. Cyrus had no interest in these earthly things, such as silver and gold, and so his people were not interested in them either. The Babylonians offered them silver and gold to spare their lives, but that did not mean anything to the Medes and the Persians.

They just killed them. They killed the women and children. But that is exactly what Babylon did to the Jews when they besieged Jerusalem. They sought out with candles those who were hiding in caves and underground and slew them. That is why the Psalmist, who wrote during the Babylonian captivity, could speak with such assurance (Psa. 137:8-9). He had Isaiah’s prophecy before him and he knew it would come to pass.

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13:19 - *“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”* Then the complete destruction of Babylon is foretold. Babylon was the glory of kingdoms. Its hanging gardens were one of the seven wonders of the world. It was a magnificent city. It had over a hundred gates. All the streets were straight. The River Euphrates flowed through it. No expense had been spared to build Babylon. They had captured all the surrounding nations and they brought their wealth back to Babylon to lavish it all on the building of this marvelous city.

13:20-22 - *“It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs [or wild goats] shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons [sea-serpents or jackals] in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.”* The Medes and Persians, although they

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captured Babylon in 539 B.C., did not totally destroy Babylon. The destruction of Babylon as a city did not occur until much later in history.

Babylon was destroyed in stages over a period of years. Darius Hystaspes eventually lowered the walls as a punishment for their revolt against the Persians. Xerxes (also called Ahasuerus in Esther 1:1), the husband of Esther, destroyed all their temples. Then finally through neglect the Grecians left it in ruins when they assumed responsibility for it after their defeat of the Persians during the conquests of Alexander the Great.

CHAPTER 14

The Lord's Mercy Upon His Chosen People

14:1-3 - *“For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose*

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captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.”

Interspersed between the prophecies against Babylon, there is this ode of hope for Israel. The Lord in these first three verses is assuring Israel of His love for them. If ever a nation needed to know that God loved them, it was Israel, because no nation has ever suffered like Israel. Thus, there is the promise of restoration to their land after the Babylonian captivity.

However, within this delightful interlude is a sense that it also foreshadows a far greater return after the captivity just prior to the second coming. The Lord will greatly bless Israel, and the other nations who oppressed them will become their servants. This has to apply to the millennium because the Israelites did not rule over their oppressors after they came back from Babylonian captivity. This will be fulfilled in the millennium. These prophecies are remarkable because when Isaiah prophesied them, Israel was in their own land. But Isaiah is looking ahead to the return of Israel from Babylonian

Isaiah

captivity. Now the prophetic flow returns to the denunciation of Babylon, and in particular, against the king of Babylon, who we will see later is a personification of Satan himself.

14:4-6 - *“That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth.”* While the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, was the oppressor of the nations, the Lord broke the power of his successors through the assassination of Belshazzar during the night of the fall of Babylon (see Daniel chapter 5). No one came to Babylon’s aid.

14:7 - *“The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing.”* There was such rest and rejoicing among the nations of the earth when Babylon fell and the Medes and Persians took over.

14:8 - *“Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller [a woodsman with an ax] is come up against us.”* Now Isaiah speaks in figurative language, which has always been a part of the forms of expression and communication in the Middle East,

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especially of the nations on the borders of the Mediterranean. The inhabitants of the lands are alluded to as fir trees and cedars. When Babylon was destroyed, all the world was at rest because Cyrus was a good and merciful ruler.

14:9-11 - *“Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.”* Now Isaiah is speaking of, not just the king of Babylon, but Satan. Here we see the end of the last king of Babylon, Belshazzar, but we also see in this prophecy the end of the Antichrist as he falls into hell (see Rev. 19:19-20). The inhabitants thereof are amazed that one who was so boastful and brought so much havoc to mankind had become like one of the kings of the earth who have themselves fallen into eternal damnation. Now becoming more and more direct and specific, we have clear identification of this spiritual king of Babylon as no less than Lucifer himself.

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14:12 - *“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!”* Lucifer means “son of the morning.” That was Satan’s title before he rebelled. The Antichrist, energized by Satan, will weaken the nations in the last days. He will be able to make war against the saints and prevail, and even slay Moses and Elijah (Rev. 11:7-11). But then he will be cast down into hell.

14:13-14 - *“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”* Now we have what are termed the five “I wills” of Lucifer. They reveal his terrible pride, presumption, and blasphemy in seeking to take the place of the Almighty Himself. These are the things that the Antichrist will echo when he comes. Thus, we have an understanding of the pride that caused Lucifer to fall. The beautiful son of the morning, who became Satan, gives us insight into the last days when the Antichrist will speak great things against the Most High (see Dan. 7:25).

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Lucifer was the one who led worship in heaven, but he then wanted to receive that worship which belongs to God alone, and that was the reason for his fall. Ezekiel also had a revelation concerning the fall of Lucifer (Ezek. 28). Lucifer looked inward at his own beauty and became puffed up in pride. This is something we must guard against even in our own lives. We must always have an outward, upward vision. Our eyes must be filled with God, and we must always attribute any success we enjoy to God and God alone.

The danger in the ministry, and in life itself, is to look inward and look at what we think we have accomplished. We must not look at what we have accomplished, but we must realize that it is only by grace. We must say with the Lord Jesus Christ, “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do” (Jn. 5:19). We cannot do anything without God. It is not the weapon that matters (a jawbone of an ass or a sling), but in whose hand the weapon is placed. As we put ourselves in the hands of God, He can accomplish great things through our lives. However, if God were to remove His hand from our lives, we could do nothing and we would be of no value at all.

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14:15-16 - *“Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms.”* Yet, the end of Satan and the Antichrist is clearly stated in these verses. Many of those leaders and warriors that had great preeminence during their lifetimes will also be brought down to hell. We have confirmation of this in Ezekiel 31 concerning the fall of the leaders and warriors of Assyria. In a vision, I have personally seen some of this century’s most renowned leaders in hell. Satan’s destruction is declared in Ezekiel 28:11-19. The covering cherub will be brought down to the pit. These next few verses apply to the king of Babylon as well as to the Antichrist:

14:17-20 - *“That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.”* Historically, King Nebuchadnezzar

imprisoned his son and heir, Evil Merodach. His son ruled in Nebuchadnezzar's place during the time that he was being judged by God and was transformed into a beast (see Dan. 4:33-34). During this space of seven years, Evil Merodach reigned in a riotous manner.

However, when Nebuchadnezzar returned to the throne, Evil Merodach was placed in prison by his father. Eventually, when his father died and he succeeded him to the throne, Evil Merodach cast out the body of his father from his grave to avenge the years of imprisonment and to show spite to his father's memory. It appears that this will also be the fate of the Antichrist. His carcass will be thrown out of its grave because he will destroy the land and devour the people.

14:21-22 - *“Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord.”*

These verses apply in particular to the king of Babylon and his seed because the Antichrist will have no affiliation with women (Dan. 11:37). Therefore, he will have no natural seed. Historically, this was the case because the royal seed was slain at the capture of Babylon by the Medes and Persians.

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14:23 - *“I will also make it a possession for the bittern [or owls], and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom [broom] of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts.”* As we have previously mentioned, Babylon itself suffered in several stages almost total annihilation in later years. This culminated with its neglect by the Seleucids, who were responsible for Babylon after the death of Alexander the Great.

The Assyrians

14:24-28 - *“The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.”* Turning to the Assyrian epoch, which preceded the Babylonians, the Lord declares that the

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Assyrian yoke upon Israel will be broken. This was given in the last year of Ahaz (715 B.C.) and it was fulfilled some fifteen years later in the reign of Hezekiah his son.

Palestina (or the Philistines)

14:29 - *“Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent’s root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.”* Now the prophet turns to the Philistines, the neighbor country of Israel. They have been the thorn in Israel’s side throughout the centuries and still are even today. Here the Philistines started to rejoice because the rod, referring to Uzziah, who had kept the Philistines in check was dead.

In verse twenty-nine, the Philistines are told that out of the common snake there would come forth a very dangerous snake in the form of Hezekiah. And from him, would later come a flying dragon in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The *Targum* (the Aramaic translation of the Old Testament) translates verse twenty-nine like this, “For from the sons of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah and His works shall be as the flying serpent.”

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However, this could also signify that the serpent is the nation of Assyria. Assyria was replaced by the Babylonians, who came out of the root of Assyria. Babylon was a colony of Assyria before it rose to prominence. Finally, the dragon, or the Antichrist, will come forth from spiritual Babylon.

14:30 - *“And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.”* Verse thirty signifies that the poor of God's people will trust in the Messiah, and He will slay the root of the Philistines (the Palestinians) with famine and He will slay their remnant.

14:31 - *“Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times.”* The Philistines will howl and cry because Israel will utterly destroy them (see Isa. 11:14).

14:32 - *“What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.”* It is the Lord who will finally establish Zion, and the poor of the people will trust in Zion's King.

CHAPTER 15

Moab

The nation of Moab was conceived by an illicit relationship between Lot and his eldest daughter after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:30-38). When we think of the life of Lot, we see a train of tragedies which ensued from this righteous life. Two nations, Moab and Ammon, who have been a thorn in the side of Israel throughout their existence, should in actuality never have been born. They comprise today the kingdom of Jordan. As we go through the Bible, we see whole families who have brought nothing but shame throughout all generations.

Regretfully, we find the same situation today. Often I think it would have been better if some had never been born, or at least had no children, so that they did not pass on their traits to their offspring. Can we do anything if we are begotten of an evil seed? Yes. Ruth was different, and yet she was a Moabitess. Meet God and ask Him to remove the evil of our forefathers from our lives so that we do not propagate that evil seed.

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15:1 - *“The burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence.”* With deep pathos, Isaiah declares this burden concerning the destruction by the Assyrians of the two principal cities of Moab in the same night.

15:2-5 - *“He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off. In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: on the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, weeping abundantly. And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard even unto Jahaz: therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him. My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, an heifer of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction.”* It is almost as though Isaiah prophesies unwillingly that such judgments should come upon those who are so close to Israel in relationship, remembering that the blood of Moab flowed through the veins of David by virtue of his great-great grandmother, Ruth. Therefore, the blood

Isaiah

of Moab also flowed through the veins of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David. Isaiah says in verse five that he will cry for Moab.

15:6-9 - *“For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing. Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows. For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beerelim. For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.”* The essence of this chapter along with the succeeding one, which in reality forms the whole prophecy against Moab, is its destruction by Assyria. Three years are mentioned (Isa. 15:5, 16:14). While this would be the time period between the death of Ahaz and the Assyrian invasion of Moab, it is possible that there is also another prophetic interpretation. This interpretation would revolve around the time of the Antichrist, because it is written in Daniel 11:41 that Edom, Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon will escape the King of the North, who is the

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Antichrist. However, as we read in Isaiah chapter 63, three years later the Lord Himself will wreak vengeance upon them at His second coming.

The remaining verses of chapter fifteen are self explanatory. They refer to locations in Moab that will be overrun. The Moabites will be forced to flee. The *lions* in verse nine speak of the Assyrians, Sennacherib being alluded to as “*the old lion*” in Nahum 2:11.

CHAPTER 16

16:1 - “*Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.*” This chapter opens with a continuing saga concerning the judgments of God upon Moab. The alternate rendering of this verse gives a clearer understanding of the purpose and intention of the prophet. The NIV translates it, “Send lambs as tribute to the ruler of the land, from Sela, across the desert, to the mount of the Daughter of Zion.”

The prophet is saying that during the reign of Mesha, king of Moab, a lamb tribute was paid to the kings of Samaria, but this ceased in the days of Ahab (II Kgs.3:4-5). To avoid judgment, Isaiah implores them now to pay the tribute to the ruler of Judah at Mount Zion; for the security of Moab

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depends on in its obedience to Judah. However, this also contains a truth that applies to our lives. We should send our tithes and offerings to the church for our protection. Moab, however, rebelled against the tribute and therefore was coming under judgment.

16:2 - *“For it shall be, that, as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon.”* The women of Moab, therefore, will flee from the enemy and they will seek to come to Judah, for the fords of Arnon are at the extremity of the territory of Moab as one enters Israel.

16:3-5 - *“Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land. And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.”* Here the prophet is crying out to Judah to take care of the fugitives from Moab who are fleeing from the Assyrians. There is the promise that the throne of King David will be established

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in righteousness, and one will sit upon that throne judging righteously. Ultimately, this speaks of the Lord Jesus Himself, the righteous Judge and King. However, it also refers to the immediate historical setting of those two righteous kings, Hezekiah and Josiah. They judged righteously and their thrones were established in mercy.

16:6 - *“We have heard of the pride of Moab; he is very proud: even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: but his lies shall not be so.”* The last section of this passage refers to the sins of Moab, and his just judgment by the Assyrians. It was the tremendous pride of Moab that was the root cause for his terrible punishments; and for that reason the Lord lifts up the Assyrians against him. Pride so often enters into those who have sinned and yet have not repented of their sin. They become proud of the wicked things that they are doing, and even laugh and rejoice in them.

16:7-8 - *“Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye mourn; surely they are stricken. For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come even unto Jazer, they wandered through the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, they are gone*

Isaiah

over the sea.” Here we have a description of the mourning of Moab because of this invasion. “The lords of the heathen” refer to the kings of the Assyrians who have broken Moab. In this case, Moab is likened to a vine that was once flourishing, but is now destroyed.

16:9-11 - *“Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen. And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease. Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.”* Kir-haresh is a town in Moab. Here the prophet experiences no joy when contemplating the destruction of Moab, the traditional enemy of Israel. This is in accordance with the attitude of the godly in Proverbs 24:17, “Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.”

16:12-14 - *“And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail. This is the word that the Lord hath*

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spoken concerning Moab since that time. But now the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant shall be very small and feeble.” Although Moab becomes weary with his sin and seeks to pray to his idols, he will not prevail.

Thus will it ever be with the wicked. The end of the matter will be that Moab will be greatly reduced and his remnant (those who survive these chastisements) will be very few in number.

CHAPTER 17

This chapter primarily concerns God’s judgments upon the alliance of Syria and Ephraim (or Israel), the Northern Kingdom. It goes back in time to the third year of Ahaz, while the previous prophecies were fulfilled in the times of Hezekiah.

17:1-2 - *“The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap. The cities of Aroer are forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid.”* Damascus is the capital city of Syria, and it is believed to be the oldest

city in the world. The reason for the judgments upon Syria at this time was that there were, according to the historians of the day, 365 streets in Damascus and each street had its own idol.

The initial judgment upon Damascus was accomplished in the third year of Ahaz by the Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser III. However, to call Damascus *a ruinous heap* would make us tend to believe that this also refers to future judgments in the last days upon Damascus, because Tiglath-Pileser III could not have reduced the city to this condition. The two cities of Aroer are found upon the east bank of Jordan and belonged to Gad and Reuben. They were included in this devastation.

17:3 - *“The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts.”* Thus, the Lord declares that both Ephraim and Syria will evaporate, even as also the glory does from Israel. They shall cease for that time in history from being kingdoms and powers due to the Assyrian invasion.

17:4-5 - *“And in that day it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and*

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reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.” The poetic terminology here portrays the rich valley of Rephaim that is filled with ears of wheat; but the gleaner, the one who comes after, only finds a few ears of corn. Therefore, Israel, that was once known for its prosperity and greatness, will be greatly reduced to just a few people.

17:6-8 - *“Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel. At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel. And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images.”* When the Lord has judged Israel, they will no longer have confidence in their idols, but rather they will turn to the Lord who created them. The purpose of judgment is to turn the people of God back to Him. It is a fact that Israel has not worshipped idols since its return from Babylonian captivity. God purified Israel of idolatry in Babylon.

In order to purify Jacob of deception, the Lord sent him to his uncle Laban, who is considered to be the arch-deceiver. In order to purify Israel from idolatry, the Lord sent them into Babylon, the mother

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of idolatry, and they were purified there. So often, if we have a problem in a certain area of our life, the Lord will put us in a captivity. He will put us alongside someone who has our problem, but their problem is magnified ten times. We then get so sick of that problem in their life that it purifies us of that same iniquity. When it is dealt with, we can go on our way. Of course, the ideal solution is to get our sins purified out of our lives in prayer, but so few of us learn our lessons that way.

17:9-10 - *“In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation. Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange [or foreign] slips [branches or twigs used for engrafting].”* Returning now to the prognosis of coming judgments, the prophet declares that there will be a strong forsaking in the land. Israel will become desolate.

However, there is also another thought here that is important. Israel will be engrafted with *strange slips*, which are the Gentiles, or the Church. (See Romans 11:17, 24).

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17:11 - *“In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.”* Judgment upon man and field will be the result of turning their backs on God. They will plant their seed as at other times, but the harvest will be small. This is a truth that is often repeated in the Word of God. When God judges a nation, He also judges the land. That is what we are seeing in the United States of America today. The land is being judged because of the wickedness of its inhabitants. Oh, may the godly cry out for revival fires to begin burning throughout this nation in order to turn it back to God!

17:12-14 - *“Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. And behold at eventide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.”* Now the prophet turns to the Lord’s judgments upon those who have been used by Him to punish His people, Israel. This is consistently the theme of holy

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Scripture. The Lord's anger comes upon those whom He uses for the chastisement of His own, whether it be nations or individuals. As we will see later, this is particularly the case with Assyria and Babylon. Both nations were completely wasted by God. Even until this day, their capital cities of Nineveh and Babylon lie in ruins. Assyria punished Israel, and then it was destroyed by Babylon, which in turn was destroyed by Persia. Persia was then destroyed by Greece, which was in turn destroyed by Rome. In the last days there will arise the ten kings, who will reign in the confines of the old Roman empire, and the Antichrist will emerge from this area and he will afflict Israel (see Dan. 2:42, 7:7-8, 20-27). They will in turn be destroyed by the Lord Himself when He comes in judgment. History repeats itself.

CHAPTER 18

Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a land that is an enigma. It is also mentioned in the scriptures in Psalms 68:31, "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." This was a favorite text of the late Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, who had it engraved on the reverse side of a medal

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that he was prone to give to visitors. When Italy invaded his country in 1936, he fled to England where his daughters and granddaughters studied at the Swansea Bible college under Rees Howells. The Emperor claimed his lineage came from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. The conversion of the Ethiopians dates back to the time of Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:27.

However, the Ethiopians will also align themselves with the Antichrist in the last days and swear their allegiance to him (see Dan. 11:43). Therefore, Ethiopia is full of mixture. At times it will come against Israel and at other times it will support Israel. It seems that in the last days Ethiopia will go with the Antichrist, but will seemingly stretch out its hands to God in the millennium. It is a land of mixture, and today it is very anti-Christian.

18:1-3 - *“Woe to the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes [papyrus boats] upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled! All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and*

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when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.” This chapter provoked much discussion when my wife and I were in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia while we were being entertained by several missionaries to that region of Africa. Their argument was that the “*peeled and scattered*” people, referred to in Isaiah 18:2, are those who inhabited the lower regions of Sudan and parts of Eritrea. This is certainly a strong possibility when one considers first the historical aspect, and then the geographical aspect of the area.

Historically, Ethiopia has been associated with Egypt over many centuries. When divided between the North and South Kingdoms, the Southern Kingdom was at times ruled over by the Ethiopians (see II Kgs. 19:9). We must understand that the goal and intent of the northern kingdoms was always to conquer the Southern Kingdom (Egypt). The Assyrians came down into Egypt several times. The Babylonians also came against Egypt. Then later on the Persians and Greeks also led campaigns against Egypt. At this time, during the twenty-fifth dynasty, the Ethiopians and Egyptians resisted the Assyrian advance during the invasion by Esarhaddon, and later his son, Ashurbanipal. Their notable kings were Shabaka and Taharqa.

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Geographically, the Blue Nile has its source in the central highlands of Ethiopia, joining the White Nile near Khartoum. Thus, the vessels of bulrushes, or papyrus, mentioned in Isaiah 18:2 would be very appropriate, since in those days that was the main means of transportation on the Nile River.

The theme of this chapter is that the Ethiopian Empire is thrown into great confusion because of the impending invasion by the Assyrians, and their ambassadors are going throughout their domains with warnings. The land is described as one that the rivers have spoiled, which refers to the overflow at the flood stages of the Nile and her tributaries.

At this time, both parts of the Egyptian kingdom, the north and the south, were governed by the Ethiopians. The initial invasion was in the time of Sennacherib, during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. However, successive kings of Assyria, notably Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, carried out extensive incursions into Egypt and captured a lot of territory. Nevertheless, as we have already mentioned, the Ethiopians were able to mount counteroffensives and protect some of their land.

18:4-6 - *“For so the Lord said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For afore the harvest, when*

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the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches. They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.” The Lord said He would quietly retire and allow this invasion of Egypt and Ethiopia to take its course. The poetic language speaks of the birds of the air making their feast upon the cadavers of the slain in the summer and the beasts of the earth ravaging them in the wintertime.

18:7 - *“In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion.”* Certainly, Egypt became a haven for the teachings of Jehovah during the time of the translation of the Old Testament into the Greek language (the Septuagint version) in Alexandria in the third century B.C. This translation made it possible for everyone in the Grecian empire at that time to read the scriptures in their language, because Greek was the common language.

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However, there appears to be a deeper eschatological fulfillment of this in the millennial reign of Christ upon earth. Will Ethiopia finally turn in that day to the Lord? We must wait and see, but it appears as though they will; for we are told in verse seven that they will bring a present to the Lord in Mount Zion in the millennium.

CHAPTER 19

Egypt

In chapter nineteen, the Lord speaks specifically concerning the impending judgments upon Egypt. In the previous chapter He was dealing with Ethiopia, which occupied Egypt for a time during the twenty-fifth dynasty.

19:1 - *“The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.”* It is interesting that the idols of Egypt are mentioned here as trembling before the Lord. The Apostle Paul stated that those who worship idols worship demons (I Cor. 10:19-20). Therefore, it was

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demons that the Egyptians were worshipping that were trembling, since the Lord was not only going to judge the Egyptians, but also those demons. This was also true when the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt in Exodus 12:12. "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord."

19:2-4 - *"And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts."* The Lord caused the Egyptians to fight against one another, resulting in the overthrow of the Egyptian dynasty. This took place between 695 and 670 B.C. The kingdoms of upper and lower Egypt fought, resulting in Psammetichus of Ethiopia gaining control. He is the cruel king referred to in verse four. He reigned from 664-610 B.C. and was succeeded by his son Necho,

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who reigned from 610-595 B.C. He renewed the project of Ramaases-Miami to construct the Suez Canal. He tore away 120,000 natives from their homes, sending them to wear out their lives through forced labor. His son, Hophra, reigned after him (589-570 B.C.). The grandson of Hophra, Psammetichus III, was overthrown by a revolt in 525 B.C., bringing an end to the hateful government of the family of Psammetichus.

19:5-7 - *“And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags [papyrus or weeds] shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.”* Then a further natural tragedy is declared. The Nile will dry up. Thus, the papyrus industry, which Egypt depended upon for its exports, would be ruined. This would also affect the fishermen and the weavers.

19:8-10 - *“The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle [hooks] into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish. Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks [fine white linen], shall be confounded. And they shall be broken in the*

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purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish.” Thus, through the Lord drying up the Nile, the economy of Egypt would be severely affected.

19:11-14 - *“Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are they? where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt. The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof. The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.”* Not only were the basic industries of Egypt to be reduced, but also the administration of the land as a whole would be affected by the Lord mingling a perverse spirit that caused the governing princes, the counselors of Pharaoh, to err in judgment. Zoan was the main headquarters of Egypt, and the headquarters of Goshen, where the children of Israel were held captive in the time of the Exodus (cf. Psa. 78:43; Isa. 30:4).

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19:15-16 - *“Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do. In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shaketh over it.”* The whole economy was going to dry up. Because of all these disasters, the work force would literally have nothing to do. Added to this, they would be threatened by Judah, or to be more precise, they would tremble like women because they will acknowledge that Jehovah has accomplished all these desolations upon them.

19:17 - *“And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he hath determined against it.”* Now follows an event that was literally fulfilled in the time of Ptolemaeus Philometor in about 160 B.C. This event took place during the Syrian reign of terror by Onias IV. Onias IV was the son of the High Priest Onias III, who emigrated to Egypt. Ptolemaeus Philometor showed these prophecies to Pharaoh and then obtained permission to build a Jewish Temple at Heliopolis (near Cairo). The Septuagint version of the Old Testament was translated at this time, and certainly the Jewish religion flourished in Egypt for at least 200 years.

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19:18-21 - *“In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction. In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.”* All this was initially fulfilled during the time of Ptolemaeus Philometer, whom we must regard as their promised savior referred to in verse twenty. He certainly opened up the way of truth to the Egyptians. However, we must regard the next verse as coming at a later period in history.

19:22 - *“And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.”* We know that at the beginning of the Church Age one of the bastions of truth for the Gospel was Egypt, and Alexandria in particular. However, after some 600 years, the Egyptians no longer walked in the ways of God. The Lord then

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smote them through the Moslem hordes in A.D. 640. Yet, there is a promise that He will heal them. Today, there are approximately six million Christians among a population of fifty million in Egypt. Yet, we believe that the Lord will cause Egypt as a nation to return to Him (in the millennium).

19:23-25 - *“In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.”* This will come to pass, not in our days (the Church Age), but when the Lord returns to rule and reign in Jerusalem. My wife and I have had the privilege of ministering in Egypt on several occasions over the years. On our trips to Egypt, it has been interesting to see that when we come to gatherings of believers, we have been presented with mementos which have inscribed on them the little phrase from verse twenty-five, *“Blessed be Egypt My people.”* Truly, they are a precious people, and we pray that the Lord will give them revival before the time of trouble that will come upon the Middle East.

CHAPTER 20

Egypt

The book of Isaiah is not written in chronological order. Therefore, the chapters do not necessarily follow in chronological sequence. This is especially true concerning chapters nineteen and twenty. We are now directed back in time to the reign of Sargon, king of Assyria. He took over the throne when Shalmaneser V died, while besieging Samaria in 722-721 B.C. Sargon, who was the captain of the army and not the legitimate heir, seized the throne. He captured Samaria in that same year.

20:1 - *“In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it.”* Sargon was pursuing the Assyrian plan to subjugate Egypt. This included the plan to take Ashdod, because the Philistines had joined with Egypt to threaten the Assyrian positions in the western part of the Middle East. It is possible that this campaign took about three years because in previous sieges Ashdod had held out for considerable periods of time.

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20:2-4 - *“At the same time spake the Lord by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.”* Isaiah then becomes a sign to the Egyptians of the impending Assyrian invasion of their country. During the twenty-fifth dynasty, when the Ethiopians and the Egyptians were allied, the Assyrian invasion began. The whole purpose was to show the Judeans the futility of relying upon the Ethiopians or the Egyptians when the Assyrians came through their land in the reign of Sennacherib.

20:5-6 - *“And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?”* This is the Lord’s warning to

all that would go down to Egypt (the world) for help. May we remember, too, that our help comes only from the Lord. Amen!

CHAPTER 21

The Fall of Babylon Foretold

21:1-2 - *“The burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land. A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.”* This poetic description of the invasion of the land of the Chaldeans by the Medes and Persians depicts them coming from the south across the desert from “a terrible land.” This is the general Biblical description of the land of Persia. The Persians at this time were looked upon as little more than cruel barbarians.

So that we may be correct in our analysis of the fall of Babylon, it appears that the invasion of Babylon involved several armies. Some came from the desert region, while those under the

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immediate command of Cyrus came from the north along the Diyala River where it joins the Tigris. Here Cyrus and his army crossed over and descended upon the lowlands of Babylon. The armies who came from the desert region are those that the prophet Isaiah saw in this particular vision. However, Isaiah does see the armies of Cyrus take Babylon, as he records in Isaiah 44:28.

21:3-4 - *“Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.”*

The destruction is so great that the prophet foresees that he is like a woman in travail. Babylon was to be rewarded with that which they had done to others. We read in Psalm 137:8-9: “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.”

21:5 - *“Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.”* There seems to be a command here from the Lord to the defenders of Babylon to eat and drink and to give but a cursory thought to the armies that are coming against them. This would

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coincide with the prophecy of Jeremiah that drunkenness, sent from the Lord, would overcome the defenders of Babylon (Jer. 51:39,57). This we see, too, in Daniel's account of the last night when Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians in Daniel 5.

Then they are called to arise and anoint their shields. Soldiers did this at the moment of battle by pouring oil upon their leather shields so that the strokes of the enemies swords would slide off. The Medes and Persians have now pierced the defenses of the city, and because the princes of Babylon are in a drunken stupor they are forced to face the invaders unprepared. Consequently, they are taken by surprise and defeated.

21:6-7 - *“For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed.”* The Lord is speaking prophetically to Isaiah in verses six and seven. Here the watchman is obviously one who watches spiritually, because this event takes place long after the lifetime of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah

Isaiah sees the army of the Medes and Persians in battle array moving toward Babylon. The Persians used these animals mentioned in verse six for diverse reasons. Cyrus defeated the Lydians by means of a great number of camels. Darius Hystaspes used asses when he fought and conquered the Scythians.

21:8-9 - *“And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights. And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.”* What obviously happens is that this watchman has seen the Persian army moving stealthily forward. The army has entered Babylon, and now much later there comes a small number of troops who are to convey the news to the outposts of the empire that Babylon has fallen.

21:10 - *“O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.”* Thus, it is a message of hope to the children of Israel. The

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children of Israel were crushed like corn upon the threshing floor of Babylon. Now in turn, as Micah 4:13 declares, the daughter of Zion will thresh her enemies.

Edom

21:11-12 - *“The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come.”* Dumah can mean “deep silence,” or the land of the dead. The inquiry here concerns Seir, which is the mountain of Edom (Gen. 32:3). The prophet is asked concerning the future, and he replies by saying, “When the morning comes it will still be night,” as though there is no hope for the land because of the judgments that are to come upon it.

Arabia

21:13-15 - *“The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent*

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bow, and from the grievousness of war.” Here is the thought that the enemy is going to dislodge the wayfaring tribes that inhabit this region of the Middle East. Isaiah calls for the inhabitants of the town of Tema, which is in Edom, to sustain them with bread and water since the war will envelop the whole of this region.

21:16-17 - *“For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail: And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it.”* The Kedarenes are descendants from Ishmael through Nebaioth. They were nomadic tribes who inhabited these regions of Edom. The one year mentioned in these verses must also allude to the time after the fall of Samaria when Sargon moved, not only against Ashdod and then toward Egypt, but also toward Arabia. Both Sargon and his successor, Sennacherib, claimed to be King of Arabia.

CHAPTER 22

The Valley of Vision - Jerusalem

The previous chapters have described God's judgments upon the lands around Israel; but now we see the enemy hordes coming against the beloved city of God, Jerusalem. The time period for this vision is during the Assyrian invasion and siege of Jerusalem at the time of Sennacherib.

22:1-3 - *"The burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops? Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle. All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound by the archers: all that are found in thee are bound together, which have fled from far."* Jerusalem was so unaware of the danger of the approaching enemy that they were dwelling carelessly. Their rulers were not slain in the battle. Rather, they attempted to flee and escape, but they were caught by the Assyrians and then slain. This coincides with the account of the siege of Sennacherib, whose Assyrian army encircled Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah.

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22:4-5 - *“Therefore said I, Look away from me: I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people. For it is a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord GOD of hosts in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.”* Because of this, the prophet weeps bitterly at the thought of such disgrace. The destruction of God’s people would not come on the field of battle, but through hunger and famine caused by the siege.

22:6-7 - *“And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men and horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield. And it shall come to pass, that thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate.”* Now the prophet looks at the oncoming army, which is made up of the dreaded Elam, an Assyrian province. Kir is in the northwest provinces of modern-day Iran and Iraq.

As custom dictated, these foot soldiers were accompanied with chariots. *“The shield was uncovered”* means that they were ready for war. *“The choicest valleys”* are the valleys of Kidron on the east, Hinnom toward the south, and possibly Jehoshaphat’s valleys which ran above the Kidron. They were

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all filled with enemy chariots and horsemen ready to advance at any given moment against the gates of Jerusalem. Now at this late stage the defenders finally see the danger.

22:8-11 - *“And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest. Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool. And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall. Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.”* They looked to the armory, which was the house of cedars built by Solomon upon Mount Zion (I Kgs. 7:2). Then they realized that there were many breaches in the walls, which they tried to repair by pulling down other houses in Jerusalem. The pools of water mentioned here are those that were gathered at the time of Hezekiah. They made a conduit to link the sources of water together so that the water came into Jerusalem and they didn't lose it to the outside. Yet for all this, they did not look unto their Maker, the Lord. They were confident in themselves.

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22:12-14 - *“And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.”* Thus, instead of repenting for their sinful ways and looking to the Lord in all humbleness of mind because of the besieging Assyrians, the defenders engaged in blasphemous reveling. So the Lord utters this dreaded judgment that their sin will only be expiated by them experiencing, as the *Targum* says, the second death (Rev. 20:14).

22:15-19 - *“Thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house, and say, What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock? Behold, the Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord’s house. And I will drive*

Isaiah

thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.” Then the Lord singles out Shebna, who was the Minister of the King’s House (or affairs). This was the supreme post under the king and it was sometimes held by the heir to the throne (II Chron. 26:21). He was riding in much opulence at this time, which was during the reign of Hezekiah. Shebna was replaced by Eliakim. In Isaiah chapter 36 and in Second Kings 18:18,26, we find both men, Shebna and Eliakim, mentioned.

His self-confident, proud spirit led Shebna to assume that he would hold that post until he died. Thus, he constructed for himself an outstanding sepulchre and monument that would be a testimony to all succeeding generations, thinking that his name would live forever. However, the Lord declared that He would violently remove him from his station and also from his country into another country where he would die. Eliakim is slated by the Lord to replace the disgraced Shebna.

This is an attitude that one finds sometimes in Christian circles. People think they will hold their position forever. I remember while I was on the faculty of a Bible school that a certain faculty member actually bought for himself and his wife plots in a local cemetery. He then boastfully declared to the principal and others in a faculty meeting that he would be there forever. At that time, this passage of

Isaiah

scripture came to my mind; and sure enough, it was not long before that man had to leave the school in disgrace.

22:20-21 - *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.”* Eliakim, who is called the servant of Jehovah, served Him in true humility of mind and spirit. He is now clothed upon with the dignity of the office that Shebna is being obliged to vacate.

The all-important lesson for us all to learn from this passage of scripture is that Eliakim will, in the foreknowledge of God, perform his duties as a father toward those for whom he will have responsibility. Our quest must be to be clothed upon with the divine attributes of the fatherhood of God. The Apostle Paul speaks of this in First Corinthians 4:15, where he states that although there may be ten thousand instructors in Christ, there are not many fathers. A spiritual father begets people into Christ, or into a vision, and then has a godly concern and care for them. He provides for those

Isaiah

whom he has begotten. Shebna used his position for his own exaltation and benefit. However, Eliakim was like David, a shepherd to the people of God.

22:22-24 - *“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. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.”* Eliakim was literally given the same power that David had—the power to open and no man could shut, and to shut and no one could open. This is the prerogative of Christ which is spoken of in Revelation 3:7. A father literally has the position of a pillar, or as it says here, he is the nail upon which all the other spiritual vessels (meaning people) and servants of the Lord hang. For this reason we realize, as First John 2:14 declares, that fathers know the Lord in a very intimate way. The Lord’s nature is developed in and through them, and they are used to develop His nature in others.

Isaiah

22:25 - *"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it."* Yet for all this, there is a day coming when Judah will be deprived of their father-like figure in Jerusalem because of the ensuing judgments that will come in the time of the Babylonians.

CHAPTER 23

Tyre

The prophecies against the nations started with the Babylonians, who were the greatest imperial land power at that time, and they close with the judgments against Tyre, which was the world's greatest maritime power of ancient times. It was the city of commerce. The king of Tyre, even as the king of Babylon, was likened to Lucifer in Ezekiel 28. Tyre rose into prominence during the time of the Assyrians and was situated on the sea coast about five miles from Sidon. However, in times of difficulty they transferred their throne to an island that is only a half mile from the mainland. In reality, there were two cities of Tyre; one was on the mainland which was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, and the other city which held out for thirteen years against him. Only Alexander the Great succeeded

Isaiah

after a siege of seven months in capturing the island by building a causeway from the mainland. The account in the prophecy of Isaiah alludes to the capture of the old city by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (see Ezek. 26:7-14).

23:1 - *“The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.”* Here the merchant ships of Tarshish, which in olden times was often the terminology for all of the Mediterranean Sea, heard from Chittim of the destruction of Tyre. Chittim was the principal harbor of Cyprus, the last port on the homeward journey.

23:2-3 - *“Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue; and she is a mart of nations.”* Thus, Zidon, another Phoenician merchant city, bought up grain harvests from Egypt (Sihor) to become the market place of the nations.

Isaiah

23:4 - *“Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, nor bring up virgins.”* This speaks also of Zidon being deprived of having children.

23:5 - *“As at the report concerning Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.”* Egypt, likewise, would be in sore distress because of the news concerning Tyre. This interpretation of verse five is validated by the NIV translation of this verse, which reads, “When word comes to Egypt, they will be in anguish at the report from Tyre.” It would obviously greatly affect her economy, as well as give concern that the armies of the Babylonians would soon advance upon her. In actuality, this is exactly what happened. In Ezekiel 29:18-19, the Lord said that Nebuchadnezzar had no wages for the siege of Tyre (see note on Isaiah 49:6); and therefore, God said He would give him the land of Egypt for his wages.

23:6-7 - *“Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle. Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.”* Tyre was a city of mirth and revelry by virtue of her commerce that had made her extremely wealthy. Tyre established

colonies in far distant places such as Carthage in North Africa, Citium in Cyprus, and Tartessus in Spain.

23:8 - *“Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?”* This reference to a “crowning city” alludes to the fact that Tyre appointed citizens of Tyre to reign as kings in her colonies. Thus, she is called the crowning city. However, the Lord has determined to judge Tyre for her evil deeds.

23:9 - *“The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.”* This decision illustrates the universal determination of God to bring down the pride of man, as evidenced in the writings of Paul in First Corinthians 1:19. “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”

23:10 - *“Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: there is no more strength.”* The Assyrian will overflow the land of Tyre like the Nile River, which covers the land of Egypt at flood stage. Tyre will have no more strength.

Isaiah

23:11 - *“He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the Lord hath given a commandment against the merchant city, to destroy the strong holds thereof.”* The Lord will destroy all the fortress towns of Phoenicia that were composed of Zidon, the mother city. He will destroy Tyre, as well as the minor towns that were stretched along the coast of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

23:12 - *“And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.”* Now Zidon, the mother city of great antiquity, which was founded before Tyre, will be judged. Although the inhabitants try to cross over Cyprus where they have a colony, they will find no rest there either.

23:13 - *“Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin.”* Now we come to a historical reference to the Chaldeans. It is used to illustrate the previous rise and fall of the Chaldeans, in order to teach Tyre that she will also fall even though she has risen to great prominence. This undoubtedly occurred in the time of Sennacherib when he had to deal with a rebellion in Babylon. He destroyed it in 689 B.C. and decreed that it should not be rebuilt

Isaiah

for seventy years. Therefore, it laid waste and was inhabited only by wild beasts until Nabopolassar of the Neo-Babylonian era rebuilt it. Therefore, in like manner would God deal with Tyre.

23:14-15 - *“Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste. And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot.”* The seventy years in which Tyre also lay forgotten was from the time of Esarhaddon’s invasion (after the rebellion of Tyre due to Egyptian encouragement in 675 B.C.) until the waning of the Assyrian power due to the revolt of Nabopolassar in 606 B.C. Tyre then recovered sufficiently to withstand thirteen years of siege by Nebuchadnezzar from 585-572 B.C.

23:16 - *“Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.”* Like a forgotten harlot Tyre sang.

23:17-18 - *“And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat*

Isaiah

sufficiently, and for durable clothing.” However, after those seventy years, the Lord will remember Tyre and visit her.

This is easily explained because, although Tyre continued as the mart of the nations after the end of the seventy years, from history we know that Hiram, king of Tyre, was ever a lover of David and supplied timber for Solomon’s Temple (I Kgs. 5:1-12). As seen in Ezra 3:7, they also supplied timber for the temple that was built in the Restoration Period. “They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.”

Tyre played an important part in both temples by supplying timber which was consecrated to the Lord for their construction. It could well be that Tyre will also supply the materials for Ezekiel’s temple that will be built in the millennium, and provide the produce and clothing for those who will be temple priests in the millennium. God remembers the past, and for Tyre that is good.

Isaiah

May we always sow good seeds so that in due time we will reap His goodness and blessing. If we do what is right, God will remember it and reward us in the end. Praise the Lord!

Part Five

THE APOCALYPSE OF ISAIAH

(24:1-23)

CHAPTER 24

This chapter stands apart from the judgments upon individual nations and deals with God's universal judgment upon mankind for their sinfulness. The whole earth will one day be desolate and will mourn

Isaiah

because the people have negated and changed the laws of God that He gave for their universal benefit.

The time period of this prophetic utterance is the last days just before Christ's second coming. While describing universal judgment, there is also a similarity with Zechariah chapters 12-14 where we read of the horrors and great afflictions that will befall Jerusalem and Israel during the time known as Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7), or the Great Tribulation (Mt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14).

24:1 - *“Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.”* Isaiah chapter twenty-four starts with this thought of universal judgment. It is the Lord who will judge the whole world (Rev. 19:15).

24:2 - *“And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.”* In verse two, by the reference to the priests, there is the thought of the Lord speaking particularly to the land of Israel. This duality of thought continues throughout the whole passage, which is very apocalyptic in nature.

Isaiah

24:3 - *“The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word.”* Now Isaiah is speaking very specifically of Israel.

24:4 - *“The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.”* Here Isaiah, contemplating as though in a vision, declares that the earth and her inhabitants will lose their strength.

24:5 - *“The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.”* Then the prophet continues by declaring that the reason for all of this devastation upon the land is because the people of the earth have grievously sinned, and the very earth itself is affected by the conduct of the inhabitants. This is a truth that flows through Scripture. We see it first in Genesis 3:17, where because of his sin, Adam is told by God that the ground is cursed for his sake. In Genesis 3:18, He continued by saying, “Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee.”

In the last days, the inhabitants of the world will transgress the laws of God, principally the ten commandments. They will change the ordinances of God which is what the leaders of the French

Isaiah

Revolution (1789-1799) did, decreeing that man would work a ten-day week. This failed miserably because God has only created man for a seven-day cycle. The people and the work animals became exhausted.

Isaiah does not specifically mention what they will do in the last days. Yet, we do know that they will also break the everlasting covenant which refers specifically to the shedding of man's blood by man (Gen. 9:5-6). Man is made in the image of God. The ordinance that man should not shed man's blood was a part of the everlasting covenant that God made with Noah (Gen. 9:8-17). Therefore, we will see violence everywhere in the last days. The Lord Himself declared that the days of the coming of the Son of Man will be as in the days of Noah (Mt. 24:37). The days prior to the flood were marked by extreme violence and bloodshed. Thus, the earth will be cursed for that reason.

24:6 - *“Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.”* This coincides perfectly with the account of the three-fold judgments in the book of Revelation (the Seals, Trumpets, and Vials). We

Isaiah

are told that there will be considerable loss of life when these judgments are poured out upon the earth.

24:7-9 - *“The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.”* The vines will also perish, thereby diminishing the joy of the revelers. Their singing and rejoicing will turn to mourning.

24:10 - *“The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.”* This city is analogous to Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of all harlots, which will be destroyed in the last days (see Revelation chapters 17-18). Babylon means “confusion” in the Hebrew (see Gen. 11:8-9). The other cities who have not sought the Lord in the end times will experience her same fate.

24:11-15 - *“There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the*

Isaiah

Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea.” This passage is so reminiscent of the response of the prophet Habakkuk in a similar situation. “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places” (Hab. 3:17-19).

This is the way that we glorify the Lord in the fire—by having a rejoicing spirit at all times. In so doing, the joy of the Lord, which is our strength, is developed in our lives (Neh. 8:10). Also, the “*isles of the sea*” are mentioned, which in such a scriptural setting speak of the Gentiles in the end times. Thus, the Church will triumph spiritually as it enters into His joy during the last day tribulation period. Just as their Head, the Lord Jesus, endured the cross because of the joy that was set before Him (Heb. 12:1-2), so will His people.

Isaiah

24:16 - *“From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.”* Thus, the prophet hears the cries of triumph and the songs of the righteous from the uttermost parts of the earth. He hears the victorious Gentile Church in the last days.

24:17-19 - *“Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.”* These awesome judgments will overtake the wicked in the last days as God thoroughly shakes the earth. God will so thoroughly shake the earth in these last days that everything that can be shaken will be shaken (see Hag. 2:6, Heb. 12:27).

24:20 - *“The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.”* Verse twenty is

Isaiah

obviously apocalyptic (referring to the second coming), yet there is a strong possibility that it also refers to the end of time after the millennial reign of Christ upon earth.

24:21-22 - *“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.”* These two verses refer to the specific judgment of “the high ones that are on high,” which are principalities in heavenly places, or the fallen angels. “The kings of the earth,” meaning the human rulers, will also be judged. This takes place at the second coming of Christ.

24:23 - *“Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”* Finally, the prophet foresees the glorious millennial reign of Christ. At that time the Lord will reign before His resurrected saints, who have trusted in Him and have been like Job, who said, “I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and

Isaiah

not another; though my reins be consumed within me” (Job 19:25-27). We want to press on in God so that we might also be privileged to be in that better resurrection which Paul longed to be in (see Phil. 3:11, Rev. 20:4-6).

Part Six

THE BOOK OF SONGS

(25:1 - 27:13)

CHAPTER 25

Here we have the songs of the redeemed as they contemplate the righteous judgments of the Lord upon the wicked in the end times. This should be compared with the rejoicing of the heavenly

Isaiah

multitudes in Revelation 19:1-3, which concerns the fall and destruction of spiritual Babylon which is Rome.

25:1-2 - *“O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.”* We must also compare this again with Revelation 18:10 which concerns the judgment upon Babylon, and also with the Song of Moses and the Lamb with respect to the joy and songs of those who have the victory over the Beast (Rev. 15:3-4). The prophet praises the Lord for destroying the Imperial City, and for protecting His oppressed Church.

25:3-5 - *“Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee. 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. Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.”* The songs of the redeemed

Isaiah

will ascend to the Lord in the last days. This is termed the first of four melodious odes to the Lord for His deliverance of His people.

25:6-8 - *“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 veil that is spread over all nations. 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.”* Then there is an interlude for a declaration of the fact that the mountain of the Lord of hosts will be exalted in the last days. (Compare with Isaiah 2:2). Here we have an amplification of the ministry of those who will attain unto Mount Zion in the last days.

The mountain mentioned here is a literal mountain in Israel, but it represents a spiritual mountain for the Church. Therefore, there are in reality two fulfillments of this prophetic declaration. One will be accomplished in natural Israel at the second coming of the Lord when the defenders of Zion will welcome Him. All prophecies concerning that time will then be fulfilled.

Isaiah

However, there is a spiritual reality for the Church in this prophecy. The Church will know great revival in these last days, in order that all that has been declared by the prophets for the last day Church will be fulfilled. The Church will come to and inhabit His holy mountain, and there will be spiritual feasts of all the good things in the Word of God, as well as great joy, as expressed by the wines in verse six.

The thought of the Lord destroying “*the face of the covering cast over all people*” in the holy mountain of Zion signifies the breaking of the power of the Satanic principalities that govern nations. Everyone who has seen these evil powers in the Spirit knows that they have a great influence on the decisions that are made in the government of a country, and they also impede the lives of those who live in that country. What a day of rejoicing that will be when their power is broken forever!

At the second coming, there will be that blessed event when the Lord destroys death, which is our last enemy (see I Cor. 15:54). This event is only for the redeemed; the unsaved will experience the second death at the end of the millennial reign of Christ upon earth (Rev. 20:13-15). As Revelation 7:17 declares, the Lord will also wipe away the tears from the eyes of His redeemed. The shame and

Isaiah

disgrace that His people have to bear by virtue of their identification with the Lord will also be taken away. For then they will be a people sought after in the earth (see Isa. 62:12).

25:9 - *“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”* Verse nine is a very remarkable prophecy because it is the response of the defenders of Zion to the words of the Lord at His second coming, given in Deuteronomy 32:39-43: “See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.” The

defenders cry out that they have waited for Him. Along with this, we should note their further remarks in Zechariah 13:6, where they ask concerning the wounds in His hands.

25:10-11 - *“For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.”* The second ode concerns the second coming of the Lord to His people who are defending Jerusalem and the consequent destruction of Moab. Moab will be completely destroyed at Christ’s second coming. This is consistent with other prophecies that the kingdom of Jordan (Edom, Moab and Ammon) will experience great judgments at the second coming. It appears that they will take part in the division of the land of Israel (Dan. 11:39, Joel 3:2), and demonstrate the long nourished hatred of Esau for his brother Israel (Amos 1:11). The sons of Lot, for the evil they have done to the true seed, Israel, will be recompensed by the Lord Himself at His coming.

Isaiah

The thought in verse eleven of the Lord spreading forth His hands as one that swims, appears to indicate that they will surround Jerusalem at His coming; and He will disperse them as one disperses or divides the water as he swims.

25:12 - *“And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.”* All their fortresses will be brought down and destroyed. This is the manner in which the Lord will vent His anger upon those who will seek to overthrow Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 26

The Third Ode - 26:1-19

26:1-4 - *“In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.”* Over

Isaiah

on the western side of Moab lies the beloved city, Jerusalem, which will sing with joy at His second coming while others mourn.

The city of Jerusalem is declared to be strong in contrast to the fallen cities of Moab, and also the *city of confusion*, Babylon, which has fallen a long time before this. Since this will be the song of Jerusalem and Israel in the millennial reign of the Lord, they will then invite the righteous nations who keep the truth to enter into the gates of Jerusalem. This undoubtedly refers to the time when Jerusalem will be rebuilt in the millennium according to the measurements of Ezekiel 48:30-35. However, there is also a fuller application of this to the time of the new heavens and the new earth, as we see in Revelation 21:24-25.

When we are studying the prophetic books, it is always important not to overlook the spiritual fulfillment to the saints in the Church Age. This applies to verses three and four. As we keep our mind stayed upon Him, He will keep us in perfect peace, even amidst all the confusion that is emanating from the demons in these last days. The key to this perfect peace lies in the instructions given to us

Isaiah

by Paul in Philippians 4:6-8. Also, there is the beautiful truth that the Lord becomes our strength as we trust in Him. This is an experience available to all who truly follow Him (see Isa. 40:28-31).

26:5-6 - *“For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.”* Now the prophet returns to speaking of the destruction of the evil city—the last-day Babylon which is lifted up in pride. Moab is simply an adjunct of latter-day Babylon. The poor, the outcasts, and the despised of the people will have the privilege of tramping upon the imperial power. Those who have been oppressed by the might of Babylon will obliterate her.

26:7-9 - *“The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”* Now the prophet turns to a subject that is of spiritual significance; it concerns God’s people and their walk with Him.

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The beloved of God is one who is often in communion with Him. The night hours are some of the most treasured moments when we can commune with our Lord in quietness away from the demands that daybreak brings upon our time. The Psalms reveal the devotional times of King David. Very often he would meet with the Lord during the night (Psa. 22:2, 63:6). Likewise, at break of dawn the devout are found seeking their Lord (Psa. 63:1). Also, when the judgments of God are honored and proclaimed in the earth, the people will learn righteousness.

26:10 - *“Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.”* Even in the land of uprightness, the wicked will not turn from his wicked ways and learn righteousness. It is an awesome phenomenon of life that the condition of the heart can prohibit one from partaking of heaven’s glory even when the opportunity is offered.

Those who have had visions of heaven’s glories have also recorded seeing at times the damned approaching the eternal light, but then fleeing from it. In the millennium, all flesh will have to look sabbath after sabbath upon the damned who are in the pit as a warning to them to change their ways

Isaiah

(see Isa. 66:23-24, cf. Isa. 14:15, Mk. 9:43-44). Yet, even in spite of that gracious forewarning of the punishment of their sins, they will not turn from their wicked ways. Isaiah goes on to tell us that the sinner, one who has refused to turn from his wicked ways after continual warnings, will die at the age of one hundred years in the millennium and be cursed (Isa. 65:20).

26:11 - *“Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.”* The prophet continues in a similar vein of thought by stating that when the Lord moves they will not be ready. To their shame, they will see His blessing upon His people; but they will not be able to partake of it. They will then be ashamed of all their envy, but the fire of God will consume those who are enemies of His people. These, of whom the prophet is speaking, are so often those who have been intimately connected with the Church, and could have been a part of that which God does in revival. However, because they have let envy overcome them, they have missed out and have been destroyed.

26:12 - *“Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.”* The peace of God is ordained for His people. It is God’s purpose that all His elect should be partakers of His

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divine peace. However, there are conditions to receive His peace. As we allow the Lord to work in us His nature, divine character and will, we are enabled to partake of His peace. This is developed in Romans 5:1. As we are constantly being justified, or straightened, and as we are being made conformable to His image, it is then that we have peace with God. There is also the thought in this verse that all that has been accomplished through us has been of God. It is entering into the rest of God whereby we cease from our works and He becomes our all and in all (Heb. 4:10), and He performs His works through us.

26:13 - *“O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.”* The prophet continues by crying to the Lord that others have governed Israel besides Him. This refers to other nations who have dominated Israel because of their sins. However, in our own lives as well, there have been times when we have been subjected to other powers, either bondages of sin or people who have different opinions than we do, causing us great distress.

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26:14 - *“They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.”* So often we are prone to be afraid of man, even as the prophet Elijah was afraid when he fled from Jezebel (see I Kgs. 19:1-4). Yet, we must realize that mortal man will soon perish and pass away at God’s appointed time. Therefore, we should not dishonor God in fearing man. Solomon said in Proverbs 29:25, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.”

26:15 - *“Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.”* Here Isaiah is looking at a time in the future when Israel will go into Babylonian captivity.

26:16-18 - *“Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.”* These verses reveal Israel in captivity, pouring out

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their hearts in prayer and supplication unto the Lord like a woman in travail (see Psa. 137). Yet, they also confess in Babylon that there had been no true deliverance wrought by Israel and the people of God upon earth. The fortresses and strongholds of their enemies had not fallen under them.

26:19 - *“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.”* The response of the Lord to the cries of Israel in captivity is that “their dead shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise.” This refers to the resurrection of the Lord when many of the saints came out of their graves. Matthew 27:52-53 records: “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” Also, in His resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ released the Old Testament saints from paradise and took them with Him in glorious triumph into heavenly vistas. “When [Christ] ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” (Eph. 4:8).

26:20-21 - *“Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh*

Isaiah

out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” In these verses, the Lord is warning His people concerning the Great Tribulation that will take place during the last days of the Church Age. Here the Lord’s admonition is to hide during this time of the manifestation of His anger. The Lord speaks in a similar manner to His people through Zephaniah. “Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the LORD’S anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’S anger” (Zeph. 2:2-3). Comparing these two scriptures, we can conclude that only those who follow after righteousness and meekness will be hidden by the Lord. Therefore, it behooves us to earnestly pray as the Lord Himself said in Luke 21:36, “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

CHAPTER 27

27:1 - *“In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.”*

There is a continuation of the thought of the last day judgments in verse one. The interpretation of this verse is relative to the end times when the Lord will slay His enemies with the sword of His mouth. In particular, the beasts mentioned here, appear to be the dragon (Satan) and the two serpents (the false prophet and the Antichrist). However, they also symbolize the three major powers that afflicted Israel in ancient times: Assyria, whose capital was located upon the banks of the Tigris; Babylon, which was situated upon the banks of the Euphrates; and Rome, the mistress of the seas, which is depicted by the dragon.

The Song to the Vineyard of Red Wine (v. 2-6)

27:2-6 - *“In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold*

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of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me. He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Now we have a triumphant ode concerning Israel, the vineyard of the Lord, the nation whom the Lord cares for moment by moment. This is the second vineyard song; and unlike the one in Isaiah 5:1-7, it ends triumphantly. The enemies of Israel and the Lord are likened to briars and thorns that He will burn up. The Lord counsels His enemies to make peace with Him, which some obviously will do in the last days. By contrast, Israel will blossom and fill the earth in the millennium and bear much fruit.

27:7-9 - *"Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind. By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up."* The Lord judges Israel, but He does not smite them with the same intensity as He does their enemies. In verse eight,

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there is the thought of Jehovah sifting Israel as one sifts wheat from the chaff with the strong winds. However, all these judgments come upon Israel so that their iniquity may be purged. This will happen when Israel makes all their altars chalk and their idolatrous groves are destroyed.

27:10-11 - *“Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.”* Here the judgments upon Israel and the Northern Kingdom in particular are mentioned. In verse ten, the Lord says that the defenced cities of the Northern Kingdom will become desolate. God will not have mercy upon the generation of those who lived in the time of the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions that have grievously sinned.

27:12-13 - *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall [thresh] from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were*

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ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” This is looking forward to the time of the millennium. At His return, the Lord will dry up the river of Egypt and gather those who have been exiled in Egypt. Those in captivity in Assyria (modern-day Iraq) will also be liberated and return with great joy to worship the Lord in Jerusalem at Mount Zion.

Part Seven

THE BOOK OF WOES

(28:1 - 31:9, 33:1-24)

There are six specific woes pronounced in this section of the book of Isaiah:

- 1.) Woe to the Drunkards of Ephraim - 28:1
- 2.) Woe to the City of David - 29:1

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3.) Woe to Them Who Seek to Hide Their Counsel From the Lord - 29:15

4.) Woe to the Rebellious Children - 30:1

5.) Woe to Those That Go Down to Egypt - 31:1

6.) Woe to Those That Spoil and Are Not Spoiled - 33:1

CHAPTER 28

The First Woe - The Drunkards of Ephraim - 28:1-4

28:1-4 - *“Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine! Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet: And the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.”* The tribe of Ephraim was the head of the Northern Kingdom, which was made up of the ten apostate tribes. As the book of Hosea depicts, Ephraim was

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the backslider who was given over to idolatry. In this indictment, we see that Ephraim was now given over to pride and drunkenness. They erred through strong drink. Therefore, the “mighty and strong one” (the nation of Assyria) would be permitted by God to tread them under their feet. The Northern Kingdom became as a fading flower because of drunkenness and pride. We must always walk in humility and realize that strong drink is a mocker (Prov. 20:1). We must stay far away from it, lest we become “a half baked cake” like Ephraim (Hos. 7:8), and suffer the same judgments they suffered.

28:5-6 - *“In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.”* To the residue of those faithful ones who are deemed worthy to escape those judgments, the Lord will be as a crown of glory upon them. His beauty will be revealed through them (II Thess. 1:10). The Lord will clothe His judges with the spirit of judgment and will clothe those who go to battle with His strength, so that they can defeat their enemies who try to enter in through the gates of the city.

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28:7-8 - *“But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.”* As we reflect upon the sins of Ephraim, we see the terrible consequences of strong drink. It causes the Lord’s people, and even His ministers, to err in the realm of vision. That is why ministers who drink wine and alcohol do not have the correct goals to present to the people of God. They are not imparting to them a progressive vision, and they are not fair when they make decisions. May we flee strong drink and remember well the words of Saint Augustine, who said, “It is easier to abstain than to practice temperance.”

28:9-10 - *“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.”* As the Apostle Paul stated in Hebrews 5:12-14, 6:1, those who are taught of the Lord are those who are weaned

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from the elementary doctrines of Christ. Those who are teachers know it is essential to take people from the known to the unknown in easy, clear-cut steps.

I remember a time when I was with my wife in one of the Indonesian islands teaching at several pastors' seminars. At meal times we would sit with an ophthalmologist who would lecture eye surgeons in third world countries for one month each year. He told us his method of success. This doctor would ascertain the level of competence of those whom he had come to help, and then he would assist them to perform an operation just one level above that which they had previously been able to perform. The result was that when he left the whole hospital had increased their level of competence. This should also be our aim. When we teach in seminars, colleges, institutes, schools, or in our churches we should elevate our students to a higher level of the knowledge of God and His Word.

28:11 - *"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people."* In verse eleven, the prophet Isaiah declares that with stammering lips and another tongue God will speak to His people. Isaiah is prophesying of the future outpouring of the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of

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Pentecost. Verse eleven is quoted by the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians 14:21 as proof of the authenticity of the scriptural evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a truth that flows through the Old Testament and the New Testament alike. Therefore, it cannot be discarded as some “first century phenomenon.” The baptism of the Holy Spirit is still for the Church today. Speaking with new tongues should follow salvation (Mk. 16:17).

28:12-13 - *“To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.”* In verse twelve, Isaiah continues by declaring that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the rest and the refreshing for the people of God. Certainly, all who have received this glorious experience will so testify that it does refresh and bring us into rest since our spirit can commune directly with the Lord.

However, in Isaiah’s day as in ours, many people do not appreciate the good things of the Lord. Therefore, they become a series of precepts to them which eventually will become a snare. They

simply become students of *the letter* of the law and it kills them as it did the Pharisees (see II Cor. 3:6).

28:14-15 - *“Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.”* The rulers in Jerusalem had abased themselves to the extent that they had made an agreement with hell.

Some people who have had visions of hell have met souls there who had apparently made similar agreements with the devil while upon earth. They said the reason they made these pacts with the devil was because they thought they would be treated well in hell. However, when they came to the dwelling places of the lost, they discovered a shocking truth. In this place of torment, not only did the demons not keep their agreements, but they treated those who had put their confidence in them with far greater severity than others. Therefore, Isaiah warns them.

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28:16-17 - *“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. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.”* Verse sixteen is quoted by the Apostle Peter in First Peter 2:6. This refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the precious cornerstone (see Eph. 2:20). The corner stone is the stone in a building from which all other measurements are taken.

Therefore, Christ is the One from whom all Christian standards of life are taken. We should not make decisions hastily, but in quiet contemplation, carefully weigh all our thoughts, words, motives, and actions to be certain that they meet His criteria and His standard. In verse seventeen, He reiterates this same thought by saying that all judgments and rules for righteousness will be measured by this plumbline—the Lord Himself. Therefore, all the lies of the adversaries will be washed away.

28:18-19 - *“And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by*

Isaiah

night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.” These wicked rulers of Jerusalem had sought this agreement with hell. When the Assyrians would come through the land, they believed that they would be spared because of their agreement with the devil, but the Lord had decreed otherwise. The very report of the Assyrian advance would be a vexation and trial to them (v.19).

28:20 - *“For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering [or blanket] narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.”* Their judgment is likened to a bed that is too short. This irritation of having a bed that is too short, or a covering that is too narrow reminds me of another judgment in hell. In a particular vision, a man was seen eating a meal which could never satisfy. He was also wearing a coat that could never keep him warm. This is figurative, since hell is far from cold. However, the truth is that when we sin and do not repent of it, many times our judgment is that we are not, and never can be, satisfied.

28:21 - *“For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.”* The prophet here alludes to the great victories of King David at Baal Perazim (I Chron. 14:11), and also his defeat

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of the Philistines at Gibeon (I Chron.14:16). The Lord will rise up and perform that which He has determined He will do.

28:22 - *“Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.”* This section ends with a warning to the mockers. They are instructed to not mock God, lest the bands of sin that already bind them be made even stronger.

The Plowman

28:23-26 - *“Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rye in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.”* This beautiful little passage illustrates a very important truth of life. It reveals that the Lord gives the abilities and instruction to the plowman to enable him to farm. Thus, it reveals the manner by which we are able to determine the secular occupation we should pursue, as well as

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helping others into their life's course. We should choose an occupation according to our ability to proficiently perform that occupation. It should also be according to our desires, that which we enjoy doing and that which gives us satisfaction. Guidance is ascertained by ability and desire.

I remember a man in Switzerland who came from a family of very well-known, rich doctors. His parents were both doctors, and so naturally they wanted him to be a doctor. They pressured him to go to medical school. However, he never wanted to be a doctor; and once he finally became a doctor he disliked it very much, even though he was very good. His family pressured him to remain in his profession; consequently, he was never happy. We should not choose an occupation that we cannot perform well. Some people just do not have the God-given ability to be a carpenter. Likewise, we should not choose an occupation that we do not enjoy doing, even if we can do it well.

28:27-29 - *“For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor [grind] it with his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in*

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counsel, and excellent in working.” This chapter continues by reiterating that it is God alone who gives us instruction to enable us to perform our duties. He is also the wonderful counselor and the excellent divine enabler who aids us in the accomplishment of our earthly tasks.

I remember very well a time when I asked the Lord time and time again in a research laboratory to help me with my studies, and to help me pass the examinations I was required to take. My testimony is that He was always faithful, and He enabled me to understand those complex problems. Be assured that He will also help anyone who would call upon His name!

CHAPTER 29

The Second Woe

29:1-2 - *“Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices. Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel.”*
The name “Ariel” has two basic significations. First, it means, “Lion of God,” speaking of the strength of the Lord’s city. This is appropriate because David was of the lineage of the Lion of Judah.

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However, it also means, “heareth.” This is where the sacrifices were offered. It is used in that sense in the Hebrew in Ezekiel 43:15 where it is translated “altar.”

Therefore, the thought is clear. The second woe applies to Jerusalem, where the sacrifices were offered before the Lord in the city where David dwelt. The first woe applied to the capital city of the Northern Kingdom, Samaria. Even though Jerusalem offered sacrifices, the Lord would still distress them and afflict them. We should remember the words of the prophet in First Samuel 15:22, “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” Obedience is better than sacrifice. Sacrifices can never replace obedience, or be an acceptable substitute for it (see Psa. 40:6-8).

29:3 - *“And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.”* This applies in the first instance to the Assyrian invasion, and then later to the Babylonian invasion and destruction of Jerusalem between 605 B.C. and 586 B.C.

29:4 - *“And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and*

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thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.” Thus, the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be as those who are dead and those who have no spirit. As the Assyrians surround Jerusalem, the defenders are reduced in power and might to become as those who have no strength.

29:5-6 - *“Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly. Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.”* Here Isaiah triumphantly proclaims the judgment of God upon all those who have raised themselves up against Ariel. Thus, the Lord will punish all those who have attacked Jerusalem. They shall be visited with the terrors of the Lord.

29:7-8 - *“And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.”* These verses

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are very similar to the prophecies that relate to the last siege of Jerusalem, prior to the coming of Christ (see Zech. 14:12).

29:9-12 - *“Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.”* Now Isaiah returns to the immediate problem of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Because of their sin and mockery, the Lord poured out upon Israel the spirit of slumber to the effect that the Word of God was a closed and sealed book to them. Thus, spiritual blindness is upon Israel unto this very day (see Rom. 11:7-8, II Cor. 3:14-15). Oh, how important it is for us to walk uprightly so that we have clear revelation from the Lord with respect to the mysteries of His Word!

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29:13 - *“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 [rules and regulations] of men.”* The reason for God’s judgment upon Israel was because they were drawing near with their mouth, but their heart was far from Him. There was no vital relationship between the people and the Lord. Their relationship with the Lord had deteriorated so much that their fear and reverence of Him was no more than a legalistic, religious observance. The Lord wants relationship, not religion!

29:14 - *“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.”* Therefore, the Lord declared that He would destroy the wisdom of the wise. In other words, all their counsel would lead them in the wrong direction. Those who have not walked uprightly with the Lord are often given over to making severe errors of judgment. This verse is quoted by the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians 1:19.

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29:15-16 - *“Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?”* They foolishly sought to hide their works and deeds from the Lord, as though it were possible to hide anything from Him. Their actions could be likened to a vase saying to the potter that made it, “You did it all wrong. I can do it better.” In other words, they were questioning God, His works, and His judgments.

29:17 - *“Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?”* Here is a promised revival in which everything will change. This promise is introduced in typical Hebraism, which is a natural event that illustrates a spiritual occurrence. Thus, the turning of Lebanon into a fruitful field symbolizes a spiritual awakening from barrenness to fruitfulness.

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29:18 - *“And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.”* Those unto whom the Word of God was a closed book will be able to plainly understand it in the last day revival, and in the millennium.

29:19 - *“The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”* The humble and the meek also will rejoice in this move of God. They will experience greater joy than they have ever known.

29:20-21 - *“For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.”* Not only will the just and meek be visited, but those who perpetrated evil will be removed.

29:22 - *“Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.”* The Lord promises a change for the redeemed of Israel. Fear will be removed from the faces of the men of Israel, and they will no longer be ashamed. This is a promise that was fulfilled in the days of the great restoration under

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Zerubbabel, and later under Ezra and Nehemiah. Yet it will be fulfilled in its entirety for Israel as a nation in the millennial reign of Christ upon earth. There is, however, as with all prophecies for Israel, a spiritual fulfillment for the Church in the last days. Both Israel and the Church will be spiritually revived.

29:23-24 - *“But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.”* Israel will truly be a holy people again as in their beginning, and their eyes will be opened to understand God’s ways. I believe that this is what we will see in the last days—a holy Church without spot or wrinkle, learning and walking in God’s ways. Pure doctrine will “drop as the rain” in the last day revival (Deut. 32:2). Hearts will be melted, and many who have complained will turn to the Lord and be restored.

CHAPTER 30

The Third Woe

30:1 - *“Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin.”* In this verse, there is a basic spiritual truth that has to be understood. As children of the Lord, we should be clothed upon with His Spirit. However, if we walk in disobedience, then we exchange His covering for the clothing of a Satanic spirit. In Israel’s case, the covering was a spirit of rebellion. The context of these remarks occurred historically during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. The Assyrian army had invaded Israel and they were overrunning Judah as well. Therefore, Hezekiah sent ambassadors to Egypt for help instead of relying upon the Lord.

30:2 - *“That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!”* When Hezekiah did this it was known also unto the king of Assyria; for he mocked Hezekiah for this when he was besieging Jerusalem (see

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Isa. 36:4-6). However, going to Egypt for help would be in vain because the Lord had determined to bring up the Assyrians against Jerusalem, and it was He who would destroy them.

30:3-6 - *“Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion. For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes. They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach. The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.”*

Under Hezekiah, the Jews attempted to strengthen themselves through Pharaoh. They sent their ambassadors to Zoan in the Northeast Delta, the seat of the twenty-second and the twenty-third dynasties. (Zoan is the place where the children of Israel had been captives at the time of the Exodus.) The ambassadors also went on to Hanes, also called Heiracleopolis, a town which was some fifty miles south and the advanced headquarters of the Ethiopians.

This is substantiated also by the fact that Sennacherib was deterred from the siege of Jerusalem according to Second Kings 19:9: “Now Sennacherib received a report that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was marching out to fight against him” (NIV). Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, left to turn his attention to this invasion, which was the result of the Ethiopians and Egyptians coming to the aid of Hezekiah.

These emissaries of Hezekiah had to go through the Negev with their donkeys and camels loaded down with treasures to induce the Egyptians and the Ethiopians to undertake the invasion to relieve them of the Assyrian siege. It was a very perilous journey. They could not take the highway because the Assyrians already occupied it. They encountered the danger of lions and snakes in a land of hardship and distress. (See Jeremiah 2:6 for another description of the desert). Although the Egyptians and Ethiopians did undertake the invasion against Assyria, their help was in vain, and they were soon routed by the forces of the Assyrians.

30:7 - *“For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still.”* How often must we regretfully learn the hard way the same lessons as the

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godly king Hezekiah had to learn. We are so prone to turn to the arm of flesh and natural resources in a time of trouble instead of trusting in the Lord. Yet, our strength is to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

30:8-9 - *“Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord.”* The prophet returns to the theme that the children of Israel are rebellious and lying children who will not hear the law. Their sin is so grievous that the Lord will record it forever. If we will not allow God to purge us of our sins, there comes a time when our sins are recorded and not blotted out. (Although David was forgiven, the record of his sin remains until this day. See Proverbs 6:32-33.) The reason why their sin of rebellion was recorded is because they refused the law and the prophets that the Lord sent to them.

30:10-11 - *“Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.”* So often in their “checkered” history, Israel did

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not want to meet the Lord face to face. It started at Mount Sinai, as seen in Exodus 20:19, “And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.”

This problem is a heart condition. If we have sinned and have not put things right with the Lord and with man, we will want to hide from the presence of God as Adam did when he sinned (see Gen. 3:8). In some congregations, the people, and especially the leaders, try to control the work of the Holy Spirit so that His presence is reduced, and the hearts of the hearers do not come under conviction. They love to serve Him, but from afar. Oh, how we must earnestly pray that our hearts are ever kept in a state of tenderness, and that we have a heart of flesh, not of stone (see Ezek. 36:26).

30:12-14 - *“Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters’ vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.”* Now the Lord declares the consequence of their rebellious actions. They trust in lies and

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wickedness, therefore, their destruction will come as a wall that falls suddenly because it is irreparably cracked. This accurately describes the effect of sin in the life of a believer. When a Christian turns off the path of righteousness and does not deal with issues in his life, it appears that all is well for a time. Yet, then there is a sudden fall and crash, and the life of a rebellious believer is shattered beyond repair.

30:15 - *“For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.”* The remedy for those who are rebellious, seen in verse seven, is now repeated. In other words, the Lord is saying in verse fifteen to wait patiently upon Him to ascertain His will and direction. The response of Israel, however, was very different.

30:16 - *“But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.”* They were going to flee from their enemy, the Assyrians. Yet, the Lord said to those who were trying to flee that their pursuers would be swifter than them, and would catch them.

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30:17 - *“One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.”* The Lord was going to severely reduce Israel until they were very small in numbers. This was completely fulfilled in the days of Hezekiah when Sennacherib the king of Assyria besieged Jerusalem. Then the Lord most graciously speaks of revival and restoration in verse eighteen.

30:18 - *“And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.”* After punishing Israel, God will again bless them, for He longs to show mercy to them. The thought here is that God is waiting to show mercy to them.

There is another interpretation, found in Second Corinthians 1:23, which we could link with the attitude of the Apostle Paul toward the Corinthian church, “Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.” The Corinthian church was sinning grievously. Immorality was rampant in the congregation. Had the Apostle Paul gone to them in that condition, he would have gone as a judge, and judgment would have fallen upon them. Yet, he waited until they

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had opportunity to repent. Therefore, he brought a blessing when he came. God also waits before He visits us in revival, so that He may come to bless, and not come as the Judge. This graciousness, however, is manifested to those who dwell in spiritual Zion, as seen in the following verses.

30:19-20 - *“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.”* He will hear their weeping and their supplications; and He will give them teachers after His own heart. This is very similar to the promise that is recorded in Jeremiah 3:15, “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.” It is a tremendous blessing of God to have godly teachers who can open the scriptures to us and teach us the ways of God. This is also a promise for the last day Church, and it is one that the Church desperately needs to see fulfilled. The Lord also promises true guidance which we will now examine.

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30:21 - *“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.”* To understand this beautiful promise, we must realize that when we are in the path of the Lord, we will not necessarily hear His voice very often. Yet, should we inadvertently, or even willfully, turn from His path, then at that moment we will hear a voice behind us saying, “This [the path we were on and then turned from] is the path, walk ye in it.” Many people say they aren’t hearing God speak to them, but if we are on the right road, we don’t need to hear much. It is when we are on the wrong road that we need to hear the Lord warning us to turn back. Very often we hear it said that “someone just fell into sin.” The Lord spoke to wife and said, “No one just falls into sin. When they turn off the path of righteousness, I start speaking to them and warning them. If they do not heed My warnings, I send others to them to warn them; and then, if they ignore all that, they fall into sin.” God is very faithful to try to bring us back onto the right path.

30:22-24 - *“Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence. Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread*

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of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures. The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan [winnowing fork].” The conditions for having “the bread of affliction” and His other judgments removed is that we remove all the idols in our lives and utterly cast them away. If we are willing to remove all the idols from our lives, the Lord will graciously cause us to prosper.

30:25 - *“And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.”* In that day when the Lord brings the slaughter upon His enemies, He will cause the streams of natural and spiritual waters to flow. It will be a time of great blessing.

30:26 - *“Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.”* Also, there will be a tremendous outpouring and manifestation of the glory of the Lord, which is applicable in all its fullness to the time of the second coming. The

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breach of Israel will be healed at that time. When a person walks with God, He blesses them spiritually and naturally after a severe testing and cleansing is accomplished in their lives.

The Lord's Judgment Upon The Assyrians

30:27-28 - *“Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err.”* This describes the extreme anger of the Lord against the Assyrians, and all the nations associated with them. God caused them to err in judgment, so that they made many foolish mistakes and errors.

This is a lesson that needs to be learned by everyone. If our ways do not please the Lord, it is possible that He will give us doctrines that do not profit. He declares this truth in Ezekiel 20:25. “Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.” (See also II Thess. 2:10-11). Then there is a very pleasant interlude in verse twenty-nine, where

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the Lord describes the blessedness of those precious songs in the night that are given by the Holy Spirit.

30:29 - *“Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel.”* These songs are birthed by the Spirit. They are experienced when the Christian is thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Israelites of old experienced gladness of heart when they would go to the mountain of the Lord in the days of the holy solemnities. Then the Lord returns to the thought of His judgment upon the Assyrians.

30:30 - *“And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.”* The Lord declares that He will cause His voice to be heard and He will utterly destroy the Assyrians.

30:31-32 - *“For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod. And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it*

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shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it." Now the Lord speaks of the eternal end of the king of Assyria. There are many verses and passages in Scripture that substantiate the fact that the Lord destroyed the Assyrian army by angelic intervention when it was encamped around Jerusalem. This will be examined in detail when we come to chapters thirty-six and thirty-seven. Also, the damnation of the king of Assyria is now described:

30:33 - *"For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."* This is confirmed by the Lord when He speaks of the king of Assyria in Ezekiel 31:16. "I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth."

Tophet was a pit outside of Jerusalem that was used for the disposal of refuse. What the Lord is saying here is that the Assyrian army will be destroyed and be wasted. Yes, the Lord will utterly destroy all the wicked of the earth, but He will exalt those who have walked in His ways. Therefore,

we should seek to be pleasing to the Lord in everything we do, so that we may escape these judgments that will come upon the wicked.

CHAPTER 31

The Fourth Woe - Those Who Trust In Men

31:1 - *“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord.”* The prophet now returns to the same theme—that the children of Israel have been rebellious in going down to Egypt for help (cf. Jer. 17:5-8).

How different was the response of this generation to the generation of King David who wrote in Psalm 20:7, “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.” Those who are not walking with the Lord in the last days will run to and fro looking for help in times of trouble instead of running to the Fountain of Living Waters, the Lord Jesus Christ. When we need guidance and help, we must not go to the world or to the world’s wisdom, but only to the Lord.

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31:2 - *“Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.”* The Lord continues by declaring His wisdom. How sorrowful He must be when we turn to the arm of flesh instead of to the all wise, powerful, and loving God. Thus, the Lord decrees punishment for the wicked who go down to Egypt.

31:3 - *“Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.”* Here the Lord reasons with the people that the Egyptians are only men and not God, and their horses are flesh and not spirit. The Lord decrees the collapse of the Egyptians with those who went to them for help.

31:4-5 - *“For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will*

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deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.” This is a further assurance that has been a continuing theme throughout this part of the book of Isaiah—that the Lord will defend Jerusalem. It was by angelic forces, which are depicted here as birds, that Jerusalem was delivered. Oh, if only the children of Israel would turn to the Lord; for it is their defense. May we eagerly await the day of their deliverance, when they shall throw away their idols in whom they have trusted.

31:6-7 - *“Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for a sin.”* The children of Israel will throw away their idols when they see His miraculous deliverance.

31:8-9 - *“Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited. And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.”* Now the Lord returns to

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the subject of the slaughter of the Assyrians. As we shall see in Isaiah 37:36, the sword that will slay the Assyrians is not the sword of a man, but the sword that is in the hand of the angel of the Lord.

The Lord Almighty will raise up His battle standard (ensign) and the Assyrians will know it, and fear the Lord—for the Lord our God is a consuming fire (Heb. 11:29), and He dwells on the holy mountains of Zion and Jerusalem (Psa. 87:1).

Part Eight

THE RIGHTEOUS KING

(32:1-20)

CHAPTER 32

Chapter 32 is a break in *The Book of Woes*, which covers chapters 28 to 31, and chapter 33. This chapter gives us a glimpse of the millennial reign of Christ upon earth. Isaiah moves with prophetic

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eloquence and ease over the various dispensations. In the previous chapters he was speaking about the slaughter of the Assyrians, but now he moves into the time of the millennium.

32:1 - *“Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.”* The millennial age now comes into perspective when the Lord Jesus Christ, the righteous King, will rule among His resurrected saints. It will be a rule of righteousness. The Lord’s millennial reign of righteousness is spoken of in many places. Psalm 72:1-2 speaks of Solomon, the son of David, as a king reigning in righteousness, but it also speaks of the greater Son of David, the Lord Jesus: “Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king’s son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.”

Also, those who have walked with the Lord wholeheartedly and have allowed Him to transform them into His image in the furnace of affliction will rule with Him and be His princes. This was the promise given to the twelve apostles by the Lord Himself in Matthew 19:28, “Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

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The Lord will rule in righteousness, and He will be King of Israel and King of the whole earth, but He will have princes who are just like Him who will also sit on thrones and judge the nations (see Rev. 20:6). David will be one of them (Ezek. 34:24).

32:2 - *“And a man 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.”* The redeemed of the Lord will be sources of strength and protection in the millennium, and also in the last days of the Church Age. The saints in the last days will be sources of spiritual waters for people to drink from in dry places.

32:3 - *“And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.”* This speaks spiritually of the fact that in the millennium there will be clear understanding and vision concerning God’s purposes and His Word. May we cry out to the Lord to obtain this blessing right now in the Church Age.

32:4 - *“The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.”* There will also be great clarity and fluency of speech, in the natural and in the spiritual.

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32:5 - *“The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl [greedy] said to be bountiful.”* No longer will those who do evil be called good and be exalted to high positions, as is the case of this present dispensation. Today, the wicked are highly exalted and praised, but it will not be so in the millennium.

32:6-7 - *“For the vile person will speak villany [or foolishness], and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices [or schemes] to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right.”* Even in the millennial reign, there will be sinners who practice all kinds of perverseness. Even though the devil and all his cohorts are in hell, the sin nature passed on from Adam will still be rampant because the nature of man will still need to be changed. Those who are born in the millennium will still have to battle with original sin. They will need salvation and the various graces that God has established for us. This is brought out in other scriptures which will be considered when we look at

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chapter sixty-five. The sinner in the millennium will withhold that which is good from those in need. However, the noble ones will live by their generosity.

32:8 - *“But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.”* We need to be cheerful givers. Proverbs 22:9 says, “He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.” We need to have a bountiful eye that sees the needs of others and seeks to meet their needs. If you give, it shall be given unto you, pressed down and running over (Lk. 6:38). The liberal shall live by their liberality and generosity.

32:9-14 - *“Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city: Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a*

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pasture of flocks.” This passage deplores the careless and vain women of Jerusalem, who will come to a very rude awakening when the Lord judges the city through the invading army of the Assyrians. In olden times, an invading army would destroy all the fruit trees. This warning is very similar to the warning in chapter 3:16-26. The thought is clearly for our days as well. Our churches must be filled with the wise women of Proverbs 31—those who walk piously and diligently with reverential fear. The land will be forsaken in our days until the Holy Spirit is again poured forth, as was the case in Israel (see Isa. 32:15).

32:15 - *“Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.”* One of the notable scriptural truths is that revival brings prosperity. The land and her fruits are affected by the outpouring of the Spirit of God. This is confirmed in Joel 1:12. Because of the outpouring of the Spirit, judgment and righteousness will be in the land.

32:16-18 - *“Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and*

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assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” These are the fruits of the kingdom of God—righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17). The hallmark of a true saint is quietness of spirit and a deep-seated assurance and confidence in the Lord that comes only from a life lived with God and in His presence. Also, the Lord promises that His people will dwell peaceably during the millennium, since there will not be any more wars in the millennial age.

32:19-20 - *“When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; and the city shall be low in a low place. Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.”* Now the Lord reverts to times of trouble. We are encouraged not to regard the weather or the dangers, but to constantly sow the Word of God to all people everywhere. (See Eccl. 11:1-6). “The city shall be in a low place” means that the city would be diminished through times of trouble and adversity.

CHAPTER 33

The Fifth Woe

Now we come back into *The Book of Woes*. This fifth and last woe relates to Assyria. As the Lord said in Isaiah 10:5-6, Assyria is the nation that has been used by God to punish the hypocritical nation of Israel. However, after Assyria fulfilled God's purpose against Israel it would also be judged.

33:1 - *“Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.”* Assyria had dealt treacherously with Jerusalem in the days of Ahaz when Israel went to Assyria for help against Syria and Israel (II Chron. 28:20), and they had no excuse for doing so. Now Judah was being treacherously invaded and spoiled by the one to whom they had turned for help, although God allowed it. We should pray that we are not used as instruments of chastisement as Assyria was, but only as instruments of mercy.

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33:2 - *“O Lord, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.”* Here the prophet breaks out into an exclamation of entreaty to the Lord as he foresees the difficulties that are coming. It is truly only those who wait upon the Lord and seek Him early that will know protection in the time of judgment. This judgment is now expressed.

33:3-4 - *“At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered. And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.”* In these verses, the prophet is describing the fact that the Lord would arise and scatter the nations. Their spoil would be rapidly gathered as though it was being devoured by locusts and caterpillars which devour ravenously.

33:5 - *“The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.”* In verse five we have the exaltation of the Lord in Zion. Zion is filled with judgment and righteousness; for it is His holy mountain. When the Lord rises to judge His enemies, He also brings revival to His people in Zion. Thus, He judges and purifies them and fills them with His righteousness. As never before, wisdom and knowledge should be our goals during these end times.

Isaiah

33:6 - *“And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.”* As Moses said in Psalm 90:12, “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” King David, in his instruction to his son Solomon in Proverbs 4:7 said, “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”

Wisdom is the stability of our times. Therefore, let us seek wisdom more than ever before so that we may be established in the troublesome times that are soon to come upon us.

33:7-9 - *“Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.”* This passage alludes to the occasion of Hezekiah sending his emissaries to Sennacherib with large sums of money to make an agreement with the Assyrian king (see II Kgs. 18:14). However, Sennacherib broke the covenant and continued wasting the cities and the land.

Isaiah

33:10-12 - *“Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.”* Here again there is the reiteration of the promise that the Lord will arise and utterly judge Assyria, whose set time had come.

33:13-14 - *“Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?”* Now the Lord turns to His own people who have not been walking uprightly. When God moves in revival, those in the congregations of the Lord who are not walking uprightly come under great conviction of sin, and they tremble before His holiness. The spirit of judgment and burning are there and the cry goes up, “Who can remain, or even join themselves to the churches?”

33:15 - The cry comes back, *“He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.”* Only at such a time can the truly righteous

Isaiah

remain. We must be those who walk uprightly, speak rightly, refuse bribes, and not be a companion of murderers and evildoers. It is only those who do these things that can dwell with God; for He is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29). Therefore, those who fulfill these qualifications will dwell safely on high from all the terrors that will come upon the ungodly in the day of God's judgments.

33:16 - *“He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”* In verse sixteen we see some of the blessings of living uprightly.

The Lord will not only take care of those who walk uprightly, but they will also know the wonderful presence of the Lord and behold Him in all His beauty and see Him *just as* He is.

33:17 - *“Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.”* To behold the Lord is the privilege of the godly. John 14:21 states, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest [or openly show] myself to him.” Seeing the Lord is a privilege that only those who are pure in heart can enjoy (Mt. 5:8). Visions of heaven are often accorded to the saints

Isaiah

here below on earth in order to encourage them on their life's pilgrimage. Likewise, they see the enemy from afar, but he does not come nigh them.

33:18-19 - *“Thine heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? where is the receiver? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand.”* This is referring to the Assyrians, a fierce looking people who spoke a different language than the Jews.

33:20-21 - *“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.”* Then the prophet switches his vision to the millennium when all will be at peace and rest. Jerusalem will be the center of the earth and Zion will be the place of supreme worship of the Lord, a place of rest. This is a millennial promise, but it also speaks of the last day Church that ascends Mount Zion. It will know extraordinary peace and solemnity.

Isaiah

33:22 - *“For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.”* This verse was used by the framers of the American constitution as a basis to form the three branches of the American government—the judicial, legislative, and executive branches (Supreme Court, Congress, and President). It also describes the triple office of the Lord Jesus. He is a judge—or a prophet like Samuel (I Sam. 3:20, 7:15), a lawgiver—or a priest like Ezra, and also a king.

33:23 - *“Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.”* Turning again to the enemy, the prophet sees how the wicked cannot muster their fleet. This very interesting phrase, “the lame will take the prey,” is used sometimes in Scripture to show the goodness of God to those who are weak, either naturally or spiritually; for they will be used by Him to spoil the enemy. Sometimes, there is a holy lameness, whereby God weakens a person and reduces him to nothing. It is in such a state that God can move upon us because He receives all the glory for it. This can be seen in the life of Jacob. He was made lame, but then he entered into the promises of God. There is also another side of lameness which describes a person who has fallen into sin, but is then restored by the Lord and goes

Isaiah

on to fulfill the purposes of God. This side of lameness is seen in the life of David. David was made lame through sin, but then he was restored and took the kingdom again.

33:24 - *“And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.”* God promises health and forgiveness to those who dwell in the millennium. However, I feel this applies also to those who will dwell in spiritual Zion in the last days of the Church Age. He is holding out to us divine health and forgiveness for all our iniquities. When the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, none were sick and none were lame (see Psa. 105:37). This concludes *The Book of Woes*.

Part Nine

THE LORD'S SACRIFICE IN BOZRAH

(34:1-17)

CHAPTER 34

This is a very remarkable chapter concerning, in great detail, the last-day judgments upon Edom (Jordan) when the Lord returns. Several names are used in this chapter—Bozrah, and the land of

Isaiah

Idumea. Bozrah is simply the name of an important city in Edom, and the land of Idumea is an alternative name for Edom. Edom is the land of Esau, the elder brother of Jacob (Gen. 36:8-9). The prophet receives a vision of the judgment upon the descendants of Esau when the Lord returns to wreak vengeance upon His enemies and to defend His beloved people, Israel.

34:1-3 - *“Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.”* This speaks of the terrible slaughter upon the mountains east of Jerusalem where the armies of the nations besieging the city of God will be encamped. This is the time of the last siege of Jerusalem spoken of by the prophet Zechariah in Zechariah 14:1-3. It occurs just prior to the second coming of the Lord.

34:4-5 - *“And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the*

Isaiah

fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.” This occurrence in heaven is also recorded in Revelation 6:14. Of old, the Lord has cursed Edom. As it is written, “Esau have I hated” (Rom. 9:13). The Edomites are the descendants of Esau, who despised the birthright and sold it for a bowl of pottage (Heb. 12:16). There will be a tremendous slaughter upon Edom and all her allies because of her perpetual hatred of Israel (Amos 1:11). Idumea is a region located in the land of Trans-Jordan.

34:6-8 - *“The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.”* Bozrah is a city in Edom. This will be the time when the Lord will revenge all that Edom has done to Israel. He will also judge the other nations that have allied themselves with Edom against His own people, Israel. This scene will be one of utmost intensity that can only be compared to the overthrow of

Isaiah

Sodom and Gomorrah. It is interesting that Jordan ignored the United Nations' sanctions on Iraq during the Desert Storm War in 1991 and helped Iraq.

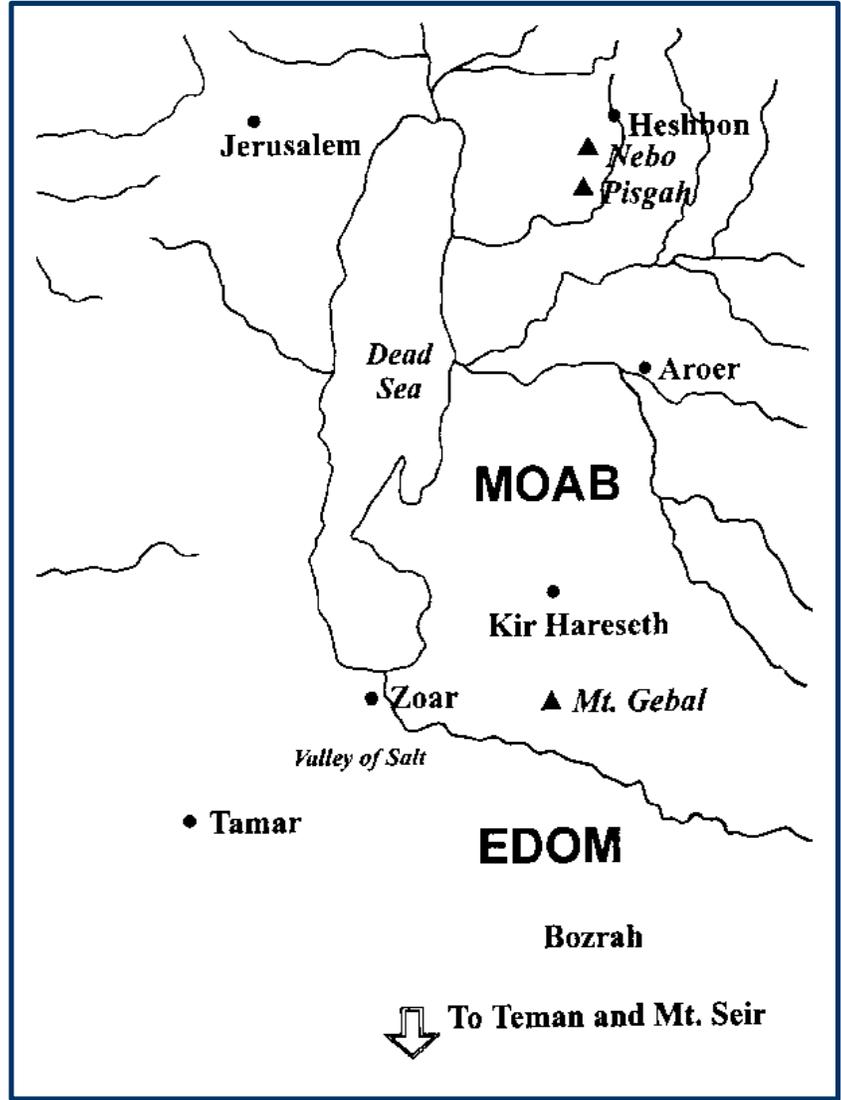
34:9 - *“And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.”* The judgments upon the land of Edom will be so great that even throughout the millennium it will resemble the unquenchable furnace of hell.

34:10 - *“It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.”*

However, where the burning pitch (tar) has not touched, the rest of the land will be one of emptiness and stones. It will lie waste and be desolate (see Joel 3:19).

THE LORD'S SACRIFICE IN BOZRAH

(Isaiah 34:6)



Isaiah

34:11-15 - *“But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.”* There will be no inhabitants of Edom left after the Lord returns in judgment. Only nettles, brambles, and the wild beasts will dwell there. The devastation of the land will be so great that the Lord has determined that these wild animals will have the land of that wicked and perverse people who rejected the blessing of the Lord as their inheritance.

34:16-17 - *“Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the*

Isaiah

lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.” Therefore, for all generations throughout the millennium, Edom will be given over to the beasts. To ensure that it is populated, none of the animals will lack their mate so that there is continual propagation of those animals and birds unto whom the Lord has given the land of Edom. None of the Lord’s judgments fail. They always come to pass. In the millennium people will be able to look at this prophecy and see that it has surely come to pass as the Lord said it would.

Part Ten

**THE DESERT SHALL BLOSSOM
LIKE A ROSE
(35:1-10)**

CHAPTER 35

In contrast to the devastation that the Lord has decreed upon Edom, we now see through the eye of the prophet the blessings that will come upon the land of Israel. Looking east, we have the desolation of Edom (Jordan), but looking west we have the pleasant land of Israel. Edom will be burning, but Israel will blossom like a rose during the millennium. In Joel 3:18-20, the prophet describes the great contrast that will exist between Edom and Israel in the millennium.

35:1-2 - *“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.”* What a time of rejoicing it will be for Israel as their nation is completely transformed into a very fruitful land.

35:3-4 - Therefore, the defenders of Jerusalem are exhorted: *“Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.”* The Lord

Isaiah

will defend Jerusalem, and He will come to wreak vengeance upon those who are attacking her. He will revenge her of her enemies, and He will strengthen the weak hands of the defenders of Zion.

35:5-6 - *“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”* Once the Lord returns, there are specific promises to the sick. As the healing waters flow, those who have borne the curse of physical deformities and afflictions are going to know Him as Jehovah Rapha. I believe that the last-day Church will also know the power of God to heal as never before. The land itself will spring to life; for all the desert places of Israel will have springs of water.

35:7 - *“And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.”* The Spirit of holiness will be in the land, and the highway of holiness will be clearly delineated. Today the unclean can come with impurity into the congregation of the righteous, but not in the millennium.

Isaiah

35:8 - *“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”* There will be a highway of holiness to the holy temple that will be built in Jerusalem (see Ezek. 40-48). Those who are unclean and have not allowed the Lord to circumcise their hearts will not be able to enter into it (Ezek. 44:9).

35:9 - *“No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there.”* No wild beasts will be there to harm the elect.

35:10 - *“And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”* The Lord will bring back His redeemed unto Zion with songs of joy. There will be such joy in the millennium as the Jews go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord!

DIVISION II

HISTORICAL EVENTS

CH. 36-39

Part Eleven

THE ASSYRIAN SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

(36:1 - 37:38)

CHAPTER 36

In this section of Isaiah, we have an eyewitness account by the prophet of the events that took place in the reign of Hezekiah, the godly king of Judah. It opens with the statement that Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

36:1 - *“Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.”* Hezekiah, who ascended the throne at the age of twenty-five, was barely forty years old when this invasion took place. This siege took place in the fourteenth year of his reign, which would have been in approximately 701 B.C., since he began his reign in 715 B.C.

According to Second Chronicles 29, he had already known one of the greatest revivals in the history of Judah in the first year of his reign. Hezekiah was a wonderful king and obtained this extraordinary testimony in Second Kings 18:3-6: “And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the

Isaiah

children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses.”

In his third year, Hezekiah rebelled against Shalmaneser, and he was able to release considerable portions of Israel from the Assyrian yoke (II Kgs. 18:7-8). In his fourteenth year, the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, termed Hezekiah proud and overbearing. Hezekiah sent ambassadors into Egypt for help. In the battle in the plain of Eltekeh, Assyria defeated the Egyptians and the Ethiopians. Then Assyria returned to the siege of Lachish, which is not very far from Jerusalem. This is when Hezekiah sent messengers to Sennacherib with much silver and gold to entreat him not to come up against Jerusalem. However, as we have noted in Isaiah 33:8, Sennacherib did not keep the covenant. As he records in his Assyrian annals, he not only took forty-six cities by means of well-stamped earth ramps and battering rams, but then shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage. Sennacherib also sent a host against Jerusalem (II Kgs. 18:17).

Isaiah

36:2-3 - *“And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field. Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiyah’s son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph’s son, the recorder.”* This is a record of the conversations between Rabshakeh, the field commander of the Assyrian forces, and these three court officers of Hezekiah. They met by the conduit of the upper pool.

36:4-6 - *“And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? I say, sayest thou, (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.”* The essence of these conversations is that Rabshakeh pointed out Hezekiah’s error. First, Hezekiah had trusted in Egypt, which was like a broken reed; and now he wanted the inhabitants of Jerusalem to trust in the Lord.

Isaiah

36:7 - *“But if thou say to me, We trust in the Lord our God: is it not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?”* Rabshakeh is alluding to the fact that Hezekiah had taken away all the altars dedicated to Baal and was turning the hearts of the people to the one true temple erected by Solomon and to the only true God (II Kgs. 18:4).

36:8-9 - Rabshakeh continues his pleading: *“Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master’s servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?”* Rabshakeh asks for pledges that Hezekiah will serve Sennacherib, and offers to give him two thousand chariots if, he sarcastically says, Hezekiah even has that many men to drive them. As Isaiah 1:7-8 declares, Jerusalem had been severely reduced to a very small number.

36:10 - *“And am I now come up without the Lord against this land to destroy it? the Lord said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.”* Rabshakeh also declares that the Assyrians have been

Isaiah

ordered to go up against the land. However, they did not know the counsel of the Lord. Although the Lord sent them against Judah because of Judah's sins, after the Lord has done His work upon Zion He will judge the boastful Assyrians (see Isa. 10:5-13). Sennacherib was very sure that God had sent him against Israel, and that is exactly what God said in Isaiah 10:5-6. It was God who had stirred up Assyria against Israel.

36:11 - *“Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it; and speak not to us in the Jews’ language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.”* Hezekiah's three emissaries plead with Rabshakeh to speak in the Syrian language, so that those Jews on the wall do not hear his arguments and become discouraged. Rabshakeh was very well educated, as here he spoke with Hezekiah's three emissaries in Hebrew, not in Syrian. He refused their request and taunted them by then addressing those upon the wall in a loud voice:

36:12-15 - *“But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and*

Isaiah

drink their own piss with you? Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria." Hezekiah had caused the people to trust in the Lord, and he was firmly standing on the word that Isaiah had spoken to him. He firmly believed that the Assyrians would not take Jerusalem.

36:16-17 - *"Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me: and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern; Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards."* The colonization plan of the Assyrians is revealed in these verses. They transplanted their captives from one end of their empire to the other, so that they could better control and govern them. Those in a land other than their own do not have a tendency to rebel since they are not fighting for their homeland.

Isaiah

36:18-20 - *“Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The Lord will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?”* Finally, Rabshakeh goes too far by demeaning the power of God as he compares Him to the other gods of those nations and cities that the Assyrians had already captured.

The towns of Hamath, Arphad, and Sepharvaim are found in what is today the land of Syria. Their confidence was in their gods of wood and stone, while Hezekiah was pleading with his people that they should put their trust in the God who made heaven and earth. Not only that, but Hezekiah encouraged them to put their trust in the word that the Lord had continually repeated—that He would defend Jerusalem. This is a very important truth. We cannot declare that the Lord will deliver unless He has promised to deliver.

Isaiah

36:21 - *“But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king’s commandment was, saying, Answer him not.”* Hezekiah had wisely told the defenders of Jerusalem not to argue with Rabshakeh, thereby allowing the Lord to speak for Himself. We should never *argue* with people about God. Let God speak for Himself.

36:22 - *“Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, that was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.”* Then the three court officers of Hezekiah returned to the king with their clothes rent as a sign of mourning; and told Hezekiah all the words of the Assyrian field commander, Rabshakeh, and how he had blasphemed and reproached the Lord.

CHAPTER 37

The Slaying of the Assyrians

When Hezekiah had received the report of the three court officers, he sent them to Isaiah the prophet who was resident in Jerusalem. These men were sent with a plea from Hezekiah that Isaiah would pray for the remnant of the Jews who remained in Jerusalem. The account reads as follows:

37:1-3 - *“And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.”* Hezekiah was a godly king, and so he went into the house of the Lord to meet with God and hear what God would say about these threats. Then he sent some men to Isaiah the prophet. He said that it was a time of trouble. The city was running out of food and they were all very weak. The women who were pregnant did not even have enough strength to bring forth their children.

Isaiah

37:4-5 - *“It may be the Lord thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.”* It is interesting that Hezekiah says to Isaiah, “the Lord thy God.” Isaiah was a great man. He was renowned for knowing God and being able to hear from God. Hezekiah knew that Isaiah had such a close and intimate relationship with the Lord that He would speak to him. Revelation comes by virtue of relationship. Peter asked John, who was leaning on the bosom of Christ, to ask the Lord who was going to betray Him. Peter knew that John was the closest to the Lord, and that the Lord would tell him (see Jn. 13:23-26). The Lord then told John the sign He would perform that would identify the betrayer.

The providence and goodness of God is seen here, as the godly king Hezekiah was strengthened in his determination to do that which was right by the presence of the saintly prophet Isaiah in Jerusalem. When we are in a position of leadership, we yearn for those who will give godly counsel

Isaiah

and who can hear from God, so that we might have our hands strengthened to do God's will in every situation we encounter.

So often, as in the case of Hezekiah, there are many who would give counsel to go down to Egypt (the world) for help instead of relying upon the Lord. Those who gave such counsel had obviously influenced him at first, for that is exactly what he did. He was relatively young. They either went without permission, or at least with his tacit consent. However, the godly counsel and prophetic word of Isaiah now comes again to encourage the king.

37:6 - *“And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.”* Isaiah had the word of the Lord for Hezekiah. In a time of need, it is so wonderful to know someone who has the word of the Lord upon their lips. We need to be those who always have that word upon our lips so that we can speak into people's lives and give a word in season to those who are weary (Isa. 50:4).

Isaiah

37:7 - *“Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.”* God here gives a respite and causes the Assyrians to be distracted from their purpose of overthrowing Jerusalem.

37:8-9 - *“So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying...”* We break here in the text to explain once again the phenomenon of an Ethiopian king at the head of the Egyptian army. In actuality, at this particular point in history, Egypt was in their twenty-third dynasty, which had three Ethiopian rulers—Sabakon, Sebichos, and Tirhakah. In 701 B.C., when this event took place, Tirhakah was only the prince, the brother of the new Pharaoh, Sebichos. However, since the account was written several years later, it is natural to call him king; for he did later succeed to the throne of the Egyptian empire. The death of Sennacherib, which took place in about 681 B.C., is recorded in verse thirty-eight. Therefore, it is obvious that this account was written several years after this event took place.

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It is apparent at this time that Lachish had fallen, and Sennacherib was fighting against Libnah, a town southeast of Lachish. Rabshakeh sent a letter by the hand of messengers to Hezekiah warning the king not to let his God deceive him that Jerusalem would not be given into the hands of the Assyrians. It is incredible that the Assyrians put the God of Israel on the same level as all these other heathen gods. Yet, they did it to their error and to their destruction.

37:10-11 - *“Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?”* Rabshakeh is looking back on what all his predecessors (the kings of Assyria) had done, destroying city after city and taking nation after nation by their mighty army. He tells Hezekiah to not let the Lord deceive him. What blasphemy!

37:12-13 - *“Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar? Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?”* Rabshakeh

Isaiah

goes on to name several other cities that the Assyrians had conquered. Gozan is located in northern Mesopotamia. It is mentioned in Second Kings 17:6. Haran is where Terah, Abraham's father, died (Gen. 11:32). Rezepth is between Haran and the Euphrates River. Eden, mentioned in Amos 1:5, is south of Haran along the Euphrates River.

37:14 - *“And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.”* When Hezekiah received the letter from the hands of the messengers, he read it and spread it out before the Lord. This is an action we heartily recommend when, as Christians, we receive disagreeable and threatening letters. Let the Lord see it and ask Him how to answer. Are we going to follow the steps that the good king Hezekiah took? There will be times when each and every one of us will be threatened by letters, but the key is to spread them out before the Lord and get His mind in the matter. Let the Lord fight for you.

37:15-20 - *“And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast*

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made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries. And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only." The godly king Hezekiah offers up his prayer unto the Lord. In his prayer, Hezekiah makes a number of very important points. They are as follows:

- 1.) That God made heaven and earth.
- 2.) That the gods of the countries overrun by the kings of Assyria were simply the work of men's hands.
- 3.) That the Lord will hear all that Sennacherib has said, which is a reproach unto the living God.
- 4.) That the Lord will save His people so that all the world will know that the Lord alone is God.

37:21-22 - *"Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria: This is the word which*

Isaiah

the Lord hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.” Isaiah was probably not there, but he saw what Hezekiah did in a vision.

It is a historical fact that the Lord caused the daughter of Israel to laugh the Assyrians to scorn by virtue of the great victory that the Lord gave to Zion. The scriptures teach us that the very same scenario will also take place at the second coming of the Lord, when the defenders of Zion will triumph gloriously over their attackers (Zech. 12:6).

37:23 - *“Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.”* The Lord now asks Assyria who it is that they have reproached and spoken against. It is now made clear that the Assyrians are challenging the Lord Himself. They have blasphemed and reproached, not only Jerusalem, but also the Lord of the whole earth.

37:24-25 - *“By thy servants hast thou reproached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the*

Isaiah

tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel. I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.” It was through his servants that Sennacherib heaped insults upon the Lord. He boasted of his conquests from Carmel to Egypt, although at this time he had not as yet entered Egypt. Perhaps a word of explanation is warranted here, since the NIV actually translates “besieged places” as the streams of Egypt. The actual Hebrew word is Matsowr, which means “limit or border.” Therefore, it is sometimes translated by commentators as Egypt, although we prefer to keep to the King James rendering of “besieged places.” One thing is clear—the Assyrian king was extremely boastful, and he wanted to add the prize of Lebanon, and the high place of Jerusalem to his acquisitions. However, the Lord had other plans.

Also, the little phrase, *“and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places,”* needs a brief explanation. When there was a mote around a city, the attacking army would dry up that mote by diverting the water. The king had the honor of pushing down the piece of wood

Isaiah

(the gate) that would release the waters to be diverted to a lake nearby that they had built. Therefore, Sennacherib could say he had dried up the rivers of different cities that his army had conquered.

37:26-27 - *“Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it; and of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities into ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.”* Now the Lord declares that He had ordained the Assyrian invasion to destroy the fortified cities. Therefore, the inhabitants of the cities had no strength before the Assyrian advance because the Lord had drained them of power.

37:28-29 - *“But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.”* In verse twenty-eight, the Lord addresses the sin of Sennacherib, which is succinctly declared to be his rage against the person of God. The Lord continues in verse twenty-nine by declaring that He will put

Isaiah

a hook in the nose of the Assyrians, and cause Sennacherib to return to his own land. The reason for this simile was that the Assyrians were prone to lead their captives by tying ropes to rings placed in their noses or lips. Thus, God said He would figuratively do the same to Sennacherib.

37:30-32 - *“And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.”* Now the Lord speaks comforting words of promise to the remnant of Judah remaining in Jerusalem. The Lord repeats His promise that there will be rejoicing on the part of the defenders.

37:33-34 - *“Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord.”* The

Isaiah

Assyrian king, who directed his armies when taking a city, would not even come to Jerusalem, but would return to his own land by the same route through which he had invaded the land.

37:35-36 - *“For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.”* In verses thirty-five and thirty-six, there is recorded for us one of the most amazing accounts of divine interventions in the annals of holy Scripture. God declared that He would not only defend the city, but we are told that in actuality it was the angel of the Lord that went forth and slew 185,000 men of the Assyrian army who were encamped around Jerusalem. As we have previously stated, this was a historical event, but it also presages and foreshadows that which will take place at the second coming, when the Lord will smite those who are besieging Jerusalem in the last days with His sword.

37:37-38 - *“So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and*

Isaiah

Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.” Even as the Lord declared, Sennacherib departed unto his own land to his capital city of Nineveh, and was slain by two of his sons in about 681-680 B.C. Esarhaddon took over his father’s throne. Esarhaddon was responsible, along with his son Assurbanipal, for massive deportations of the ten northern tribes of Israel, as well as repopulating the territory with inhabitants from other areas of the empire (see Ezra 4:2). This accounts for the fact that in the time of Jesus, the Jews would not pass through Samaria, for the Samaritans were non-Jewish. In the eyes of the Jews who were from the province of Judea, they were considered heathens.



**THE SLAYING OF
185,000 ASSYRIANS BY
THE ANGEL OF THE
LORD**

(Isaiah 37:36)

Part Twelve

HEZEKIAH'S HEALING

(38:1-22)

CHAPTER 38

38:1 - *“In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not*

Isaiah

live.” This event is recorded three times in the scriptures. It is also found in Second Kings 20:1-11, Second Chronicles 32:24-26, and as well as in the passage under consideration. Naturally, the question arises, When was Hezekiah sick—before or after the Assyrian invasion? It is clear that this illness occurred in the fourteenth year of his reign, since he reigned twenty-nine years and his life was extended by fifteen years.

The fourteenth year of his reign was the same year of Sennacherib’s siege of Jerusalem (approx. 701 B.C.). Therefore, his sickness took place just prior to the siege. We will expound on this later. Verse six confirms this, however, since in the context of this account God promises deliverance for the city of Jerusalem out of the hand of the king of Assyria. Hezekiah received this miraculous healing before the deliverance of Jerusalem. This shows that the heart of Hezekiah had been established in God’s ways by a miracle, to believe God for a mighty miracle against Assyria. So often God meets us and gives us a certain miracle or manifestation of His grace, so that we will be established and enabled to go through a greater ordeal and trial.

Isaiah

38:2-3 - *“Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, And said, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.”* Now we come to Hezekiah’s reaction to the fact that he had a terminal illness certified by a major prophet of God. Hezekiah entreated the Lord’s favor even though God had declared that he would die. He told the Lord to remember how he had walked before Him in truth.

38:4-8 - *“Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city. And this shall be a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.”* The Lord promised Hezekiah that He would extend his life by fifteen years. This gives hope to us all that the Lord in His infinite mercy at times will extend our life here upon earth.

Isaiah

Then the Lord promised a sign to Hezekiah that he would be healed. The account given in Second Kings 20:1-11 is more detailed, and we will now look at this remarkable phenomenon from this passage after Hezekiah prayed and wept sore.

Second Kings 20:4-7 reads: “And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.”

Thus, it was in a very brief period of time that the Lord answered Hezekiah’s prayer. So let us be encouraged that we do not necessarily always have to wait for weeks or months before our answer comes. For the Lord said, “Before you call, I will answer, and while you are yet speaking, I will hear.” Having clearly established that the healing of Hezekiah took place prior to the Assyrian siege of

Isaiah

Jerusalem, we see that Hezekiah was the recipient of a tremendous miracle and sign. Not only was he healed that his faith might be strengthened in God, but also he had the sign of the sun going back ten degrees.

We would like to look at this in more detail because of the background of this miracle. The account is given for us in Second Kings 20:8-11. Hezekiah inquires of the prophet Isaiah, “What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me?” Whereupon Isaiah asks Hezekiah whether the shadow upon the sun dial of Ahaz shall go forward ten degrees or backward ten degrees. Hezekiah’s response is amazing, for he declares that it is an easy thing for the shadow to go forward ten degrees, so let it go backward ten degrees. Thus, the prophet and the king are discussing the rotation of the sun in a most nonchalant way, as though it was perfectly natural for mortal man to determine the sun’s rotation and circuit through the heavens. Can you think of a greater conversation in the history of man upon earth? Both men knew God so well that when He spoke, there was no shimmer of unbelief in their hearts. The prophet cried unto the Lord, and the Lord brought back the shadow of the sun ten degrees. That shadow on the sundial would have been noticed by the whole city.

Isaiah

What an amazing conversation between two *men*! When you are accustomed to miracles, it is easy to believe God will do another miracle. That miracle strengthened Hezekiah's heart. Therefore, when the Assyrians came against Jerusalem, he could tell the whole city to trust in God because he knew that God was more than able to deliver them. Small miracles establish us in the way of faith, so that we can believe God for even greater things.

The Lord tested Hezekiah. He spoke through Isaiah telling him that he was going to die. Then Hezekiah prayed even more fervently, and the Lord heard his prayer and sent Isaiah back to tell him that his life would be extended by fifteen years. Jesus tested the Syrophenician woman when she pleaded with Him to heal her daughter by saying, "I am not sent to you. I am sent to the lost sheep of the tribe of Israel." I think that would discourage most of us. It required great faith on the part of the Syrophenician woman to say, "True, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables." Because of this, the Lord said to her, "Great is thy faith, go thy way, thy daughter is healed." (See Mt. 15:21-28, Mk. 7:24-30). Sometimes the Lord seemingly tries to discourage us. But, our outcome is determined by whether or not we press Him, as Jacob did, to meet our need.

Isaiah

The Prayer of Hezekiah

38:9-10 - *“The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.”* Hezekiah wrote this prayer that he made unto God after he had recovered from his sickness. The sickness was obviously of great intensity. Also, the fact that the prophet Isaiah had told Hezekiah to put his house in order is sufficient for the king to feel that he was going to the grave prematurely. Thus, at thirty-nine years of age, he was facing death; whereas the Lord had promised man in his dispensation a life span of seventy years (Psa. 90:10).

38:11 - *“I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.”* Now we see the piety of this godly king and his relationship with the Lord. Hezekiah’s great desire, as with so many like-minded saints of God, was to meet the Lord in the land of the living. We know that we shall see Him in eternity, but there is something so precious in knowing and seeing Him while here on earth during our mortal pilgrimage. We should

Isaiah

pray with the Greeks in John 12:21, “We would see Jesus.” Our glorious hope is to see Jesus just as He is (I Jn. 3:2).

38:12-14 - *“Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd’s tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.”* With that plea, the Lord most graciously sent Isaiah back to Hezekiah with this glorious message of an extension of life. Certainly, the effect of God’s intervention humbled the heart of the king.

Hezekiah said in the last part of verse fourteen, “O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.” Great oppression had come upon Hezekiah during the time that the Assyrians were coming against Jerusalem. When the Assyrian army came against Jerusalem, it was not just a human army that came, but all the demonic spirits of Assyria came with that army too. Those spirits would go out before the army and weaken their opponents. (For a confirmation of this truth see Daniel 10:12-13).

Hezekiah undoubtedly felt the oppression of these spirits. They were wearing down his mind and heart, and it could very well be that his sickness was a result of the oppression of the spirits of Assyria.

38:15 - *“What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.”* What does the Lord desire of us, the prophet Micah asks? “But to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (Mic. 6:8). This was the initial effect of God’s visitation to the king—he was humbled. But we shall see later that he, like many other people in Scripture, could not handle the blessing of God and became proud.

38:16-17 - *“O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.”* The Lord not only healed Hezekiah, but also put all of the king’s sins behind Him. How truly gracious the Lord was to Hezekiah. It reminds us of the experience which David spoke of in Psalm 32:1-2. “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord

Isaiah

imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” How we must pray that we personally meet the Lord in this area and receive this same precious assurance.

38:18-19 - *“For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.”* In the first instance, Hezekiah is quoting almost verbatim from Psalm 6:5 where David says that in the grave there is no remembrance of the Lord. We must remember that these saints were living in the Old Testament. Therefore, they did not have our glorious hope of going to heaven as soon as we die; they went to paradise (which was in the center of the earth) before the resurrection of Christ (see Lk. 16:19-31). Their hope was in the land of the living. The practice of praising the Lord was passed from father to son. May it also be with us. So great is the thankfulness of the king to the Lord for his deliverance from death, that he declares that he will sing songs unto Him. Hezekiah composed songs of worship to show forth his adoration of the Lord.

Isaiah

38:20 - *“The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.”* Hezekiah said he would spend the rest of his life praising the Lord. Miracles cause us to praise the Lord even more and more.

38:21 - *“For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover.”* We now come to the method the Lord used to heal Hezekiah. It is an acknowledged fact that figs do contain healing properties. I am not qualified to enter into a dissertation of this, but it is sufficient to say that health books do testify to this fact. However, while figs were used as an agency in the healing of Hezekiah, the source of his deliverance was divine. So we, too, should be very careful when we are sick to inquire of God, asking Him what method He desires to use to heal us, or keep us alive. We believe whole-heartedly in the scriptural admonition to lay hands upon the sick, but we cannot ignore the fact that the Lord, according to His infinite wisdom, does choose sometimes to heal through doctors, hospitals, and various medications as well. In the ministry of Christ, sometimes He told people to go their way and they were healed instantaneously. Yet on other

Isaiah

occasions, He did things to heal people. One time He made clay and put it on a man's eyes, then told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam, and he was healed of his blindness (see Jn. 9:1-7).

Hezekiah had just seen the tremendous miracle of the sundial going back ten degrees, but he had the humility to accept whatever means God chose to use to heal him. Also, the prophet Isaiah could have said he didn't have to use figs, since he was the vessel used to turn the sundial back ten degrees. But both of these great men of God had humility to accept God's means of healing.

38:22 - *“Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?”* The chapter closes by a reminder that Hezekiah did ask for a sign. While it is scriptural to ask for signs, we should be very careful about asking for them. Gideon, who asked for signs, then sought to live by them through the means of an ephod which caused all Israel to transgress (Jud. 8:27). So, please be careful. Regretfully, this is not the end of the life of Hezekiah, because now we come to chapter thirty-nine and we see how Hezekiah sinned through pride.

Part Thirteen

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY FORETOLD

(39:1-8)

CHAPTER 39

39:1 - *“At that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.”* This verse has

caused much perplexity to commentators throughout the ages. The main problem they encountered was reconciling the historical data of the Babylonian period at this time with the historical data of the occurrences in Judah. We simply accept Scripture as the final arbitrator. Therefore, this event took place not only just after Hezekiah's sickness, but also after the deliverance from the Assyrians. The reason for this is that, prior to the siege of Jerusalem, Hezekiah had impoverished the treasuries and the temple in seeking to buy off Sennacherib (II Kgs. 18:13-16). However, at the time of the ambassadors' visit, he was able to display his great riches. This can easily be established from the account in Second Chronicles 32:22-23: "Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side. And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth." Thus, the visit had to have taken place after his sickness and the subsequent deliverance from the Assyrians.

Isaiah

39:2 - *“And Hezekiah was glad of them, and showed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.”* The purpose of this visit by the Babylonians was to inquire about the miraculous sign that was given to Hezekiah. But there is an underlying motive—the king of Babylon was seeking a western alliance to try to overthrow the Assyrian yoke to which Babylon was also subjected. The fact that Hezekiah was glad to see them suggests that the king would have been amenable to an alliance with Babylon. It is difficult for us to imagine why, after having received such a great deliverance from the Assyrians, Hezekiah would be agreeable to an alliance with a heathen nation, especially after being rebuked by the Lord for sending ambassadors to Egypt earlier in his reign. However, anyone who has had responsibility for any sizable work of the Lord knows the terrible temptations to look to man instead of God for provision.

I fear that Hezekiah again succumbed to this folly. In this matter, God had left him to test his heart, as seen in Second Chronicles 32:31. “Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of

Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.” May God grant that we pass the test that Hezekiah failed.

Second Chronicles 32:25 tells us, “But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.” This account is so sad. Hezekiah had experienced three great miracles—the shadow of sundial turning back, his miraculous healing, and the mighty deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrian army. At first, he was tremendously humbled and said he would spend the rest of his days praising the Lord. Yet, his heart was afterwards lifted up in pride because of those mighty miracles. When God blesses, we are often in more danger of falling than when we are in trials.

The Apostle Paul had amazing revelations, even being caught up into the third heaven and there hearing things that are not lawful to be uttered upon earth. He made an outstanding observation about this principle. He said, “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I

Isaiah

should be exalted above measure” (II Cor. 12:7). Paul knew such great revelations and miracles that the Lord placed a *thorn in his flesh* to keep him humble. May we earnestly pray that God in His mercy will do whatever it takes to keep us humble, even if it means a thorn in our flesh like Paul experienced.

39:3-4 - *“Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon. Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.”* Isaiah is now sent to Hezekiah. It is clear from Hezekiah’s response that he had seen nothing wrong in showing all his treasures to heathen ambassadors; for it appears that pride had blinded his heart (cf. Obad. 1:3).

Second Chronicles 32:24-25 says, “In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign. But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon

Isaiah

him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.” Yet, he did finally humble himself as did the inhabitants of Jerusalem (II Chron. 32:26). Therefore, the judgments fell in his son’s time and not his. We need to realize that we can suffer for the sins of our parents, and our children for our sins.

39:5-7 - *“Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”* The immediate result of this judgment came upon the Hezekiah’s son Manasseh. He was taken into Babylonian captivity because of his sinful life. The complete fulfillment occurred about one hundred years later when the kings Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, and all their families were carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.

Another important lesson is that children receive their “nature” at conception. Therefore, according to the spiritual condition of the parents at the time of conception, so is the disposition of the child. Manasseh was born during the time of Hezekiah’s pride. Therefore, like his father at that time, who

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was apparently given to admiring the vanities of this world, he quickly took Judah into pride and idolatry. Oh, may we learn from these lessons.

39:8 - *“Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.”* Hezekiah received the rebuke and punishment that the Lord decreed, but his reply saddens one when he seems more concerned with his own days than the heritage of judgment that he was leaving to his offspring and future generations. Hezekiah should have pleaded with God that He did not judge his children because of his sin. However, the ultimate testimony of Hezekiah is in Second Chronicles 32:32, “Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.” He was a very great man, but his testimony was spotted; and what he did is recorded forever. We want to be irreproachable and presented spotless to the Lord (Jude 1:24). We want to have an untarnished testimony like the Lord Jesus. This ends section two of Isaiah and concludes the Old Testament of Isaiah. Now we are going to study the New Testament of Isaiah (chapters 40-66).

DIVISION III

MESSIANIC

40:1 - 66:24

Division III of Isaiah is divided up into three sections of nine chapters, with nine prophecies in each section.

PART FOURTEEN - THE BOOK OF CONSOLATION - 40:1 - 48:22

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1st Prophecy | The Ministry of John the Baptist Foretold (40:1-31) |
| 2nd Prophecy | The Righteous Man From the East (41:1-29) |
| 3rd Prophecy | The Lord as the Servant of God (42:1 - 43:13) |
| 4th Prophecy | The Promise of the Father (43:14 - 44:5) |
| 5th Prophecy | The Graven Images of the Heathen Condemned (44:6-23) |
| 6th Prophecy | The Conquests of Cyrus Prophesied (44:24 - 45:25) |
| 7th Prophecy | The Gods Who Are Carried Contrasted With the God Who Carries His People (46:1-13) |
| 8th Prophecy | The Fall of Babylon (47:1-15) |
| 9th Prophecy | The Purifying Furnace of Affliction (48:1-22) |

PART FIFTEEN - THE DELIVERER IN THE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST - 49:1 - 57:21

- 1st Prophecy The Polished Shaft (49:1-26)
- 2nd Prophecy The Obedient Servant Christ (50:1-11)
- 3rd Prophecy The Call to Hearken and Awake (51:1-23)
- 4th Prophecy Promised Deliverance From Babylon (52:1-12)
- 5th Prophecy The Suffering Servant (52:13 - 53:12)
- 6th Prophecy The Song of the Barren (54:1-17)
- 7th Prophecy The Sure Mercies of David (55:1-13)
- 8th Prophecy The Promise to the Eunuch and the Stranger (56:1-8)
- 9th Prophecy The Blind Shepherds Reproved (56:9 - 57:21)

PART SIXTEEN - THE DELIVERED - 58:1 - 66:24

1st Prophecy	The True Fast of the Lord (58:1-14)
2nd Prophecy	The Iniquities that Separate From God (59:1-21)
3rd Prophecy	The Promised Glory for the Last Day Church (60:1-22)
4th Prophecy	The Anointed Messenger (61:1-11)
5th Prophecy	Beulah Land (62:1-12)
6th Prophecy	The Judgments Upon Edom (63:1-6)
7th Prophecy	Isaiah's Intercession For Israel (63:7 - 64:12)
8th Prophecy	The Peculiar Nation Who Will Replace Israel (65:1-25)
9th Prophecy	The Birthing of Zion (66:1-24)

* N. B. - The three sections of Division III terminate with a similar warning concerning the wicked:

- 1.) 48:22 - "There is no peace to the wicked."
- 2.) 57:21 - "There is no peace to the wicked."
- 3.) 66:24 - The eternal state of the wicked.

Part Fourteen

THE BOOK OF CONSOLATION

(40:1 - 48:22)

Now we come to what is called “the New Testament of Isaiah,” from chapters 40-66. This section of the book of Isaiah covers twenty-seven chapters, corresponding with the number of books in the New Testament. It is the third division of the book of Isaiah, and we have entitled it *Messianic*. Division III

is also divided up into three sections: A.) The Book of Consolation - Chapters 40-48; B.) The Deliverer in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ - Chapters 49-57; C.) The Delivered - Chapters 58-66.

CHAPTER 40 - 1st Prophecy - The Ministry of John the Baptist Foretold

The Message of Comfort (40:1-2)

40:1-2 - *“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”* While this message of comfort certainly has immediate application to the defenders of Jerusalem after the Assyrian siege by Sennacherib, there is also a Messianic fulfillment of this prophecy when the Lord Jesus comes to deliver the nation of Israel from the final siege that terminates this dispensation of grace. Thus, the millennium will be a time of great comfort for Jerusalem. Her warfare will come to an end and the millennial reign of Christ upon the earth will usher in the thousand years of peace on earth and good will unto men.

40:3 - *“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”* John the Baptist, when asked, “Who art thou?” made clear reference to this passage of scripture (Mt. 3:3; Mk. 1:3; Lk. 3:4; Jn. 1:23). There was a tremendous anointing upon John the Baptist. Everyone immediately recognized that a prophet had arisen in Israel. The people asked him if he was the Messiah, and he said that he was not. Then they said to him, “Then are you Elijah?” And he said, “No, I am not Elijah.” So they said to him, “Well, who are you then?” He replied, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord” (see Jn. 1:19-23).

Why did John come and what was the purpose of his ministry? He came to introduce the King of Israel—Christ. In olden times, no king ever went anywhere without first being announced. Every king had a forerunner, even as Elijah ran before King Ahab (I Kgs. 18:46). Therefore, John was the one who announced the coming of the King of kings. His message was a message to those living in his days to prepare their hearts so that they would receive the Lord Jesus Christ when He came. We

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should also constantly seek to have all obstacles removed from our hearts so that we might receive with meekness the engrafted Word of God. Let us ask the Lord to help us remove all the works of the flesh from our lives, so that we might have a heart of flesh and not of stone (Ezek. 36:26).

40:4 - *“Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.”* Let us break up the fallow ground of our hearts so that we can become a fruitful field bringing forth fruit, more fruit, and much fruit. Those areas in our lives that have been exalted must be brought low; and the valleys, those places that have not developed properly, must be lifted up to assume their correct value and maturity. The result of allowing the Lord to do this work in our lives is that His glory will be revealed in our lives, and everyone will be able to see it.

40:5 - *“And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.”* Verse five refers to the life, ministry and person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The glory that was revealed, and which John spoke of in John 1:14, was the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of the glory of His Father (Heb. 1:3).

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40:6-8 - *“The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”* This is the commissioning of John the Baptist, where he heard a voice say to him, “Cry.” Life is so transitory. Moses declared that it is like a tale that is told (Psa. 90:9). Hezekiah declared that it is quicker than a weaver’s shuttle (Isa. 38:12). Certainly life is fleeting. We would do well to apply our hearts unto wisdom that we may use to the utmost that small part of history in which God has permitted us to live. Man and this earth will pass away, but God’s Word remains forever. Christ said in Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall never pass away.”

The Promised Second Coming

40:9 - *“O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!”* Here the declaration sounds forth from Zion and Jerusalem, “Behold your

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God!” Here is seen the long awaited appearance of the Messiah. For Christians, this applies to both His first and His second coming. However, for the Jews, it will be the time when He comes to bring them deliverance from the nations that will besiege them in the last days at His second coming.

40:10 - *“Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.”* The Lord will come with a strong hand and rule over all the earth. Many times it is difficult to determine which scriptures have relevance solely to the second coming because scripture often has three fulfillments. They are as follows:

- 1.) Historical
- 2.) Applicable to Israel in the millennium
- 3.) Applicable to the Church in the Last Days

Also, they can have an individual fulfillment in the life of a believer if the Holy Spirit quickens them that way.

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40:11 - *“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”* This applies to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Chief Shepherd of Israel (Psa. 23:1, I Pet. 5:4, Jn. 10:11). We see the great care that the Lord employs in the little expression “he gathers the lambs with his arm.” He gathers those who are unable to keep up with the flock. There is a very important truth about sheep here. Because of the abundance of the flocks in Israel, they were moved often. Thus, in the Church we have to move on from truth to truth, but we must be sure that we are bringing the young along with us.

The Majesty and Greatness of God Our Creator

40:12 - *“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?”* How small is the span of a man’s hand! How little it can hold of the waters of the earth! Yet God’s hand has given to the waters, to the heavens, and to the dust of the earth their proper quantities, their predeterminate form, and their proportionate place in the universe. He weighs

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them in His scales, whereas the scales that man employs can but contain a very small and minute part of the substance of the mountains and the hills. His greatness is seen in this.

40:13 - *“Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?”* Isaiah cries out, “Who can teach the Lord?” Paul quotes verse thirteen in Romans 11:34.

40:14 - *“With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?”* It is inconceivable that mortal man or any of the Lord’s creation can do anything but stand in awe of the majesty of Almighty God. We do well to heed the admonition of Elihu to Job, “Remember that thou magnify His work, which men behold” (Job 36:24).

40:15 - *“Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.”* Flying is a very salutary exercise. When gazing out of the window of an airplane flying at some 40,000 feet, on occasion it is possible to see complete countries stretched before us. It is then that we can realize how really insignificant the

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nations are when viewed from God's perspective. How truly they are but a drop in the bucket before their Creator. They are so very minute.

40:16 - *“And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.”*

Lebanon was the primary source of wood in the days of Isaiah, but even all the trees and cattle of Lebanon are not sufficient to offer a sacrifice worthy of God.

40:17 - *“All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.”*

In comparison to His greatness, the nations are so infinitesimal because of His majesty, grandeur, and power. Nations, even the mightiest, have no might in contrast to the Lord who diminishes them and increases them at will. Thus, when the might of Assyria came out against Jerusalem, one angel was sufficient to slay them while they slept.

40:18 - *“To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?”* To whom will we liken God? This little phrase is repeated twice and is intended as a challenge to those who worship idols.

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40:19-20 - *“The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.”*

Here the Lord derides the folly of those who make idols. To liken Almighty God to a graven image that a cunning workman has fashioned, and then to overlay it with gold or silver to enhance its appearance, is preposterous. Yet, the hearts of men are so blinded that they cannot understand the foolishness of their actions.

40:21 - *“Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?”* Now the Lord makes an appeal to their better senses. He asks those who make idols and worship them, “Have ye not known that which was taught mankind concerning the Lord from his creation by his fathers, from Adam who communed with the Lord in the garden in the cool of the day, and by Noah the preacher of righteousness who was responsible for making known to the generations after the flood the greatness and goodness of God?” Therefore, as Paul says in Romans 1:19-23, mankind is without excuse.

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40:22 - *“It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.”* Now the Lord declares His greatness. The nations are grasshoppers in the eyes of God who sits in the heavens and beholds the sons of men.

40:23 - *“That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.”* From these regions of grandeur above the earth, the Lord regulates the affairs of mankind. The Lord Almighty rules in the affairs of men as the prophet Daniel so clearly stated in Daniel 4:17. Daniel went on to say in Daniel 4:35, “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and [the Lord] doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”

40:24 - *“Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.”* Thus, only those who are the planting of the Lord will remain. Only those who are trees of righteousness will not be uprooted when the Lord comes in judgment (see Isa. 61:3).

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40:25-26 - *“To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.”* We would do well at times to go out into the night sky, even as King David was so prone to do. On one such occasion, David said, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3-4).

40:27 - *“Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?”* At this time, the Israelites were complaining because they felt that their just cause was not being attended to by the Lord. So many people reduce the Lord down to their level, and they think He has forgotten about them. At one Bible school where we ministered, the Lord gave my wife a vision of a funnel. He said to her, “Stop bringing Me down to the small end of the funnel to your level. I want to lift you up to see My greatness.” We must never bring God down to our level, and that is what Israel was doing.

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40:28 - *“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.”* How can we possibly challenge the wisdom and understanding of God? Regretfully, we are all prone as Job to question the dealings of the Lord in our lives, especially when we are passing through severe trials. However, as Paul says in Romans 11:33, “Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”

40:29 - *“He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.”* This parallels the *Magnificat* of Mary in Luke 1:52-53: “He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.” God meets us when we are at our “wit’s end.” When we are feeling very weak and worn out, He fills us with His strength. Just when we think we cannot go any further, and that we are about to collapse and have a breakdown, the Lord strengthens us.

40:30 - *“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.”* The days that are coming upon us are so grim that the hearts of many will faint.

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40:31 - *“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”* However, the Lord gives strength, grace, and victory to those who wait upon Him. That word “renew” can also mean an exchange of strength. The Lord gives us His strength in exchange for our human strength as we wait upon Him and spend time with Him.

The thought of renewing our strength expresses that which an eagle enjoys—the renewal of youth. An eagle comes to a point in his life where he begins to wither away and it looks as though he is going to die. Yet, suddenly he receives a resurgence of strength. Psalm 103:5 expresses this experience. “Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” May the Lord grant that we may press in to receive this blessing for the times in which we live. John Wesley and Dr. Pearson, the founder of the Christian Missionary Alliance, both experienced the strength of youth when they were well into their seventies and even eighties. It is for us too! Let us learn to wait upon Him who faints not.

CHAPTER 41

2nd Prophecy - The Righteous Man From The East

41:1 - *“Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.”* This chapter opens with a continuation of the theme of the last verse of the previous chapter—exchanging our strength for His strength.

41:2 - *“Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? he gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow.”* The Lord, who has been challenged by Israel that He is slow and indifferent to their needs, foretells in verse two about the raising up of the righteous man from the east, who is Cyrus, king of Persia. There are several references to Cyrus in Scripture. He was a world renowned king, and for this reason we include a short history of his life.

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Cyrus was raised up by God to bring about the release of the Jews who were taken captive by Babylon. He also increased the boundaries of the Persian empire, defeating Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt. Heroditus and other historians have singled out Cyrus as a model for rulers. He was truly a very great man.

41:3 - *“He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.”*

This simply means that he destroyed his enemies in places where he had not previously passed, even as he entered into lands as far south as Egypt and as far west as the Aegean Sea in Greece. But who raised up Cyrus? Cyrus himself acknowledged that it was the Lord. In Ezra 1:2 Cyrus made this testimony, “Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.”

41:4 - *“Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he.”* The Lord not only has purposes for individuals from before the foundation of the world (see Eph. 1:4, I Pet. 1:20), but also each generation has a distinct mission to accomplish.

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Every generation is given a different vision and message. Therefore, it is extremely crucial to know the message that God has for the generation in which you are living.

41:5 - *“The isles saw it, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.”* As Cyrus approached with his seemingly invincible army, the nations trembled in fear.

41:6-7 - *“They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering: and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved.”* What was the response of the heathen nations to the advance of the Persian army under the command of Cyrus? They turned to their idols for help, and even made new idols thinking they would deliver them.

41:8 - *“But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.”* Now the Lord speaks to His chosen people, Israel. What a privilege Abraham had to be called the friend of God. The Lord says that Abraham is His friend, the one to whom He shares His secrets. God

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did share His secrets with Abraham and the things He was about to do in Abraham's time as seen in Genesis 18:17, "And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?"

May we also seek to have such a close relationship with the Lord, whereby we can have the testimony that we are God's close and intimate friends. The key to becoming the Lord's friend is to always obey what He is telling us to do and always obey what His Word says. This is seen in the words of Christ Himself in John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, *if ye do whatsoever I command you.*" The Lord continued in John 15:15 by saying, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." We don't simply want to be servants of the Lord, but we want to be His friends, those who know His will and mind in every circumstance.

41:9 - *"Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away."* The army of Cyrus, which destroyed and overran the heathen, was the very army that the Lord raised up

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for the liberation of His people. Oh, to be always at the center of His will so that all things work together for our ultimate good.

41:10 - *“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”* The Lord now seeks to encourage His people who will be taken into Babylonian captivity. We, too, need the continual reminder that the Lord is with us; for events often do not show forth His presence. However, if they had read the prophecies of Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11), they would have known that they were only going to be in Babylon for seventy years. We should also remember the exhortation of the Apostle Paul to Timothy, to war a good warfare by the strength of the prophecies that went before him (I Tim. 1:18).

41:11-12 - *“Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.”* The Lord continues by promising His people a complete victory over those who

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have been angry against them. This is a promise to Israel that Cyrus will destroy Babylon. However, this promise is precious for the Christian, too. The Lord is saying here that when He turns our captivity, all those who were against us will become as nothing. In fact, we will not even be able to find them because the Lord is with us and has vindicated us!

41:13 - *“For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.”* It is the Lord who will hold our hand as a father holds the hand of a little child crossing the road. A pastor friend of ours was once up on an apple tree pruning, and he said to the Lord, “I will never let You go Lord. I will always hold on to You.” The Lord quickly replied and said to him, “No, it is I who will never let you go, and it is I who will always hold on to your hand.” Oh, what assurance! It is He who holds our hand and not the other way around; for then it would depend on our strength to hang on.

41:14 - *“Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.”* The Lord continues by further encouraging His people who are like a worm in their own eyes and in the eyes of many others. It is noteworthy that when there is a truth

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that applies to His people throughout all generations, we also see that truth in the life of Christ prophetically, as well as in Israel.

Calling Jacob a worm is the lowest form of creature to which one can liken a man. It is the place one falls to when, through great trials and afflictions, one feels reduced to a state of complete and utter exhaustion and impotency. After all these years of Babylonian captivity, Jacob felt like a worm. However, this is also a description of the Lord Himself, as we read in Psalm 22:6, the Psalm of the Cross: “But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.” Thank God that when He reduces us through His dealings to the status of a worm, He does not leave us there. He gives us His *beauty* for our *ashes* (Isa. 61:3). Our lives go in cycles. God uses us, and then He reduces us; and then He uses us again but in an even greater way.

41:15-16 - *“Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.”* The worm is transformed into a new, sharp threshing

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instrument having teeth. Our God is the God of restoration. He lifts the beggar out of the dunghill and makes him to sit with princes upon the throne. He causes us to fan away our enemies and scatter them like the chaff in the wind.

41:17 - *“When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.”* It is to the poor and needy that He extends His grace. We need to always have the attitude of the poor in spirit; for the windows of God’s blessings are opened upon those who are poor in spirit and those who are thirsty for more of Him. The Lord Jesus said in John 7:37-38: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

Let us ever have a hunger and thirst for the Lord, and the attitude of spiritual poverty. We never want to be like the Laodecian church who said that they were rich and had need of nothing.

41:18-19 - *“I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and*

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the box tree together.” If we are poor and thirsty, the Lord promises to completely transform the desert places of our hearts, as verse seventeen says. This is also a promise to the churches who are thirsty for a deeper walk with Him.

41:20 - *“That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.”* This, in part, the Lord does so that we may know that He has done it by His grace and His grace alone.

41:21-24 - *“[Present] your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you.”* Now the Lord addresses those who worship idols. He challenges the gods to prove that they are indeed gods by doing what God can do, which is to reveal the things that are to come. This is the proof that God is God, because He can declare the

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end from the beginning. He can declare the future and then bring it to pass. However, an idol of wood or stone cannot do this.

41:25 - *“I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.”*

Who is the one from the north that the Lord has raised up? It is none other than Cyrus, King of Persia. Persia was northeast of Israel. He would call upon the Lord and acknowledge that the Lord was the true God (see Ezra 1:2).

41:26 - *“Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous? yea, there is none that showeth, yea, there is none that declareth, yea, there is none that heareth your words.”* Isaiah returns now to the theme of the vanity and emptiness of idolatry.

41:27-29 - *“The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings. For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word. Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.”* The Lord reminds Zion and Jerusalem in

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verse twenty-seven that He had sent messengers of joy to them who had promised them deliverance from Babylonian captivity. Yet to those who followed idolatry, God says there is no counselor among them who could speak a word concerning these things.

CHAPTER 42

3rd Prophecy - The Lord As the Servant of Jehovah - 42:1 - 43:13

42:1 - *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”* This is spoken uniquely concerning the Lord Jesus and His earthly ministry. This verse and the three succeeding verses are quoted verbatim in Matthew 12:18-21. Jesus, as the elect of God, always performed the perfect will of His Heavenly Father. His principal ministry was to show forth the judgment of God to the Gentiles. As such, this verse has its most complete fulfillment through His Church in our day and age. Several of the other scriptures relative to the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus have, as we shall soon see in later chapters, a sense of accomplishment in their entirety only in and through the Church—His Body.

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42:2 - *“He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.”* This is a very important scripture relative to the Lord. It has an application for our days. Today, the Church is so often prone to battle with the weapons of the world, even undertaking marches to try to bring about changes in a nation. We saw this happen first-hand in New Zealand in the seventies when large, organized marches were held by Christians from many different denominations to promote holiness. Unfortunately, they were used by the political parties for their own ends. Then those who had led these marches tried to use them to overthrow pockets of wickedness in certain towns. In spite of warnings to the contrary, they continued their fight. The result was that strong spiritual forces were set in opposition to them. This brought the downfall of the leaders, who fell into immorality and consequently left the ministry. We cannot fight spiritual forces with natural means. It is prayer, and prayer alone, that changes things. Please listen—*His voice shall not be heard in the streets.*

42:3 - *“A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.”* The Hebrew word translated “bruised” is also translated “discouraged” in

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verse four. Therefore, this verse could be beautifully interpreted in this way: the Lord will not break a discouraged saint or extinguish his faint hope, but He will plead his cause in truth and justice.

42:4 - *“He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.”* This is also speaking of the Lord. He would not be discouraged during His earthly ministry until He had established the righteous judgment of His Father in the earth. Then this passage concludes with the thought that the *“isles,”* or the Gentiles, will willingly receive His law—the new covenant. In other words, the laws of God will be written upon the fleshly tables of their hearts.

The Call of the Lord

42:5 - *“Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.”* Here is a magnificent declaration of the awesome majesty of the Lord in His role as Creator of the universe.

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42:6 - *“I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.”* This is the Father’s call to His beloved Son. Jesus is the Light of the world (Jn. 8:12). Verse six and seven were quoted by the Apostle Paul in his defense before King Agrippa in Acts 26:15-18. Therefore, we have absolute proof that many of the verses spoken prophetically of the Lord Jesus Christ can be quickened by the Holy Spirit for our own life and calling. However, these verses were not only given for our edification, but also for the edification of the Lord Himself. The Lord had to believe that He was the fulfillment of these scriptures, and so He meditated upon them often, and they gave Him confidence to fulfill His mission on earth.

42:7 - *“To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.”* This beautiful verse applies to the literal opening of blind eyes and the literal release of the prisoner from jail, or prison. However, it also has a spiritual fulfillment. It is for the Lord to remove the veil from the hearts and minds of those held in doctrinal error, as well as those who are bound with evil habits and sins.

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42:8 - *“I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”* The Lord then declares that His glory will not be given to idols, meaning that idols will not lay claim to bringing to pass or predicting that which is to come. This is, and always will be, the sole prerogative of the Almighty. Therefore, the Lord reiterates that the proof that He is God lies in the fact that He can declare that which is going to happen, and He alone has the power to bring it to pass.

42:9 - *“Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.”* The Lord will do nothing without first revealing it to His servants (Am. 3:7). Therefore, we can be absolutely sure that God will reveal to us what He is going to do in the earth in these last days before He brings it to pass. This is one of the aspects of the ministry of the Holy Spirit—to show us things to come (Jn. 16:13).

42:10-12 - *“Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing,*

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let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands.” The whole earth will break forth into a song of adoration to the Lord in the last day revival and in the millennium.

42:13-15 - *“The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.”* Now the Lord in His fury declares that He will arise and deliver His people from Babylonian captivity. However, there is also a last-day fulfillment of this prophecy when the Lord will defend Jerusalem from the Arab besiegers. The reference to “the drying up of the rivers” speaks of the diverting of the Euphrates River from its original course by Cyrus. Babylon was dependent on the Euphrates River for its moat-like defenses of the city. Therefore, when Cyrus diverted the river, he was able to capture the city.

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42:16 - *“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”* Here the Lord makes reference to His deliverance of the captive Jews who have erred, which was the reason why they went into Babylonian captivity. It was God’s judgment upon them. In verse sixteen, He speaks of His plan to bring these spiritually blind back to Jerusalem, but above all back to Himself.

42:17 - *“They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.”* However, those who have trusted in idols, like the Babylonians, will be turned back and be greatly ashamed.

42:18 - *“Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.”* Now the Lord gives a clarion call to those in spiritual darkness to see, and to those who cannot hear, to hear.

42:19 - *“Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord’s servant?”* Verse nineteen describes the opinion that many have concerning ministers. Apparently, this was also the opinion Christ’s contemporaries held of Him

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during His earthly ministry. The contempt with which the world looks upon God's people at times will, as we shall see in Isaiah 52:15, cause even kings to shut their mouths in awe at the wisdom of God that will be revealed through His dealings in the lives of His elect.

42:20 - *"Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not."* For that which they had not been told, they shall now see in the time of the revelation of all the Lord's works.

42:21 - *"The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable."* In these days when even the Church is denigrating the law, there *is* going to be a people in whom God will magnify His law.

42:22-23 - *"But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore. Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken and hear for the time to come?"* The Lord now returns to the theme of the deplorable spiritual condition of His people. Although this was true in the case of those in Babylonian captivity, regrettably this is also true of so many of His chosen ones today. The exhortation to "hearken carefully for the time to come" demonstrates that these verses apply to

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all ages. Many of God's children today have been snared into pits of sin and despondency, even as those in Babylonian captivity were. Thus, we do well to meditate upon Psalm 40:1-3, that we, too, may be heard and brought out of a horrible pit, and be restored to the paths of righteousness.

42:24 - *“Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.”* Let us be forewarned of tempting the Lord by practicing known sin, for He will surely give us up to all kinds of bondages, even as He did to Israel of old.

42:25 - *“Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.”* Even though the Lord had given Israel into Babylonian captivity, they did not perceive that this had happened to them, except precious saints like Daniel (Dan. 9:3-15).

CHAPTER 43

43:1 - *“But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.”* The Lord, as the

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Creator of all mankind and Jacob in particular, now gives reassurance to His beloved people Israel, “Fear not.” It is a beautiful and comforting study to research and then meditate upon the “fear nots” of the Word of God. We offer a few here for your consideration:

- 1.) To Abraham when he was called of God (Gen. 15:1).
- 2.) To Hagar when she had been cast out of Abraham’s household (Gen. 21:17).
- 3.) To Isaac to rehearse the call that he had inherited from Abraham his father (Gen. 26:24).
- 4.) To Jacob when he was about to go down to Egypt (Gen. 46:3).
- 5.) To Israel when they would go to battle (Deut. 20:3).
- 6.) To Joshua the Lord said “be not afraid” when he was about to go into the Promised Land (Josh. 1:9).

These and nearly sixty other references in holy Scripture should make us realize that to fear is common to mankind. Yet, when we are so troubled and even tormented by fear, let us go to the scriptures and meditate on the wonderful “fear nots” of God to His people throughout all generations. We will surely find at least one circumstance that fits our need.

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43:2 - *“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”* The Lord reassures Israel that they belong to Him and that He has called them by name. This is in itself a beautiful truth. Have you entered into that place in God whereby, even as with Moses, He knows you by name? (See Ex. 33:17). What blessed assurance, and how often we need these reminders of His ever-loving care! This verse has three aspects of trouble—waters, rivers, and fire. But the Lord is with us through all of life’s storms.

We had a friend who was a missionary to Tibet many years ago. One time in her travels in that country she had to cross a certain river that was flowing very rapidly, and yet she did not know how she was going to cross the river. Nobody was around to help her, and so she simply prayed to the Lord. Then she opened her eyes and saw a man come. He crossed the river by jumping from one stone to another stone which she was unable to see. Once he was got to the other side, he beckoned her to follow him across the river. She obeyed, and as she walked across the river she felt the stones beneath her feet that he presumably had walked upon. She got to the other side of the river, and was

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just about to thank the man for his help when he disappeared. Immediately, she knew it was an angel who had helped her across those turbulent waters.

This verse also assures us that when we go through the fires of life we will not be burned. This reminds us of the three friends of Daniel who were in the fire but were not burned, for the Son of God was there with them (see Dan. 3:25-27). When we go through fiery trials, which Peter speaks of in First Peter 4:12, we will be preserved if the Son of God is with us.

43:3 - *“For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.”* It is the general thinking of eminent theologians that the Lord is referring here to the fact that He raised up the Ethiopians, the Sabeans, and the Egyptians to come against Sennacherib, and thus divert him from his original intent against Jerusalem (cf. Isa. ch. 20 and 37).

43:4 - *“Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.”* This is a truth and scriptural law. The Lord is willing to give up many in order to work out His purposes in His elect. In the case of Job, the Lord sacrificed the lives of his sons and daughters, as well as an untold number of servants who perished

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when the Sabeans and Chaldeans confiscated all his cattle. God literally disposes of, destroys, and casts aside many who are not walking uprightly in order to work out His purposes in His chosen ones. This has caused me to tremble and draw very close to the Lord that I might, by His grace, serve Him in an acceptable and pleasing manner. This truth is further enunciated in Romans 9:15-23, where we see the two groups of people mentioned as the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy.

43:5-6 - *“Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.”* Again we have one of these blessed “fear nots” of Scripture, followed by the promise that the Lord will bring the seed of His chosen ones from the east and the west. The Lord commands the north and the south to give up His sons and His daughters. This applies in the first instance to the Restoration Period that followed the Babylonian captivity, but there is also a distinct realization that this prophecy can only be fulfilled in its entirety at the second coming of the Lord. However, we see a spiritual application of this prophecy that is very beautiful. When so moved by the Holy Spirit, we can speak to the north, south, east, and west to give up those who are

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held in bondage, so that they may respond to the Gospel and find their place among the congregation of believers. Also, when we have pleased God and passed through our trials triumphantly, God literally brings our spiritual seed to us from far countries.

43:7 - *“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”* All of God’s people have been formed for His glory. This is amplified by the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:28-30, where he unequivocally states that those who are called of God are predestinated to be conformed to His glory.

43:8 - *“Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.”* Turning once again to the time of the Babylonian captivity, the Lord speaks of those whom He has already spoken of, particularly in chapter forty-two, as the blind and deaf people. The message is to those who were once spiritually blind, but are now having their *spiritual* eyes opened.

43:9 - *“Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.”* The Lord now throws out a challenge to the nations.

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Who among them can declare the things that are past, or those things that were declared prophetically to come to pass?

43:10 - *“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.”* The Lord is speaking to Cyrus in this verse. He calls Cyrus His servant because he performed His will by releasing the Jews from Babylonian captivity. There is no one we can look to for help except the one and only true God.

43:11 - *“I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour.”* The Lord Jehovah is the only One who can save people. There is no Savior besides Him. The Apostle Peter confirms this in Acts 4:11-12: “[Jesus Christ of Nazareth] is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Many years ago the Lord spoke to a missionary in India telling him to go to a certain Indian temple at a specific time and wait there. He went there and waited and waited, and he saw many people come

into that temple. Then he saw a certain old Indian man come up into the temple and fall down. He was very close to the point of death. He shook his fist at the temple and called his god by his name and said, “You are a liar. You promised me peace, and I have no peace.” Then the Lord told the missionary to go and tell that man about the One who gives true peace. The missionary said to that man, “Your god can’t give you peace, but my God can.” He led him to salvation, and as that man lay dying he said, “I have found what I have longed for all my life—peace!” Truly there is no savior besides Christ who is the Prince of Peace.

43:12-13 - *“I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?”* The whole argument in this passage is between God and those who worship idols. The Lord again declares His omnipotence. He will bring to pass His purposes and no one will stop or hinder Him. It is very reassuring, not only when contemplating the affairs of nations, but also our own individual lives that

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He who has begun a good work in us will fulfill that which He has promised to do (Phil. 1:6). Not even the gates of hell can prevail against His purposes (see Mt. 16:18). Praise the Lord!

4th Prophecy - The Promise of the Father - 43:14 - 44:5

43:14-17 - *“Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King. Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow [or a wick].”* The Lord is again speaking of the time in history when He will raise up Cyrus to bring down the nobles of Babylon by making a way in the sea. He will accomplish this by causing Cyrus to divert the Euphrates River. This is elaborated upon in chapter 44:27. The Lord will bring forth the chariots and horsemen of Babylon to battle, and they will all be vanquished and become like a burned wick.

This is an amazing prophecy. The prophet Isaiah was living at the time of Hezekiah, and it was nearly a hundred years before Babylon came into prominence, and about a hundred and fifty years before it

was destroyed. Yet, the Lord is prophesying of it many years ahead of time. The Lord prophesied of its destruction even before it arose as a world power. When the pious Jews went into captivity, they were prisoners of hope because the Lord had already said He would deliver them from Babylonian captivity.

43:18-21 - *“Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.”* The Lord tells the children of Israel to forget the former things because He is going to do a new and different thing. God’s people are so prone to live in the past, forever dwelling on what God did in the past. Denominations make monuments to that which God once did.

In the time of Hezekiah, the people were worshipping the brazen serpent that Moses made (see Num. 21:8-9), a monument of the past. Hezekiah had to destroy it (see II Kgs. 18:4). We should always be

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seeking the Lord for a new vision and a new message. It might be an old vision, but it is renewed, revived, and extended, and it is something fresh. The Lord is the God of the new manna. The children of Israel in the wilderness could not eat yesterday's manna; they had to eat fresh manna every day (Ex. 16:15-20). We have to receive something new from God every day (Mt. 6:11).

Flowing through the Book of Isaiah are several principal themes:

The Life of Christ

The Assyrian Invasion of Israel

The Babylonian Captivity

The Judgment upon Babylon through Cyrus the King of Persia

The Subsequent Restoration of the Jews to their Homeland

Yet, hidden in the pages of this glorious book, there is also reference to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. References are found in such passages as verse nineteen, where *a new thing* is linked to the mention of water, the symbol of the blessed Holy Spirit. "*Rivers in the desert*" speaks of the outpouring of the

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Holy Spirit upon His thirsty people. The Lord is insistent that He has formed His people for His praise. This is reiterated in First Peter 2:9, where He tells us that we are a chosen generation, and that we should show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

43:22-24 - *“But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.”* Then comes the cry of the Lord concerning the spiritual state of Israel. They were in a very backslidden condition, neglecting their religious duties of prayer and sacrifices. In the place of their religious duties they were committing sin. They were not faithful in their tithes and offerings.

43:25 - *“I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”* This is one of the most triumphant verses in all of evangelicalism, for in it is the promise of forgiveness of sins. In the times of Isaiah, they wrote on papyrus and on skins. Their ink

did not have the acid that the ink in our days has; and, whereas our ink is permanent, their ink wasn't. When they wanted to remove or erase something, they just took a damp cloth and wiped it off and it could not be seen any more. That is what God does with our sins—He blots them out. The blessedness of having one's sins blotted out is the peculiar prerogative of the Christian. It is because of Christ's shed blood upon the cross. No other religion can promise the peace and joy of salvation that faith in Christ alone brings. This was available to the Israelite of old through the performance of the ritualistic sacrifices that looked toward His vicarious death upon the cross. (This is treated in more detail in chapter 53.)

43:26 - *“Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.”* Israel had not obeyed the Lord. Therefore, even though this is a repetition of chapter 1:18, where the Lord invites Israel to again plead (or reason) together with Him, they cannot justify their actions.

43:27 - *“Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me.”* “Thy first father” refers to the wicked King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who was the founder of the Northern Kingdom. He introduced idolatry to Israel in the form of the golden calves at both Dan and Bethel (I

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Kgs. 12:28-29). Thus, God gave them up. In another sense, *“thy first father”* could also refer to Adam, the father of the human race. The teachers of Israel at this time had gone astray from God. A nation’s teachers can lead it either in the paths of righteousness, or into sin, as was the case in Israel at this time.

43:28 - *“Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.”* The curse to which Jacob was given is that curse which was pronounced by the six tribes from Mount Ebal in Deuteronomy 27:13, “And these shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.” The curse itself, which was upon those who disobeyed and went far from God, is recorded in Deuteronomy 28:15-68. In this is included the Babylonian captivity (Deut. 28:48-53).

CHAPTER 44

44:1 - *“Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen.”* Here the Lord addresses Jacob as His servant and calls Israel His chosen.

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44:2 - *“Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.”* Again we have one of those blessed “fear nots” of holy Scripture that are such a comfort to the saint along his pilgrim journey from earth to heaven. God formed us in the womb. God knew us when we were yet in the womb, and He called us to a particular purpose. (See Jer. 1:5, Gal. 1:15).

As we begin to scrupulously read this passage, we realize that the Lord is speaking of more than the nation of Israel. This passage is referring in particular to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. These three names that are used to describe the younger son of Isaac are worthy of note for they epitomize the three degrees in the spiritual life, not only of the heir to the covenants, but also of all Christians.

- 1.) Jacob means “deceiver.” Jacob responded to the call of God. He is a type of a carnal believer in the land of Egypt.
- 2.) Israel means “prince with God.” Israel is the one who wrestled with God and had his name changed. He is a type of the chosen of God in the wilderness of the Christian experience.
- 3.) Jeshurun means “straight and upright.” This was the name given to Jacob after he died. Therefore, it speaks of the saint who has crossed over Jordan and is in the Promised Land. This is the saint who has been proven faithful.

The promises that follow leave little doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ is indicated in this passage. Verse three is the promise of the Father to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He mentions this promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon His disciples in Acts 1:4-5.

44:3 - *“For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.”* This glorious promise ranks among the

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highest throughout all scripture and was quoted by John the Baptist as being one of the distinct features of the ministry of Jesus. He would baptize His followers with the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11), and by reason of this outpouring, His followers would spring up everywhere throughout the whole earth.

44:4-5 - *“And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord’s; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.”* The Lord now returns to the familiar theme of declaring the things that are to come, putting to shame those who worship idols.

5th Prophecy - The Graven Images of the Heathen Condemned - 44:6-23

44:6 - *“Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”* The Lord declares that there is no God besides Him.

44:7-8 - *“And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them. Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my*

Isaiah

witnesses. *Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.*” He continues by declaring that it is He who has appointed the ancient people (Israel) to perform all His will. As we have already said, the Lord declares the future before it comes to pass. He does this so that we can rightly interpret world events in the light of scripture. There is no God besides the Lord who can do such things.

44:9-12 - *“They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.”* The makers of idols are again held up in derision. How is it possible for rational man to believe that he can form a god out of metals or by carving a tree, the other part of which he uses to make a fire either to roast flesh or keep

himself warm? In many foreign countries people make little altars to their gods outside of their houses. They also make the choicest dainties for their gods. That is why the Lord says here that their delectable things will not profit. They will not get any recompense for making all kinds of sacrifices to their gods.

44:13-17 - *“The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.”* Idolatry is

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so foolish and illogical. A man plants a tree, and then he cuts it down once it is grown. Then he uses part of the wood as fuel to bake bread, and uses the other part of that wood to make a god, and he prays to that god and says, "Deliver me; for thou art my god." Why do people do this? Because it is God who has shut their spiritual eyes and closed their heart so that they cannot understand.

44:18-20 - *"They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"* The heathen are all deceived. Many years ago as we were flying in an airplane, the Lord opened my eyes and I saw all the demons that governed the nation we were flying over. I said to the Lord, "Oh Lord, if only these demons were removed, then these people would be able to understand the Gospel." Then the Lord said to me, "Whose world is it?" I said, "It is Your world, Lord." He said, "Who has the power

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to deliver this country from idols?” To this I replied, “You do, Lord.” Then He said to me, “I gave this country over to idols because they rejected Me.” It is God who gives people over to idolatry after they have rejected Him.

44:21 - *“Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.”* Now the Lord reminds Israel that they are His servants, and therefore different from the other nations that are deluded. God opens the eyes of His people to know the truth.

44:22 - *“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.”* The privilege of being a child of God brings the blessed assurance of having one’s sins blotted out, and being redeemed from sin’s cruel bondage.

44:23 - *“Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.”* Thus, the redeemed are exhorted to sing aloud because of His wonderful

Isaiah

redemption. We are to sing aloud for joy because our Redeemer is the Lord who made heaven and earth.

6th Prophecy - The Conquests of Cyrus Prophesied - 44:24 - 45:25

44:24 - *“Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.”* The Lord created and formed Cyrus with a purpose.

44:25 - *“That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish.”* One of the purposes of the Lord is to bring to nought all the diviners of the idolaters. The wisdom of the heathen will be turned into foolishness. It is a remarkable fact that today much of the world’s population is ensnared by idolatry. Even some of the high-tech nations are blinded by Buddhism, Confucianism, and other false religions.

44:26 - *“That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will*

Isaiah

raise up the decayed places thereof." The Lord now declares that His purposes for Jerusalem will be accomplished. The Lord confirms the word of His servants. When God speaks through you, He will bring to pass what He says. In the days of Hezekiah, Isaiah is prophesying of Cyrus decreeing that Jerusalem is to be built and inhabited. At the time he was prophesying, Jerusalem was already inhabited and built, but was later destroyed by the Babylonians.

44:27-28 - *"That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."* The Lord had repeatedly declared that although He would send the Jews into captivity, He would also restore them to their land. Thus, He repeats this promise that not only will Jerusalem be rebuilt after the devastation of the Babylonian invasion, but all the other cities in Judah will also be rebuilt.

Then the Lord declares *how* Babylon will fall. It will be through the drying up of the rivers, meaning the canal system that was developed from the nearby Euphrates. It was Cyrus who dug an artificial lake behind a hill. The defenders were completely unaware of this and were caught off guard when during

Isaiah

the night of October 22, 539 B.C., Cyrus diverted the waters of the Euphrates into the lake and dried up the moats surrounding Babylon. The army of Cyrus marched under the gates of Babylon and captured the city while the defenders were enjoying a drunken debauchery (see Daniel 5). Then the purpose of God's elevation of Cyrus is stated. He will give the command to rebuild Jerusalem. This took place in 536 B.C. after the three year reign of Darius the Mede.

Here the Lord calls Cyrus by name about 150 years before he is born. The Lord also called Josiah by name nearly 300 years before he was born (I Kgs. 13:2). What an amazing God we serve! There is none other who can do such marvelous things.

CHAPTER 45

45:1 - *“Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut.”* Cyrus the great Gentile king is called:

- 1.) The Shepherd of God (44:28)
- 2.) The Anointed of God (45:1)

Isaiah

It is a remarkable fact that this warrior king was named by Isaiah nearly 150 years before his birth. It is thought that it was the prophet Daniel who showed Cyrus in the scriptures God's predeterminate plan for him. Cyrus was, by all accounts, a man of greatness in the truest sense of the word. He was acclaimed by historians throughout all generations as the model for rulers everywhere. Nearly three centuries after Cyrus' death, Alexander the Great made a pilgrimage to his tomb, and was awed by its simplicity and its inscription that had been written by Cyrus prior to his death. Cyrus was particularly remembered, not only for his military prowess and his conquests of the nations from the Persian Gulf to the Aegean Sea and then on to Egypt, but also for his great compassion and magnanimity toward his enemies.

The fact that he recognized the hand of God in his victories is revealed by his declaration which is recorded in Ezra 1:2, "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah." This is the sense of Isaiah 45:1, which is a detailed prophecy about a man who was to be born 150 years later. The amazing thing is that he was a Gentile king, not one of the chosen of Israel.

Isaiah

He presages and foreshadows the Gentiles, who will enter into the promises of Israel, both in the building of the temple and ruling and reigning with the Lord.

The phrase *“loosen the loins of kings”* is confirmed by the account of the last night of the Babylonian king, Belshazzar, in Daniel 5:6. “Then the king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.” Belshazzar lost all of his strength as Cyrus was besieging the city, and the two powerful levee gates of the city of Babylon were opened from within by the army of Cyrus.

45:2 - *“I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.”* The crooked places refer to the winding and ever twisting course of the Euphrates River, which was also part of the defensive system of Babylon. It was straightened out when Cyrus built the artificial lake. The strong brass gates of Babylon, which were thought to have been impenetrable, were taken by Cyrus, for the Lord had declared that Babylon would fall to the Persians.

Isaiah

45:3 - *“And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.”* The Lord promises Cyrus that He will give him all the treasures that the Babylonians had amassed through their voracious conquests of many lands. However, though much has been said concerning the historical fulfillment of these scriptural promises to Cyrus, we must never forget that they also have a spiritual significance for the Church Age and for our own lives in particular.

It may well be that we, or our church, are confronted with tremendous obstacles which are hindering us from entering into a neighborhood, city, or a foreign land on the mission field. By claiming these promises given to Cyrus almost three thousand years ago, we can see the Lord throw down the spiritual strongholds of the enemy; and we will, by His grace, enter into the geographical inheritance that He has ordained for us.

“Treasures of darkness” can be for us the hidden treasures of dark trials. By them, we receive truths that are unattainable except we walk through dark times and come to know, as Abraham of old, the horrors of darkness (Gen. 15:12). This is often the price that we must pay to have our faith

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strengthened and to receive the hidden manna of God's Word (see Rev. 2:17). The Lord quickened this verse to me when I was in Bible school in England. He said to me, "I will give you the treasures of darkness." That is one of the promises that a person always embraces immediately, only to find out by experience the terrible price that has to be paid to see its fulfillment.

Many years later when my dear wife was lying in a hospital, the Lord appeared to me and said, "All you are interested in is getting through this trial very quickly." I said, "Yes Lord, that is absolutely true." Then He said to me, "Have you forgotten the promise I gave to you in Bible school? I promised to give you the treasures of darkness. How do you expect to obtain the treasures of darkness unless you go through darkness? There are some things that you cannot make up in heaven. There is no sorrow, suffering, or darkness in heaven. Therefore, do not go through your trials too quickly, but pick up every treasure that I have placed in that valley of darkness for you."

45:4 - *"For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."* Here is the reason for God's calling upon a life. Callings are given to bring to pass God's purposes for His people. This is illustrated in the New

Isaiah

Testament, speaking of the five ministry gifts. They are given for the sole purpose of perfecting the saints (Eph. 4:12). In the immediate narrative under consideration, it is clear that Cyrus was raised up by the Lord for the express purpose of liberating the children of Israel from Babylonian captivity. The remarkable aspect of this whole episode in history is the minute detail in which the Lord chose to declare it. The Lord declared it:

- 1.) Through Moses (Deut. 28:49-57).
- 2.) Through Isaiah, both the rise and fall of Babylon.
- 3.) Through the other prophets, such as Jeremiah and Habakkuk.

For the space of about seven to eight hundred years, the Lord thoroughly warned His people of that which He was going to do because of their sins. The Lord was so longsuffering with Israel and warned them for many years; but after they continually refused to listen to Him and obey Him, He finally judged them.

45:5 - *“I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.”* Now addressing Cyrus, a hundred and fifty years before the event, the Lord

Isaiah

declares that He has strengthened him for this task, even though Cyrus did not have a personal knowledge of Him (at least until the time Daniel spoke to him). The whole purpose is that all may acknowledge the greatness of the Lord who has brought all these events to pass, declaring them long before they happened.

45:6 - *“That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.”* The purpose was to glorify the Lord. Now all nations would know that the Lord was the only true God. We must not forget that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 19:10). The prophecies that we have personally received enable us to fight a good warfare (I Tim. 1:18). That which God declares, whether for an individual or a nation, He will surely bring to pass.

45:7 - *“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil [adversity and sorrow]: I the Lord do all these things.”* The Lord then continues by attributing to Himself the bringing into existence of all circumstances. A fact that is often ignored to one’s detriment is that the Lord is the

Isaiah

author of both good and evil. This was acknowledged by Job (see Job 2:10). By *evil*, I mean adversity, not sin.

45:8 - *“Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.”* This verse could be interpreted thusly: the righteousness of heaven would come down to those on earth, who would in turn be recipients to manifest His righteousness and His great salvation. Also, there is the thought that in the fall of Babylon, God’s righteousness was revealed in the deliverance of His people from the tyranny of Babylon.

45:9-10 - *“Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?”* Then we have again the thought of the omnipotence of the Lord, who makes and shapes us and our destinies. We must never challenge our parents, or the Lord. We must accept the way the Lord made us. We might think the handicap of a person is a tragedy of birth. However, the

Isaiah

Lord Jesus stated that the man born blind in John chapter nine was born blind so that the works of God could be made manifest in him (Jn. 9:1-3). Also, the Lord clearly states in Exodus 4:11 that He is the one who makes the dumb, the deaf, and the blind. This has been made very real to us since my own dear wife was born with a heart problem. Upon seeking the Lord, He said that He had measured her strength for a purpose. Now paralytic, she is awaiting her miracle.

45:11 - *“Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.”* In the Hebrew, this verse actually reads, “Are you commanding Me?” In other words the Lord is saying, “Are you telling Me what to do?” Some have incorrectly taken this verse to mean that we are supposed to command the Lord. It is true that we are to decree things when God tells us to, but we are never to command the Lord and tell Him what do; we simply speak forth the word He gives us. The NIV translation of this verse confirms this. “This is what the Lord says—the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker: Concerning things to come, do you question me about my children, or give me orders about the work of my hands?”

Isaiah

45:12 - *“I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.”* The Lord gives the reason now why He cannot be challenged or commanded concerning His plans for His sons. It is simply this—He is God! This was the argument the Lord used when Job questioned God’s dealings in his life (see Job 38:1-4, as well as Job 38-40).

45:13 - *“I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.”* Then directly referring to Cyrus, the Lord again makes it very clear that He is the One who raised this Gentile king to prominence. Cyrus did not personally rebuild Jerusalem, but he gave the decree for it to be rebuilt. Thus, he is credited with building it. When Cyrus came into Babylon, he gave a decree saying, “All those who were taken captive by the Babylonians are released and set free.” Normally, when a conqueror would come upon a situation like this, he would sell the people back into their lands and accrue unto himself great wealth. But Cyrus did not do that; he let them go (and not for price or reward).

Isaiah

45:14 - *“Thus saith the Lord, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God.”* Because Cyrus released the Jews and let them go home free, the Lord tells him that He will give him a reward. The Lord gave the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Sabeans into his hands. Thus, the nations recognized that God was with Cyrus. However, we believe that these promises are also given to His people in the Church Age.

45:15 - *“Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.”* As King Solomon also said, God is a God who dwells in thick darkness (1 Kgs. 8:12). His affairs are accomplished away from the eye of mortal man. We can only see Him and His workings with the *eye of faith*.

45:16-17 - *“They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.”* The prophet Isaiah now continues with this theme of contrasting the greatness of God with idols and graven images. He begins by declaring

Isaiah

that those who follow idols will be confused, and ends by assuring Israel that they will be saved and not be ashamed. This is also a promise to us. Once the Lord has passed us through great trials, in the end we will know His great salvation and we will not be confounded.

45:18 - *"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else."* The Lord now states that He created the world with a purpose and to be inhabited. This statement is so different to what many scientists and philosophers would have us believe. The Lord did not create the world in vain, but with a purpose. Our generation has a purpose to fulfill—to take God's glory to the nations and prepare them for His coming.

45:19 - *"I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right."* God now reveals His ways to us. As Amos 3:7 declares, God will do nothing unless He declares it first to His servants, the prophets. That God declares what He is going to do and then He brings it to pass is an aspect of His greatness. God does not speak in some dark corner of the earth.

Isaiah

45:20 - *“Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.”* Although primarily speaking to those who have escaped from Babylon, the Lord is also addressing those in the end times who will escape from all those enemy nations who will come against Jerusalem in the last days.

45:21 - *“Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.”* Speaking again to those who worship idols, the Lord asks them who has declared the things that will come to pass. Only God has, and therefore there is no savior except Him.

45:22 - *“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none e/se.”* Then He gives the invitation to those who are escaped to come unto Him and be saved. Isaiah is the evangelical prophet. He constantly speaks about salvation. (The word *salvation* occurs twenty-

Isaiah

eight times in the book of Isaiah, and the Lord is referred to as *Saviour* more times in the book of Isaiah than in any other book of the Bible).

45:23 - *“I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.”* Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, even as Paul interprets these verses in Philippians 2:10-11. (See also Romans 14:11).

45:24-25 - *“Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”* In the Church Age, and also in the millennial reign, God’s people will confess that in Him only do they have righteousness and strength. As Paul states in Romans 11:26, all Israel will be saved. In Romans 11:26, Paul is quoting Isaiah 59:20, which reiterates this glorious promise for Israel. The end for Israel is good. They will be justified by the Lord Himself. Then the Jews will say, “In the Lord have we righteousness and strength.” The whole nation of Israel will glory in their Lord and Savior.

CHAPTER 46

7th Prophecy - The gods who are carried contrasted with the God Who carries His People

46:1-2 - *“Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity.”* This short chapter is a continuing contrast between the impotency of idols and the all-potent God.

Bel and Nebo were the two founding pagan deities of Babylon. To show their allegiance to these gods, the rulers and kings were often given names that included reference to these heathen founders. *Nebuchadnezzar* and *Belshazzar* are two examples in particular. Here in these verses, these gods are derided because they have to be carried upon cattle. They will also go into captivity when Babylon falls, unable to save themselves or those who put their trust in them. They are gods only in name, for they are powerless to do the things that only the true God can.

Isaiah

46:3-4 - *“Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar [or gray] hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.”* Here the Lord contrasts Himself to these images by saying to His people, “You have to carry your idols and gods, while I, the one and only true God, carry you from the cradle to the grave; and I will deliver you from your enemies.”

46:5-7 - *“To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.”* Because repetition is one of the means whereby a truth is firmly planted in our minds and hearts, the Lord again challenges them, as He has so many times before, to compare Him with these useless idols of vanity.

Isaiah

46:8-10 - *“Remember this, and show yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”* Now the Lord calls His people twice to remember:

- 1.) The stupidity of graven images.
- 2.) The former things whereby God showed Himself to be God by declaring the end from the beginning.

The Lord’s counsel will stand and His purposes will come to pass in all the earth. He will do all His pleasure.

46:11 - *“Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.”* The Lord then states precisely what His sovereign pleasure is in this instance, namely to call Cyrus from the east.

Isaiah

Here Cyrus is called *“a ravenous bird”* by virtue of the fact that he was a Persian. That is the temperament and nature of the Persians. Cyrus devoured many nations. Therefore, he was also termed ravenous. Yet, in so doing, he was performing the predeterminate counsel of God.

46:12-13 - *“Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.”* Turning once again to His backslidden people, God pleads with them to listen and obey. God will manifest His righteousness by placing salvation in Zion. This is a promise that is also proclaimed by the prophet Joel with respect to the last days (Joel 2:32). The prophets, as we have previously stated, confirm and establish one another.

CHAPTER 47

8th Prophecy - The Fall of Babylon

47:1-3 - *“Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the*

Isaiah

millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.” Now the prophetic flow turns to the judgment upon Babylon. The importance of this chapter is not simply historical, but it is of the utmost importance prophetically. In the book of Revelation, we see some of these same scriptures repeated concerning the fall of spiritual Babylon (Rome) in the last days.

In these verses, the Lord contrasts Babylon to a delicate woman who was accustomed to being waited upon, but will now be stripped of all her ornaments and be forced to grind meal with millstones as a slave. The Lord says in verse three that Babylon is not even worthy to be treated as a man. Therefore, He will take awesome vengeance upon that city and nation.

47:4-5 - *“As for our redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.”* The Lord will redeem His people Israel and send Babylon into eternal darkness, no more to be called “the lady of kingdoms.” They thought that Babylon was the lady of kingdoms

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because so many other kingdoms had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar. This phrase is so often used of the inhabitants of modern cities like Paris and New York because there are many people in those cities who are caught up with the latest fashions.

47:6 - *“I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.”* The Lord gave His people into the hand of the Babylonians because of their iniquities. However, the Babylonians did not show the Jews any mercy, but went further than the Lord intended. This opened the way for the Lord to judge the Babylonians.

47:7-8 - *“And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children.”* The Lord is speaking of Babylon's phenomenal pride in verses seven and eight. She thought that she would retain her position forever, and thought she would never have trials or mishaps as others. This thinking is very prevalent with the wicked who

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have attained unto prominence. Adolf Hitler's Third Reich proclaimed that they would remain for one thousand years. The Lord declared later through Jeremiah that seventy years would be the sum total of Israel's captivity in Babylon and then Babylon would fall (Jer. 25:11).

47:9 - *"But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments."* Her destruction and loss of children and widowhood came in one night. That was all the time that it took for God to destroy that mighty empire. This foreshadows the fall of spiritual Babylon in the last days (see Rev. 18:7-8). Also, one of the primary sins of Babylon was that she was the mother of sorceries, witchcraft, and spiritism. Virtually every false religion in the world has its roots in Babylon.

47:10 - *"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me."* Their confidence was in their wickedness. Like Satan of old, their wisdom had corrupted them (Ezek. 28:16-17). The Chaldeans were renowned for their learning, but it corrupted them. It is not learning

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and degrees that will keep us on God's path for our life, but a heart that is committed to doing God's will.

47:11-12 - *"Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail."* God now declares that evil will come upon them from Him, and they will not know where it came from. He is, however, referring to Cyrus, king of Persia. The Babylonians did not even know the Persians were attacking them until it was too late. Their sorceries and enchantments were not able to save them.

47:13 - *"Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee."* All these stargazers and those who write monthly horoscopes which have entered into the Western

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world will not be able to save themselves through their predictions. All of them will suffer the torments of eternal fires.

A dear friend of ours, Stanley Frodsham, the editor of *The Pentecostal Evangel* for many years, was walking down a certain street in Springfield, Missouri one day. A lady came up to him and said to him as she grabbed his hand, “Mr. Frodsham, let me tell you your future.” He shook his hand away from the woman’s clutch and said, “My future has already been told. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life!”

47:14-15 - *“Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it. Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.”* Even all the merchants will perish, too. Babylon was a merchant city, but none of their wealth would save them. Babylon would be utterly destroyed. Historical Babylon typifies spiritual Babylon (Rome). Revelation 18:9-19 speaks of the merchants of the world mourning when spiritual Babylon falls because it was a source of commerce.

CHAPTER 48

9th Prophecy - The Purifying Furnace of Affliction

48:1-2 - *“Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness. For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The Lord of hosts is his name.”* In the previous chapter, the Lord addressed the heathen, but now the Lord returns to admonish His people in verses 1-2. There is a word of wisdom for us here. We do not want to get so wrapped up in what is happening in the end times in the nations of the earth that we forget what God wants to do in the Church, and in our own lives in particular.

The children of Israel make mention that they belong to the Lord and have confidence in the holy city of Jerusalem and the temple, but they do not walk uprightly. However, there is nothing new under the sun as King Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 1:9. Christians today place their confidence in the fact that

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they hold a position in their church, but they walk in complete disobedience to the precepts of Christ and His Word.

48:3 - *“I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.”* The Lord then reminds them that He has declared the former things that have come to pass.

48:4-5 - *“Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.”* The Lord knew His people were obstinate and would try to claim that their idols had brought them through and delivered them. Therefore, the Lord showed them everything beforehand.

48:7-8 - *“They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them. Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very*

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treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.” The Lord continues by stating that He has brought to pass new things with respect to Babylon that did not exist before, lest His people should say they already knew those things. In verse eight God says to Israel, “I knew, even before I chose you, that you would go astray. Yet, I chose you anyway because of My great love for you.” (See Hosea 11:8-9).

48:9 - *“For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.”* Then the Lord declares that even though Israel is worthy of being cut off because of all their abominations, because of the Lord’s goodness He will not do so. If He had cut off Israel, as Moses said in the wilderness (Num. 14:13-16), then the other nations would have said that the Lord was incapable of bringing Israel into all the promises that He had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

48:10-11 - *“Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.”* Thus, the Lord refined His people in the furnace

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of Babylonian affliction, and there He chose them for His glory. Likewise with us, it is in the furnace of trials and deep affliction that the Lord mercifully purifies us, and then chooses us for an ongoing ministry and His further purposes for our lives. The Lord said that many are called, but few are chosen (Mt. 22:14). Why? Because we are chosen in the furnace of affliction (difficult trials, darkness, confusion, and confinement), and very few Christians will allow God to take them through the purifying fires.

48:12-14 - *“Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans.”* In verses 12-14, the Lord repeats again that Israel is the called of God, His chosen people. Also, we see that He who has called them is the Alpha and Omega—the first and the last. This is the very manner by which the Lord Jesus Christ introduced Himself to John on the Isle of Patmos in Revelation 1:11. He is the One who created the heavens and commands

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them to this very day. Then the Lord proceeds by declaring His deep love for Israel. It is because of this love for Israel that He will severely judge Babylon.

In 1973 my wife and I made a trip to Israel after having some very beautiful meetings in Ammon, Jordan. The Israeli soldiers at the border were very rough with us. They even went so far as to claim that a flashlight battery I had was a bomb. After a long time of waiting and being harassed, they finally let us go. We then went up to the Mount of Olives to spend the night in a hotel. While I was wishing we were back in Ammon, Jordan where the Christian people had been so nice to us, and I was thinking anything but kind thoughts about the Jews after that stop at the border, the Lord appeared to me in our hotel room. He said to me three times, "I love Israel." You must always immediately agree with the Lord when He says something, so I quickly agreed with Him and said, "I love Israel too, Lord." The Lord loves Israel and guards them as the apple of His eye.

48:15 - *"I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous."* Finally, after their purification by the Lord in Babylonian captivity, Israel will again be prosperous. This will openly be fulfilled in its entirety in the millennial reign of Christ upon earth, for it

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is then and only then that Israel will experience the tremendous spiritual blessing of the Lord, as well as economical blessing.

48:16 - *“Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.”* The message the Lord gave to Isaiah now flows plaintively from the lips of this prophet. God speaks in the open, not in some dark, secret corner. The Lord has repeated this many times in Isaiah.

48:17-18 - *“Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”* If only Israel had hearkened to the Lord, their situation would have been so different. The Lord was the One who sought to instruct them in the good way which would have resulted in Israel having peace like a river. However, they would not listen. Therefore, Babylonian captivity awaited them.

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When we hearken to the Lord's commandments and obey His voice, He will bring us into perfect peace, and we will know an extraordinary impartation of His righteousness to us.

48:19 - *"Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me."* They could have entered into the covenant promises of Abraham, whereby their seed would have been as the sand upon the seashore (Gen. 22:17).

48:20 - *"Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob."* Now God gives a clarion call to those in Babylonian captivity to leave the city and the nation of the Chaldeans. This took place when Cyrus gave the decree in 536 B.C. Thus, they would become the witnesses of the Lord and show forth His praises after their deliverance. They would be able to testify of how the Lord sent them into captivity because of their sins, but then released them at the set and appointed time.

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Here the Lord is telling the captives (long before they went into captivity) to leave Babylon. The reason the Lord spoke this through the prophet Isaiah was so that they would have an assurance that He would break the yoke of the Babylonians and not leave them there forever. However, He also said this because, when Cyrus gave the decree and opened the gates of the city of Babylon and told the Jews that they were free to go back to their homeland, only a few actually left. Many had become comfortable in their bondage and chose to stay in Babylon (see Isa. 52:2).

48:21 - *“And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.”* Here the Lord reminds them of that which He did for them when they came out of Egypt. He reminds them how He caused the water to flow in the wilderness so that His beloved people did not thirst. We are to drink from the Rock, the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive our life and refreshing from Him.

48:22 - *“There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.”* As we have said in the outline, the three sections of Division III (ch. 40-66) all end with a similar warning (48:22, 57:21, 66:24). Peace is a

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result of living uprightly before God and man (see Psa. 37:37, 85:10, Rom. 2:10). However, those who do not walk uprightly will not know peace, but only restlessness.

Part Fifteen

**THE DELIVERER IN THE PERSON OF
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

(49:1 - 57:21)

CHAPTER 49

1st Prophecy - The Polished Shaft

This second section of Division III, chapters 49-57, is also divided into nine prophecies. The Lord is introduced in this chapter as the Arrow of the Lord, the One who hit the mark of the high calling of God for His life.

49:1 - *“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.”* The expression “O isles” is a term used for the Gentile nations; and the phrase “ye people from afar” speaks of a generation yet to come (not in the time of the prophet). This is evident from the next statement, for it speaks of the birth of the Lord Jesus. This is confirmed in Matthew 1:20-23: “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet,

saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” Christ was called from His mother’s womb and mention was made of His name before birth.

49:2 - *“And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me.”* In verse two, we see the formation of Christ. He is described now as the Arrow of God. An arrow has basically two parts:

- 1.) The arrowhead made of steel like a sword.
- 2.) The polished shaft made of wood.

In the life of the Lord Jesus, the first aspect of this Divine arrow that we see in the Gospels is the encounter between the Lord and the doctors of the law in the temple in Jerusalem (see Lk. 2:41-52). There He asked and answered questions to the amazement of all. This was the Word flowing like a sword from His mouth. The arrowhead had already been formed at the tender age of twelve. He had the ability to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Being well equipped to partake in

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such a discourse with these learned advocates of the scriptures, one would naturally think the Lord was ready to begin the ministry God had sent Him into the world to fulfill.

Yet, the very next phrase reads *“in the shadow of His hand hath He hid Me.”* The shaft of the arrow is made of wood. In the natural, it has to be polished, so that when flying through the air toward the target to which it has been aimed, the aerodynamical forces will not deflect it due to any rough edge on the shaft. It is also like this in the spiritual. In the analogy of an arrow representing the person of the Lord Jesus, the wooden shaft represents Jesus as the Son of man. It represents His humanity. The arrowhead represents Jesus as the Son of God, the Word incarnate.

Therefore, as the Son of God, He could not fail; yet as the Son of Man, with the frailty of the human nature, He could have missed the mark. The divine shaft was polished under the shadow of the Father’s hand. At that time, from about the age of twelve to twenty-eight, Paul tells us that He was learning obedience by the things He suffered (Heb. 5:8). The Arrow of God was made ready before the time. For possibly two years, the Lord was hidden in the quiver of His Heavenly Father in Nazareth.

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An archer only puts an arrow into the quiver when it is ready and polished. If we look at examples in the Old Testament, we would have to say that Joseph was ready for the throne prior to his summons. He was ready at least two years beforehand when he interpreted the dreams of the baker and the butler. Therefore, we could say that Jesus was ready before the time, too. Each and everyone one of us are arrows in God's hands. We have a mark to hit, a purpose for which God has created us. However, it is one thing for us to be ready; yet it might not be God's time to shoot us forth toward our mark. Christ was ready, but He had to wait in humility for His Father's time. Then in the fullness of time, at the age of thirty, He was presented to Israel by John the Baptist at the Jordan River. There He was placed in the bow and was shot toward the mark that God had ordained for His life—the cross of Calvary.

A friend of mine had a vision of the last day before Jesus went to the Jordan River to be announced by John the Baptist. He saw the Lord Jesus Christ in His father Joseph's carpenter shop, and He had just finished a table. He stepped back to look at it and admire it. Then He took off His carpenter's

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apron, folded it, and put His tools away. He opened the door, took one last look at the shop, and then closed the door and walked down to the Jordan River to be baptized by John.

Satan did everything he could to deflect the Arrow from going to the cross, even to the extent of seeking to cause Him to come down from the cross when He was hanging on it. Yet his efforts were to no avail. The polished shaft had hit the mark, and it remained embedded there until He was taken down by His disciples, having completed, as the Arrow of God, His preordained flight to the cross. Likewise, as arrows in His hand, we must also first have our tongues sharpened like a two-edged sword. This is accomplished by the study of the Word of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We then must submit to His chastenings until we become polished shafts, learning obedience in the school of suffering. Then we will also be shot forth to hit that glorious mark which God preordained for our lives before the foundation of the world.

49:3 - *“And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”* The Lord God speaks with such assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ is His servant Israel (He came from Israel), in whom He would be glorified. Christ came to glorify His Father, not Himself (see Jn. 8:50, 17:4).

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49:4 - *“Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.”* Even the Lord Jesus passed through the valleys of deep anguish and despair when He thought His work and labor were all in vain. This can be well understood when everyone had forsaken Him and He hung alone upon the cross, surrounded by two malefactors. It is, therefore, understandable that we wonder at times if our lives have accomplished anything during our time upon earth. Our response of faith, however, must ever be that our judgment and our work is with the Lord. May God grant that He makes something more of our lives than what appears to us—something eternal and wonderful for His honor and glory.

In view of the fact that we are arrows in His hand, we must expect times of intense darkness in our lives. We will experience times when we are seemingly put on His shelf; times of intense perplexities, times of rejection and inactivity; times when our wheels seem to be spinning, but we are not going anywhere. But oh, may we take strength and courage from meditating upon this wonderful truth concerning Christ, the Arrow of God.

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49:5 - *“And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.”* We now come to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord stated specifically that He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (see Mt. 15:24). However, Isaiah clearly states that Christ will not bring Israel back to God at this time. They rejected Him, and He felt that He had labored in vain; yet He said, “My Father, My judgment is with You.”

What a comfort this is for us when we are sometimes sent to a people who do not respond, and we seem to bring forth no fruit in the lives of those to whom we are sent. Yet, we are glorious in the eyes of Him who has sent us. To be accepted in His sight is that which truly matters (see II Cor. 5:9). We need to seek only to please Him and be approved by Him. Jesus could not be called the most successful preacher. When He began touching the deeper truths of God’s Word, many of His followers left Him. Then turning to His twelve disciples He said, “Will you also leave Me?” (See John 6:66-67).

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I was confronted with this many years ago in my ministry. My wife and I were pastoring in a certain denominational church where we experienced great popularity and acceptance. I was invited to speak at virtually every function in that city. Everything was going well, and then the Lord spoke to me and said, “Now tell the people where the anointing comes from.” I said, “Lord, if I tell them about the baptism of the Holy Ghost they will reject it.” He said to me, “I know their hearts, but I want to know your heart. Are you going to preach what I want you to preach, or are you going to preach what they want you to preach?” At that moment, I made the consecration to always preach what the Lord wants me to preach. The people rejected the message and became angry with me, but I was happy that I had done what pleased the Lord.

So it was with the Lord. He said to His Father, “I did not bring Israel back to You, Lord. They rejected Me as the Lamb of God, but I know that I have done those things that are pleasing to You, and I know that I shall be honored in Your sight.”

49:6 - *“And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest*

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be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” The Father speaks comforting words to His beloved Son in verse six. The Lord always gives compensation for work that is carried out in His name. This may be proven in several ways, but the illustration we have chosen is from the life of the heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar. He was used of God to chastise Tyre, laying siege to her for thirteen years. Yet, he only took the earthbound city, not the seaport on the peninsula. In the words of Ezekiel 29:18, he received no wages for this. Therefore, the Lord said that He would give Nebuchadnezzar the land of Egypt for his labor because he wrought for the Lord. The Apostle Paul, in Hebrews 6:10, states this same truth by saying that God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labor of love. Because the Lord Jesus received no reward or recompense, since Israel was not gathered back to God, He was given the privilege of being the Light to the Gentiles (after His resurrection).

Therefore, His post-ascension ministry was infinitely more rewarding than His pre-crucifixion ministry. More souls have entered into the kingdom of God through His post-ascension ministry than through His preaching before His crucifixion. The Father has given the Son fruit in nearly every nation of the world, even in countries the Lord did not physically go to when He was upon earth. Sometimes we

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can seemingly do nothing, but if we are faithful to God, He will give us seed in places that we never dreamed possible. Therefore, let us take heart. What the Father did for Jesus, He will do for us, too. We shall see the travail of our souls and be satisfied. Amen!

49:7 - *“Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.”*

Now the Father turns to contemplate the Lord Jesus as the despised One. Both the secular and religious rulers despised and mocked the Lord Jesus when He was upon earth. In fact, the whole nation of Israel abhorred and rejected Him, as they do until this very day.

However, the day is coming upon His return when all the kings and rulers of this world will have to declare that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father. Yet, this verse is also applicable to us. How often we have been despised and rejected; yet the day will come when the Lord will lift us up, and all those who have mocked us will be forced to acknowledge that the Lord has chosen us!

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49:8 - *“Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.”* At the appointed time the Lord hears us and helps us. He promises to preserve us and then give us for a covenant to the people that we might, by the grace of God, help establish His name in those areas that He has given to us for our inheritance.

49:9 - *“That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.”* This describes the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ while He was on earth. Christ’s ministry was to liberate those bound by the fetters of sin’s dark sway, and to free them from bondage. This should also be our ministry. Those who are used to deliver will feed on the finest of pastures in the lofty places and rare climates of heaven’s pasture land.

49:10 - *“They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.”* They will be protected from the elements, and the Lord will provide shelter for them. Oh, what a privilege and

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blessing! My wife and I have had to walk the streets for lack of shelter at the mercy of the winter's cold blasts in our younger days. Now the Lord has brought us into this place in Him where we have always had shelter, and also the Lord has so graciously provided some cool spot for us to be refreshed in the heat of summer. Praise the Lord for His goodness to His people!

49:11 - *“And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.”* The Lord also now makes His ways very clear to us, whereas before we groped for His paths.

49:12 - *“Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.”* Those who will come to know the Lord, after He had risen from the grave and became the ascended Lord of Glory, will come from every corner of the universe. Specifically mentioned is Sinim (modern-day China), where today mighty revivals are taking place.

The Lord spoke to a dear friend of ours in Singapore one time and said, “Today I am the Lord of the Americas, the Lord of Africa and Europe; but the day is coming when I will also be the Lord of Asia. Asia will recognize Me as Lord.” We believe that there is going to be a mighty harvest in Asia in the last days, and it is already beginning.

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49:13 - *“Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.”* Speaking again of the restoration of Israel to their land, the Lord calls for His chosen ones to break forth into singing.

49:14 - *“But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.”* Although the Lord gives such a wonderful message of hope for the future, those in captivity feel forsaken. It is so easy to slip into this depressed and despondent state after walking through dark places for so long. During those times, we never seem to enjoy the sunlight of His presence. There are times when we think the Lord has forgotten us. Others are finding favor, but we are not.

49:15-16 - *“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.”* However, the Lord watches over us when we walk through these dark places with all the care that a refiner of precious metals exercises when those metals are in the crucibles of ferocious heat. The refiner actually sits to watch the process of

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the refinement so that the metal is not subjected to a heat that will destroy it, rather than simply separate the dross.

The Lord's response is as a woman who can scarcely forget the son of her womb. He certainly cannot forget us, for our names are engraved upon the palms of His hands. If you have seen the hands of Christ, you can see the nail-wounded scars on His hands. Paul said he bore in his body the marks (*stigmata*) of the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:17). Sometimes when we are suffering we can feel those nail prints in our hands. When He looks at His hands, He sees our names. The walls of Zion are continually before His eyes. He is always there to protect.

49:17 - *“Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.”* Then He promises that those who have destroyed and wasted Zion will leave, meaning the Babylonians in the first instance. In the second instance, those Arab nations who will surround Jerusalem and Zion in the last days, will be destroyed and will flee from her as the Lord comes on the scene to save His beloved city. The children of Zion (those who were taken into captivity) will make

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haste to come to Israel again. There comes a time when those who have wasted us will be removed afar off.

49:18 - *“Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth.”* One of the great blessings of the Lord is to give us spiritual children. There is a principle that is not often appreciated in the dealings of the Lord in our lives. There comes a time in our lives when we will lose our spiritual children. We are stripped of them through one process or another—through church splits, doctrinal differences, envy, jealousy or the like. However, there is another crop of children that will come. Abraham had two sons. Ishmael came before Isaac. One (Ishmael) is born through our own labors and efforts; but God is in that, and He hears the cries of our Ishmaels. Yet, there comes a time when we are circumcised from Ishmael and God gives us our second seed—our Isaacs, those who are spiritual. They are the ones who will inherit the promises of God and be fruitful.

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Our inheritances that the Lord has given to us become desolate through church closures or perhaps through congregations forsaking us. This is that which the Apostle Paul experienced when he wrote in Second Timothy 1:15 that all those in Asia had turned away from him. As we remain true to the Lord, we enter into the blessed experience of Isaiah 49:19-20:

49:19-20 - *“For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.”* Therefore, there are the two phases in our spiritual multiplication and two sets of spiritual children (congregations or churches). It is the second crop of spiritual children who enter into all the promises of God. They fulfill the vision. May I say at this juncture that the second group is always founded around the nucleus of the first. Just as with the children of Israel, the old Joshua and Caleb led the new generation into the Promised Land. We lose the first to gain the second. The first is generally the Ishmael congregation—people who are less

advanced spiritually. They choose to remain in the wilderness, like those who journeyed with Moses out of Egypt but perished in the wilderness.

49:21 - *“Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?”* This new crop has been conserved for us by the Lord, hidden from our eyes. We are so astonished when this happens that we say to the Lord, “Where did these spiritual children come from?”

49:22-23 - *“Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.”* Only believe, dear ones. As we wait for the Lord to do all His good pleasure in our lives, He will do abundantly above all that we can ask or even think (Eph. 3:20). Such is the abundance of the blessing here described.

Isaiah

49:24-26 - *“Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.”* Then the Lord turns His attention toward those who have risen up against His beloved Zion. He decrees that their spoil will be taken from them. Those Jewish captives they have enslaved will be taken back from them, and He will cause those who took them captive to be slaughtered. When He turns our captivity, all will know that He is the Lord who judges righteously and redeems those who wait upon Him.

CHAPTER 50

2nd Prophecy - The Obedient Servant Christ

50:1 - *“Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold*

Isaiah

yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.” In this short passage the Lord makes it abundantly clear that it is not He who has cast off Israel; but because of their constant sinning against Him, they have sold themselves into slavery and captivity.

50:2 - *“Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.”* Here the Lord is venting His displeasure. When He rebuked Israel, no one answered His call to repentance. Yet, He reminds Israel that He is still the One who can redeem them; for it was He who dried up the Red Sea, and brought them forth out of Egypt and through the wilderness. There He provided rivers for them.

50:3 - *“I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.”* Continuing this thought of the wilderness journey, the Lord reminds them that He caused darkness to reign in Egypt (Ex. 10:21).

Isaiah

50:4 - *“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.”* Now the Lord speaks of His beloved Son. We are going to be privileged to understand some of the times of sweet communion which took place between the Father and the Son during the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus. Here we have one of the keys to the life of Christ which enabled Him to walk in the Spirit. His ears were opened by the Lord God every morning to hear Him speak. Like David, we need our ears opened so that we may live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (see Psa. 40:6).

Thus, day by day, as with our Lord Jesus, we can be prepared to minister and bring the right word to those in need. Every morning we need to seek the Lord to hear what His will is for us that day, and what He has planned for us to do that day. Thus, we shall truly be a people who walk in the Spirit and are led by the Spirit. (See John 5:19).

50:5-6 - *“The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from*

Isaiah

shame and spitting.” These two verses have been very precious to me personally because of an experience that I will now recount. My wife and I were traveling in the United States, and in order to reach our destination, we could have taken either of two routes. The first route would require us to attend a certain church service where we would come in contact with a very objectionable pastor’s wife. She was accustomed to railing on people; and as I had suffered her tongue-lashing on several occasions, I was not looking forward to seeing her again. Therefore, I had fully intended to take the other route which would have enabled us to reach our destination more quickly and without an unpleasant confrontation. However, the night before we were due to reach the point at which the two routes separated, the Lord woke me up at three o’clock in the morning. I saw Him as Isaiah describes Him in these verses—with blood streaming down His face due to large segments of His skin having been pulled off when His beard was plucked off by those who mocked and scorned Him.

The Lord did not speak in the vision, but in my spirit I knew why I was given the vision. I had to go to that church. Sure enough, the pastor’s wife railed on me, and I literally felt as though the skin on my

face was being plucked off. But, I had such an inner joy to know that in some small way I was participating in the sufferings of Jesus!

50:7 - *“For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.”* I have also seen the face of Jesus at times set like a flint, determined to do the will of the Father against all opposition. This is seen in Luke 9:51, “And it came to pass, when the time was come that [Christ] should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.” By His grace, we must seek to have the same holy determination to do His will at all times. Persevering against all odds is the outstanding characteristic of a true missionary or minister. Or, as Winston Churchill once stated, “We must never, never, never give up.”

50:8-9 - *“He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.”* In spite of the seeming defeat in the eyes of man, the Lord clung tenaciously to the fact that His Heavenly Father would be the One who would justify Him. All those who had risen up against Him would soon wax old

Isaiah

and be tossed aside; whereas He, the matchless Son of God, would continue with His eternal youth throughout all generations.

Many years ago, my wife and I were pastoring at a certain church where the elders rose up against us. We left that church in apparent defeat. However, after we left that place God lifted us up to preach all over the world. All of those elders who had risen up against us ended up in misery. Many died, and one in particular came to see me many years later and said, “Can you forgive me? I am dying of cancer, but I do not want to die before I have received forgiveness.” I said, “I had forgotten that you had ever done anything to me.” I honestly could not remember what he had done to me, though it had tormented him for years. It is very easy to forgive when you can’t remember the wrong that was done to you. Let us ask the Lord for a *holy* forgetfulness.

50:10-11 - *“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in*

Isaiah

sorrow.” Now we have a truth that has been precious to my wife and myself, and to countless others. It is a very prevailing thought in Christian circles that if we walk uprightly with the Lord we will be spared from suffering. This is an extremely erroneous and dangerous teaching, as well as being completely unscriptural. This doctrine is easily refuted by the experience of Job, who is held up as an example of suffering in the will of God throughout all generations (Jas. 5:10-11), and yet he was also one of the three most righteous men, along with Noah and Daniel (Ezek. 14:14). Paul is another outstanding example. He was, in his own words, a pattern of longsuffering to all those who should later believe on Christ (I Tim. 1:16).

The intent of these verses is that, when we are living righteously before God and man and we are in darkness, we should not seek to strike our own light (or try to improvise a method of getting out of the darkness or trial). Rather, we should trust the Lord to bring us out in His good time when all that He has purposed in the trial and darkness has been accomplished in our lives for His honor and glory. This was made real to us when, having no money, food or heat in the dead of a North American winter, the Lord would not allow us to go to the phone and call friends for help. If we had done so, the

Isaiah

Lord implied that He would be finished with us. We were told to only trust Him; and these are the two verses the Lord quickened to us. So after three days of waiting, a lady drove up to the house with food and money which we used to buy oil for heating. It was then that we began to know Him in a new way as Jehovah-Jireh—the Lord our Provider. We would have missed the purposes of God for our lives if we had turned to man for help in our desperate situation.

CHAPTER 51

3rd Prophecy - The Call to Hearken and Awake

51:1-2 - *“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.”*

Those that follow hard after righteousness, to do only those things that please the Lord, are often alone. They experience a time of loneliness when they don't have many friends, and perhaps their church is very small. It is truly a lonely walk when one wholly follows the Lord because there are not many going the same way. So it was with Abraham, but the promise to him was, “In multiplying I will

Isaiah

multiply you.” To encourage us on our pilgrim voyage from earth to heaven, the Lord says, “Look back, look to the place I have taken you from.” As we meditate on all that the Lord has done for us and redeemed us from, we become encouraged and we say, “Amen! Be assured that the Lord has a plan and a purpose for my life.” This strengthens us to keep on going. There will be an increase in due time as we faithfully follow where He leads.

51:3 - *“For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.”* The Lord is speaking here to the inhabitants of spiritual Zion—those who wholly follow the Lord. Saints who have passed through the desert and wilderness experiences shall know the restoring power of God. Their waste places will be like the Garden of Eden, and joy and gladness will be their eternal portion. They will be a thankful people as they remember all that the Lord has done for them.

51:4 - *“Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.”* Here He is speaking of the Lord

Isaiah

Jesus who would come to the Jewish nation. He would proclaim the law of the gospel of faith. He would show forth the true judgment of God which would shine forth from the One who is the Light of the world.

51:5 - *“My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.”* Thus, He would bring forth the righteousness of God, and the Gentiles would wait for Him, and upon Him would they also trust.

51:6 - *“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.”* Then we are encouraged to look heavenward. Although heaven and earth will pass away, His words and His righteousness will remain (Mk. 13:31).

51:7-8 - *“Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my*

Isaiah

salvation from generation to generation.” Now comes a word of comfort to those who are experiencing the abuse of man because of their stand for Christ and His righteousness. The fear of man is a snare. Fear causes even the godliest of men to stray from the course. Yet, in meditating upon these verses, we see that those who oppose us will perish (cf. Heb. 13:6), whereas that for which we have stood—His righteousness—will remain for all generations.

51:9 - *“Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?”* This is referring here to the fact that the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt (Rahab) and wounded the dragon (Satan and the heathen gods of Egypt). (See Exodus 12:12).

51:10 - *“Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?”* Then the prophet makes mention of the drying up of the Red Sea as proof of the greatness of the power of God to deliver His people.

51:11 - *“Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning*

shall flee away.” Because of these deliverances, the prophet looks ahead now to the end of the age when the people of God will return triumphantly to Zion.

51:12-13 - *“I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; And forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?”* The Lord takes up again the often repeated theme of rebuking His people for being afraid of what man will do unto them. The Lord said with respect to fear in Matthew 10:28, “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” The reason why we fear man is because we do not truly have reverential fear for God, and because we have not come into perfect love yet (I Jn. 4:18). God is with the oppressor, and he can only do what God permits him to do. When he has finished God’s work, God then removes him. God appeals to His people to consider His might. The one who does not know God is now described.

Isaiah

51:14-15 - *“The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is his name.”* God's people are not to be afraid of the enemy. Rather, they should remember His greatness.

51:16 - *“And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.”* The Lord has put His creative words into the mouths of His faithful ministers. Then comes the second time that we are hidden in the shadow of the Lord's hand. This takes place much later in our ministry, and it brings us into the fullness of our ministry—ministering to those in spiritual Zion. It is equivalent to the second wilderness journey that we see mentioned in Song of Solomon 8:5, after the first one which is recorded in Song of Solomon 3:6. It is comparable to David fleeing from Absalom, and Job in his trials. This is the experience of a seasoned minister. After this second covering and second wilderness, we are given that creative word that plants, or peoples, Heavenly

Isaiah

Mount Zion. These are those who are rejected and cast off by men, but they are His chosen and elect. They are those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Rev. 14:4).

It is important when studying the prophets, especially Isaiah, to understand that they roam back and forth through the whole spectrum of world history. After prophesying concerning one epoch in Israel's history, they then switch to another, and often not in chronological order. Now Isaiah addresses Jerusalem at the end of her seventy year period of captivity, when it is time for her deliverance from Babylon.

51:17-20 - *“Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out. There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up. These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee? Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God.”* Here the Lord declares the pitiful condition (spiritual

and natural) of Jerusalem. She is depicted as one who is drunken and none of her sons are able to help or guide her. She has endured famine and destruction through the sword of the Babylonian army. Jerusalem's sons lie dead at the head of every street.

51:21-23 - *“Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine: Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.”* God caused Jerusalem to drink of the cup of trembling, which made them tremble before the Babylonians. However, those who have afflicted Jerusalem will now be given to the their captors to drink.

As we have already explained in Isaiah 44:27-28, the Babylonians will be literally drunk, and will also drink of the fury of the Lord. The Babylonians will tremble when the Persians come up against them. They will be subjected to the same indignities they forced upon the Jews.

CHAPTER 52

4th Prophecy - Promised Deliverance From Babylon - 52:1-12

52:1-3 - *“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.”* In this passage, the Lord is exhorting His people to awake from the dust and ashes of their captivity. He promises that the uncircumcised will no longer pass through the city of Jerusalem, but they must wait until the second coming of the Lord to see this promise fulfilled. However, there is a spiritual significance for us all in these verses. There could be a time when the Lord would wish to quicken these verses to us so that we might know when the time of our personal captivity will be finished. When the Lord speaks this to us, we should shake ourselves and step out of our bondages into a new freedom in Him.

Isaiah

52:4 - *“For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.”* The Lord makes mention of the fact that Israel went down into Egypt to dwell peaceably there, but the ruling Pharaoh is suspected to have been of Assyrian descent, and he oppressed Israel without cause. Then there was a later oppression of the children of Israel by the Assyrians, which we have already referred to with respect to their invasion of Israel in the reigns of Pul to Ashurbanipal.

52:5 - *“Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.”* This is the Babylonian captivity in which God’s people suffered very harsh treatment at the hands of their captors. The Babylonians continually blasphemed the name of Jehovah (see Psa. 79:1-13).

52:6 - *“Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.”* In other words, the Lord is saying that He will glorify Himself by delivering His people who have been abused and mocked by the enemy.

Isaiah

52:7 - *“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.”* Now the Lord raises up His prophets who declare that the long promised deliverance is nigh. This is repeated by the prophet Nahum who forecasts the demise of the Assyrian Empire as a world power (Nah. 1:15).

52:8 - *“Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”* When the Lord brings back Zion, singing will break forth from the watchmen who guard the walls. This is a millennial prophecy, but we believe that it has very real meaning for the Church in the last days. When the Lord brings spiritual Zion into its fullness, the watchmen (the ministers) will all speak with one voice. True unity is coming, and all the true ministers will preach the same message and run after the Lord together. Praise the Lord!

52:9 - *“Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.”* Thus, there will be intense joy when the Lord redeems His people.

Isaiah

52:10 - *“The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”* All nations were aware of the great deliverance the Lord accorded the Jews when He brought down Babylon through Cyrus and set His people free to return to their own land. This deliverance typifies the greater deliverance that the Lord will bring to His people when He descends upon the Mount of Olives in the last days at His second coming.

52:11 - *“Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.”* The Lord then encourages His people to depart from Babylon when He delivers them. He commands them not to take any of the unclean things of Babylon with them. It was the images of Babylon that had caused the children of Israel to grieve the Lord, and caused Him to bring them into Babylonian captivity in the first place. Another passage that flows right along with this thought is when the children of Israel took Jericho. They were warned not to touch the accursed thing. In other words, they were not to take any of the garments or the treasures of the heathen. When Achan did so, Israel was defeated at Ai. We must not have anything that is

Isaiah

heathenistic in our possessions—idols, carvings, and the like, so that we do not provoke the Lord to jealousy.

52:12 - *“For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your [rear guard].”* When the Lord took the Jews out of Babylon it was well ordered. There was the decree of Cyrus, the treasures of the temple were given back, and Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest, led them to Jerusalem. I often feel that when God is leading us from one situation to another, this is the way it should be. It is one of the indications that the Lord is directing us. When, however, our movements are haphazard, then it speaks more of human guidance than divine guidance.

5th Prophecy - The Suffering Servant - 52:13 - 53:12

52:13-15 - *“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were [astonished] at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall*

Isaiah

they consider.” We see with what royal demeanor the Lord controlled Himself during His earthly ministry. Each one of His movements and discourses were governed with such grace and wisdom. Therefore, the promise was given to Him that He would be highly exalted (cf. Phil. 2:9).

However, those who saw His blood spattered, His marred face, and His twisted, tortured form upon the cross, were astonished. Yet, because He shed His blood, He could sprinkle the peoples of many nations by that precious atoning blood. Kings will shut their mouths in wonder because that which had not been revealed to them on earth will be revealed at His second coming. In fact, the Apostle Paul clearly states that the princes of the world would not have crucified the Lord of Glory had they been apprised of the wisdom of God that was manifested in the crucifixion of Jesus upon the cross of Calvary.

First Corinthians 2:7-8 says: “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” Thus, the purpose of the crucifixion was hidden from the rulers of this world, for had they understood, they would not have

Isaiah

decreed His death. That is why the Lord prayed upon the cross, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Lk. 23:34).

CHAPTER 53

This is one of the most beautiful and awesome chapters in all of holy Scripture. In this passage the prophet Isaiah describes the plan and purposes for the crucifixion of Jesus about 700 years before the event took place.

53:1 - *“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”* In actuality, who really believed and understood the message of Isaiah chapter fifty-three? Centuries later, the Ethiopian eunuch was asking the evangelist Philip for understanding of this same portion of scripture with the same dilemma as Jews of our day.

“And Philip ran thither to [the eunuch], and heard him read the prophet [Isaiah], and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, ‘He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so

Isaiah

opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.’ And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:30-35).

53:2 - *“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.”*

Here Isaiah is speaking again expressly of the Lord Jesus. In actuality, this whole chapter is speaking uniquely of Christ. However, we can be led into these same experiences and experience the fellowship of His sufferings. Isaiah sees Christ as:

- 1.) *A tender plant.* This signifies His humble beginnings and His gentleness.
- 2.) *A root.* This signifies that He came from the root of Jesse (see Isa. 11:1).
- 3.) *Out of a dry ground.* This speaks of the fact that He did not come in a time of revival, but during a period of spiritual dearth in Israel.
- 4.) *He has no form nor comeliness.* His bearings and trappings were not those of royalty.

Isaiah

His early life, with the exception of His excursion into the temple discussions, was not noteworthy. However, we must balance this with His demeanor and bearing which were very striking when He was anointed at the Jordan River. Josephus describes His physical stature as that of a man six feet in height. His nose was more Roman than Jewish. His hair was light, chestnut brown, parted in the middle, and barely shoulder length. His facial coloring was light with rose cheeks. His figure was very commanding, but His features were not what one could describe as strikingly handsome.

As Isaiah so aptly brings out, He is the Man of sorrows and He is acquainted with grief. Also, there was nothing lovely about His message, which was rejected by many. He did not preach an easy message that concerned only how the Lord can bless us. He preached on circumcision of heart and on being totally committed to doing will of God for our lives. This is not a message that people like to hear.

53:3 - *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”* Years ago when my dear wife was passing through a series of heart operations, the Lord visited me in our apartment. He

Isaiah

appeared to me in His glowing, white garments as the Lord our Healer. Then He turned and walked to the wall; then faced me again, and He was transformed into the “Man of sorrows” whom Isaiah saw. Then the Lord explained to me that my wife and I had known Him as our healer, but we must also come to know Him through the fellowship of His sufferings. This means that we must go outside the camp, bearing His reproach (see Heb. 13:13). As we pass through these devastating experiences, others tend to hide their faces from us, and we are counted as nothing and as those who are not enjoying the favor of the Lord.

53:4 - *“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”* The real reason for His sufferings is now revealed. In the eyes of God, He was the chosen burden-bearer. He suffered vicariously for our sins. In the eyes of man it looked as though He was rejected by God. In verse four, however, the thought relates more to the consequences of our sins than the root cause of our sins. He, therefore, healed all who were sick because He bore our infirmities (see Mt. 8:16-17). Psalm 38:7 brings out the thought that, upon the cross, having partaken of the cup filled with human iniquities in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord

Isaiah

Jesus Christ was filled with a loathsome disease. “For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh.”

53:5 - *“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”* He was the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29). He suffered specifically in the following ways:

- 1.) He was pierced for our transgressions by His heart being wounded with the soldier’s spear.
- 2.) He was bruised for our iniquities by being struck on His face (Lk. 22:24) and smitten with a reed on His head (Mk. 15:19).
- 3.) He was chastised and buffeted for our peace (Mt. 26:67, Mk. 14:65).
- 4.) Because our Lord endured the pain and indignity of the scourging by the hands of the Roman soldiers, we are healed by His stripes.

This is the fulfillment of Psalm 129:3, “The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows,” as well as of Isaiah 50:6, “I gave my back to the smiters.” The last part of verse five is quoted in First Peter 2:24, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

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53:6 - *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* Here the Lord’s people are likened to sheep. This causes us to understand why the Lord called Himself the Good Shepherd in John 10:11. Sheep are practically defenseless. They are totally dependent upon their shepherd for protection and to lead them into green pastures. Sheep also have a very low intellect and turn easily from the path upon which they have been directed. We also err so easily from the paths of righteousness to walk after our own desires. God has laid all our iniquity upon the Lord Jesus.

A pastor friend of ours from Australia owned a herd of sheep. He had one certain ewe that kept getting out of the boundaries of their property. He would have to go on his bicycle to try to find her. Yet, the Lord always told him not to be rough with her, but take her back with gentleness and love. After several months of this repeated cycle, he said to the Lord, “Is she worth it, Lord?” The Lord said to him, “Are you worth it? You do the same thing she does, but I have never given up on you, have I?” Yes, we have all gone astray at times like sheep, but praise the Lord that our Good Shepherd has never given up on us!

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53:7 - *“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”*

Not only is He the Good Shepherd, but He is also the Lamb of God. As such, He has the admirable characteristics of a lamb—meekness and submissiveness. When the shearers are going to take everything a little lamb has, the lamb does not open its mouth to complain. May God grant that when we are before our shearers we have the same meekness.

This was made very real to us when we were in Austria many years ago. A friend of ours there had a car that he had bought in the United States. To take it overseas he had to put it in the name of another minister. One day he received a letter from the man whose name the car was in, saying that he was going to give the car to a certain missionary that was coming to Austria, and if he would so kindly have it ready for him to take. I asked him, “What are you going to do?” He replied, “The Lord has quickened to me Isaiah 53:7. The shearers take everything you have, and this car is all that I really possess. The Lord has told me that I cannot open my mouth before my shearers.” He washed the car and made sure it was clean and ready to go when the missionary came. He invited the

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missionary in and served him tea, and then gave him the key to the car. We must be silent like Christ before Pilate and His accusers, and not defend ourselves (Mk. 15:3-5).

53:8 - *“He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.”* The Lord was taken from prison, or confinement, prior to going to the cross. A lamb is corralled prior to being slaughtered. This inactivity produces tender meat. This is a picture of the Lord of Glory prior to His crucifixion. You will notice that so many of the saints in Church history, like Paul, were put into prison before they were executed so that their spirits could be quieted, and so that they could meet death with great meekness. Christ was crucified for our iniquities and was slain in the prime of life. The question therefore arises: Who are His descendants, and where is His seed and offspring?

53:9 - *“And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.”* His death was so unjust. Clearly, we see that He did nothing to merit His judicial sentence of death. We also must be prepared to suffer at the hands of authorities who may condemn us unjustly. This was the case with Jesus, the Apostle Paul, and

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others. Jesus was condemned with thieves, yet His grave was the grave of a rich man (Mt. 27:57-60). It was a sign from God of His regality.

53:10 - *“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.”* Why was the Lord so badly treated? Because it pleased the Father to bruise Him for our sakes. The little phrase, “it pleased the Lord to bruise Him,” has become so real to us personally. The suffering of my dear wife has been simply because the Lord has so deemed it. The reason for His sufferings and grief was simply that His soul would be made an offering for the sin of others. But, praise the Lord! The reward for becoming bruised and being put to grief at His hands is that we will have an eternal seed. And the Lord will prolong our days upon the earth, like He did for Abraham and Hezekiah. Then the work that the Lord has for us will prosper.

53:11 - *“He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”* The Lord is righteous and rewards us for all suffering that He imposes upon us. It is through knowledge that we understand why we suffer,

and then we are able to go to the Lord for the abundance of grace that is necessary to endure those griefs and chastisements on behalf of others.

53:12 - *“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”* Because the Lord was willing to bear the sin of many and pour out His soul unto death, He will divide the rewards with the righteous. There is also the sense in this verse of the Lord becoming like a mighty warrior who takes the spoils of the enemy after the battle. Certainly, that is the sense of Colossians 2:14-15. *“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”* The Lord divides the spoil with those who are strong in character.

Through His victory upon the cross, where He bore the sins of many, the Lord took the spoils of Satan and his hordes. This could also mean that the souls of men and women who were held captive

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by Satan through sins and bondages were set free. Also, we must remember that this is true for us as well. We must also intercede for the transgressors for whom we suffer.

In this exegesis of Isaiah fifty-three, I have at times mingled personal testimony with the account of Christ upon the cross. There is scriptural authority for doing this. In the writings of the Apostle Paul, he clearly states in Colossians 1:24, “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” Therefore, as individual believers, we also have the privilege of entering into the fellowship of His sufferings.

CHAPTER 54

6th Prophecy - The Song of the Barren

54:1 - *“Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.”* There is a very remarkable truth that flows through the Word of God concerning

barren women. There are six principal barren women in the Word of God which brought forth sons of great stature that were used by God to become deliverers to their people.

THE SIX BARREN WOMEN OF SCRIPTURE

- 1.) Sarah, who brought forth Isaac.
- 2.) Rebecca, who gave birth to Esau and Jacob.
- 3.) Rachel, who begat Joseph.
- 4.) The wife of Manoah, who gave birth to Samson.
- 5.) Hannah, who brought forth Samuel.
- 6.) Elizabeth, whose son was John the Baptist.

Also, Mary brought forth Jesus. Barrenness also has a spiritual truth for our lives. Paul says in Galatians 4:27, "For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." Therefore,

if we are going to be used by God to birth a work, we must understand that we will have to pass through a time of spiritual barrenness in order that we might be purified, and so that which we birth is of God, and not by our own effort. *“Not married”* signifies that perhaps we are not joined to others in the initial stage of our ministry. Jeremiah said he sat alone because of God’s hand upon him (Jer. 15:17).

54:2 - *“Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.”* There comes a time when the Lord blesses, then other challenges present themselves. Enlargement is brought on by the demands of others. When we are, perhaps, responsible for a church or a fellowship, more room is needed to facilitate everyone. More buildings are needed. This forces us into a building program. And we also have to look after missionaries, the needs of the young, orphans, the elderly or the sick. They beg us for space, and as difficult as it may seem, we must allow God to permit them to enlarge us. Enlargement is not just natural, but spiritual; it takes place within our hearts (cf. Psa. 119:32).

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54:3 - *“For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.”* There will be a breaking forth from our confinement. Our seed will go everywhere and inherit the unsaved (Psa. 2:8). Even those places that had once known the gospel but then rejected it will spring to life again. We have to concentrate on perfecting our spiritual seed and bringing them to maturity, because they will go to places that we could never go, and we will have an inheritance in those places through their lives. After all, we want much eternal, lasting fruit (see Jn.15:16).

54:4 - *“Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.”* Verse four is a reassurance to those who have been going through trials where it seems like they have been abandoned by the Lord and other Christians. These two aspects of shame are worthy of comment.

1.) *The shame of one’s youth.* These are days when perhaps we sowed “wild oats” and did all kinds of shameful deeds. The Apostle Paul, writing to his spiritual son Timothy says, “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure

heart” (II Tim. 2:22). On his death bed, Charles Darwin asked that the windows to his room be opened so that he might hear a hymn which was being sung at a nearby church. “But,” replied the maid, “I thought you did not believe in the Creator.” “Oh,” responded the author of *The Origin of Species*, “that was just the folly of a youthful mind.”

2.) *The reproach of widowhood.* This can refer to the obvious disregard that many have for widows, especially in the Middle East. However, there is also a spiritual aspect to this that must not be overlooked. Many times our church or parent organization will disassociate itself from us. For example, in the Charismatic revival, many found that they were obliged to leave their denominational churches because they were not moving on in God and they lacked vision. There was a feeling of going outside the camp, bearing His reproach. The Lord in His infinite love and compassion makes us forget both these forms of shame, and brings us into a very blessed relationship with Himself that others who have reproached us then begin to envy.

54:5 - *“For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.”* How often have I felt led to bring sorrowing widows to this very scripture, assuring them that the Lord will become their husband, in the sense of being their provider and protector.

54:6 - *“For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.”* The Lord so often meets His people in their valleys of

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despair. Here is a classic example. A woman is forsaken, divorced, and rejected by her husband whom she married when they were young. Now he has turned to another woman and she is quite naturally grieved in spirit. But the Lord reaches down and calls, giving a fresh plan for her life.

54:7 - *“For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.”* Here is someone who is seemingly forsaken in the most devastating trial of her life, being divorced by her spouse, and the Lord is apparently far away. Yet, I have so often seen that divorces are two-way affairs. When a couple sees the situations that led up to their separation from the Lord’s point of view, both parties must acknowledge their share of responsibility for the separation.

54:8 - *“In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.”* The Lord’s wrath is kindled against the so-called innocent party, who, in actuality, was not totally innocent. However, now as they bend in contrition before Him, He again shows forth His mercy and compassion which He promises will not depart again.

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54:9 - *“For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.”*

These verses can be quickened by the Holy Spirit to apply to any stage and event in our lives. It is the Lord speaking to us or dealing with something in our lives that merits His judgment. Therefore, He withholds His presence from us until we put things right. Afterwards, He reveals His kindness and mercy to us in a fresh dimension.

54:10 - *“For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”* To those who have experienced His purifying fires, the Lord concludes this passage of reassurance with the added promise that the blessed covenant of His peace will be their portion. Not only do we want to have peace with God, which in itself is so wonderful, but we also want to have a deep impartation of His tranquillity (Jn. 14:27).

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Philippians 4:7 says, “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Peace *with* God is to experience His forgiveness. To have the peace of God is to know His character.

54:11-12 - “*O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.*” We all are called to pass through the tempests of life, wherein we are tossed and buffeted with the howling winds of the storms of adversity. But the Lord promises to give us stability that only a solid building can provide—foundations of sapphires, which spiritually speak of gems of truths that will hold us, as do the foundational truths of Hebrews 6:1-3. The thought in the original Hebrew is more of decorating or bedecking the city of Jerusalem with sparkling stones and precious jewels.

However, I have interpreted these verses as they have been quickened to me over the years for my comfort, as they have applied to my own personal life. These various stones speak of truths and

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virtues and spiritual riches that the Lord promises to place within us, for the Lord said that wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of our times and the strength of our salvation (see Isa. 33:6).

54:13 - *“And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.”*

Now the Lord takes up again the thought of our spiritual children. What a blessed promise this is. It is similar to the sure mercies of David. God promised to care for the seed of David (Psa.89:29-37). These are the two things that every parent wants for his children—that they are taught of the Lord and that they have peace in their hearts. If we have entered into covenant relationship with the Lord, our spiritual (and natural) children will experience these blessings.

54:14 - *“In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.”* We want to be established in righteousness and be filled with the righteousness of God, even as our Lord Himself promised. Christ said in Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” Then there is the promise concerning protection from terror which is very similar to Psalm 91:1-10.

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54:15 - *“Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.”* It is inevitable that the wicked and even our brethren will gather themselves against us. There are always at least two camps in the Church—Ishmael and Isaac. He that was born of the flesh always persecutes him that was born after the Spirit (see Gal. 4:29). However, those who come against us will, in the providence and the goodness of God, fall for our sake.

54:16 - *“Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.”* It is the Lord who has created those who have risen up against us. He made the smith who makes the instrument (or the sword) that is used to pierce our souls. The Lord also creates the waster who devours our works. Of course, the waster can only go as far as God says.

54:17 - *“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”* This is a glorious promise that my wife and I have held to for

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years. The Lord has quickened it to us over and over again in all the circumstances of life. When the enemy has appeared to be in a position to entirely overwhelm us, the Lord speaks this scripture afresh to us, and the storm within subsides and peace reigns again as we meditate upon these words.

CHAPTER 55

7th Prophecy - The Sure Mercies of David

55:1-2 - *“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.”* In these verses the prophet gives an invitation to the thirsty to come to the waters of life. No money can buy that privilege. The requirement is desire. In order to partake of the blessings of God, we have to have a thirsting and a hunger for them (see Jn. 7:37-38). However, there is a price to pay for the blessings of God and for

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truth, as explained in Proverbs 23:23, “Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”

There is a price for truth that money cannot pay. It is a whole-hearted dedication to the Word and to the Spirit. Wine speaks of the Spirit, and milk speaks of the Word of God. Yet, we are so prone to spend our money and time for that which does not satisfy. This was made so real to my own heart and life many years ago when I was the co-director of a mission in Switzerland. I had a variety of duties as director of our Christian hotel, as well as responsibilities for the Bible school; but in my heart there was a call to the Third World mission fields.

To facilitate traveling in some of those tropical forest regions, I thought a small, light plane would be ideal. Therefore, I decided I should take flying lessons. I would leave very early in the morning and drive to the airport to meet my instructor. I would fly over beautiful Lac Lemman for an hour, then drive like Jehu back to my duties as director, and supervise the serving of breakfast at the hotel. One day while driving through the winding roads of the Swiss Alps back to the hotel, after an exhilarating morning flight, the Lord spoke this verse to me. I knew then that I had to make a decision—to

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continue flying and to have leanness in my soul, or to give it up and have my soul enriched with spiritual substance from His Word. The Lord gave me grace to quit flying.

Please understand me; flying was not the Lord's will for my life. However, I have prophesied to others that the Lord wanted them to fly, which they have done and been blessed in it. But for me it was different. I was spending my money on something that could not profit me. For others, the choice would no doubt involve other things. The issue is for the Lord to show us personally what His will is for our life and what He is requiring us to give up.

55:3 - *"Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."* A further invitation is given to us if we make the right decision. We will hear from God, He will make a covenant with us, and we will enter into the sure mercies of David. These mercies are that the Lord will be a Father to our natural and spiritual seed (II Sam. 7:14). Verses four and five are also a part of the blessing of the sure mercies of David.

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55:4 - *“Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.”*

As with David, the Lord will make us a leader in His Church, having responsibility for His people. Also, He will make us a witness or pattern of some particular aspect of His truth or blessing. Paul, for example, was a pattern of His longsuffering (I Tim. 1:16).

55:5 - *“Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.”*

Here we see the glorious privilege of having a missionary call to another nation, because the Lord’s calling and anointing is for that very purpose. Our branch will go over the wall, and we will have fruit in many parts of the earth (see Gen. 49:22, Psa. 2:8).

55:6 - *“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.”* One of the most awesome truths in holy Scripture is that the Lord does limit the day when it is possible for us to obey Him. The Apostle Paul says in Hebrews 4:7, “Again, [the Lord] limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”

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There was a certain young man who attended church for several months, but he never made the commitment to give his heart to the Lord. The pastor of the church desperately pleaded with him for months to give his heart to the Lord, but he would never make a commitment. Then one night the pastor felt deeply impressed that he had to lead that young man to salvation that very night, or he wouldn't be given another opportunity. The pastor said to that young man, "Won't you please give your heart to the Lord this night?" The young man said, "I will think about it; perhaps tomorrow." He left the church and was in a fatal car accident that night. God had limited a day, and that young man had lost out. God limits a day!

This truth is also illustrated in the journey of the children of Israel. At Kadesh Barnea God told the people to rise up and possess the land. They refused, and, therefore, God told them they would wander in the wilderness for forty years and never inherit the promised land. The very next day they came to Moses and said, "We have sinned. We will go today and possess the land." Moses told them they couldn't, but they insisted. So they went into the land and they were defeated (see Num. 14-15).

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God limits a day sometimes. Therefore, let us be quick to obey when the Lord speaks. One day can be too late sometimes, as it was for the children of Israel at Kadesh Barnea.

55:7 - *“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”* The call to the backslider is clear. He has to forsake sin and evil thoughts; for as a man thinks, so is he (Prov. 23:7). It is only upon these conditions that the Lord will have mercy and pardon. May we commend a close study also of Hosea 14:1-2.

55:8-9 - *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* The prophet Jeremiah states that it is not in man to direct his ways (Jer. 10:23). Therefore, we must trust in the Lord to teach us the way that we should go. Proverbs 3:5-6 says: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Also, He will guide the meek in judgment, and He will teach the meek His ways (Psa. 25:9).

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Therefore, we need to cry out to the Lord to have His mind (see I Cor. 2:16). God's ways are so much higher than our ways. Therefore, it is essential that we do not presume (when situations arise and decisions have to be made) that we have the answers. Rather, in each situation great or small, let us have the wisdom and humility of heart to inquire of the Lord.

55:10-11 - *“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”* That which God speaks to us comes to pass if we fulfill the conditions. This is one of the surest things in life. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10). Timothy could war a good warfare by reason of the prophecies that were spoken over him (see I Tim. 1:18). The Word of God is creative and it has the power to bring to pass that which God has spoken. Therefore, we live as the Lord Jesus said, “By every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (see Mt. 4:4; Deut. 8:3).

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55:12 - *“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”* As we reverence and treasure that which the Lord has personally spoken to us, verse twelve will be our experience as He brings us forth from our trials. This is a repetition of the promise that was given to those in Babylonian captivity (Isa. 52:12). However, it applies to us as the Lord most graciously gives it to us to come forth from our captivities with joy and rejoicing. Figuratively, hills and trees speak of people who will rejoice with us when we are released from our captivity.

We used to continually travel around the world. At one point we traveled for seven years without stopping. Yet, every time we moved from place to place, my wife had great joy in her heart as she packed our bags. We always went out with joy and a fresh expectation of what God was going to do in the next place. We have lived out of suitcases most of our lives, but we have always had joy as we have gone from place to place.

55:13 - *“Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”*

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Then fruitfulness will be our portion. The thorns and briars speak of heartaches and sorrows, which will give way to strength and security. As His prisoners of hope (Zech. 9:12), through all this we must hold on to the promise that He will give us an expected end (Jer. 29:11). The end purpose in all our trials is always that the Lord, through our trials, captivities, and darkness, will get unto Himself a glorious name. Certainly, with the case of the release of the Jews from Babylon and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the Lord has placed in the holy scriptures, before all mankind, an everlasting sign that He is the God who fulfills His Word.

CHAPTER 56

8th Prophecy - The Promise to the Eunuch and the Stranger - 56:1-8

56:1-2 - *“Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.”*

Herein is a call to righteousness. The extreme urgency in this call is that the Lord is about to reveal His salvation. This call relates to the personal appearance of the Lord Jesus when He was introduced

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by John the Baptist. He will give His righteousness, which is by faith, to all those who believe. There are two aspects concerning keeping the sabbath:

- 1.) Keeping the day of the Lord (Sunday) as a special day devoted to Him.
- 2.) Entering into His sabbath of rest. This is developed in Hebrews 4:7. The rest of God means to cease from our own works and let God wholly direct our lives, being holy even as He is holy.

We can see that this chapter applies to New Testament believers as we examine the following verses. Those who were excluded in the Old Testament from participating in the service of the Lord are now included.

56:3-4 - *“Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant.”* The eunuchs, who were expressly excluded according to Leviticus 21:20, are invited only if they choose the things that please the Lord.

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56:5 - *“Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”* Thus, these eunuchs will receive a better name than if they had begotten sons and daughters to propagate their name. This also applies to those who have received commandments from the Lord not to have children, or not to marry as Jeremiah was commanded. “Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place” (Jer. 16:2). They will have many spiritual children.

56:6 - *“Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant.”* In some instances the sons of the stranger were not allowed to enter into the congregation of Israel until the tenth generation. The purpose was to retain a godly seed.

Deuteronomy 23:3 says, “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever.” Those sons of the strangers who were disqualified by the law are now invited to serve Him. If they would join themselves to Him and love Him, and if they would keep the sabbath as we have already mentioned

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in verse two, and if they would take hold of salvation and not let it slip by, they would not be disqualified (see Heb. 2:1-3). Let us take hold of the promises of God, and not let them slip away as Esau did.

56:7 - *“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”* In the New Testament era, the Lord opened up the way to His holy mountain of Zion, causing His people to be joyful in His house of prayer. We firmly believe that one of the evidences of the blessing of God upon a church or fellowship is that it becomes multi-national whereby it attracts and has an impact upon people from many nations.

56:8 - *“The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.”* As if further proof is necessary, the Lord promises to gather others besides Israel. This very scripture is quoted by the Lord in John 10:16, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” The Apostle Paul then writes to the Gentile Church in Ephesians

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2:19, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”

9th Prophecy - The Blind Shepherds Reproved - 56:9 - 57:21

56:9-12 - *“All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.”* In the closing verses of this chapter, the Lord is speaking of the condition of Jerusalem in the days of Isaiah.

A Description of the Shepherds (or Ministers) of Israel in the Time of Isaiah

- 1.) Blind.
- 2.) Ignorant (Rom. 10:3).
- 3.) Dumb (Not able to understand or explain the Word of God).
- 4.) *They cannot bark*—they give no warning of approaching danger.
- 5.) They love to sleep (All those who have accomplished something for God have gotten up early in the morning).
- 6.) Greedy (I Tim. 6:6).
- 7.) Void of understanding (Prov. 4:7).
- 8.) They seek their own benefit and not the benefit of those of the flock.
- 9.) Drunkards (St. Augustine said, “It is easier to abstain than to be temperate.”).

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Thus, we see how backslidden the pastors (or watchmen) of Israel were at this time. God grant that we be willing to examine ourselves, so that we are not guilty of such errors. Let us be watchful concerning our life-style. Second Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." We should also remember the exhortation in Titus 2:12, "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

CHAPTER 57

57:1-2 - *"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."* The righteous are spared in times of judgment. This may be illustrated in the case of both Methuselah and Lamech, who lived at the time of the flood. Methuselah's name means, "At his death shall the going forth of the waters be." He died at the age of 969, the same year of the flood. Lamech died at the age of 777, five years before

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the flood. Both these righteous men were taken prior to the catastrophe. I have seen this in many incidents in my own lifetime, two of which I will now recount.

A twenty-two year old named Madeline, a Bible school student of ours in Switzerland, was called to be a missionary to Africa. However, she died at the Bible school. I inquired of the Lord why she died and He said to me, "In time you will understand." The girl who replaced her went to Africa and had several tragic experiences which caused her to die of a broken heart. The Lord said, "See, I spared Madeline from that tragedy because she found favor in My sight."

Another incident was the case of a little girl who was only four years old. She was a pastor's daughter. Her parents, who had other children, described her as a little angel, almost faultless. She had such a sweet disposition. However, she died quite unexpectedly. I visited her parents just after her death, and the Lord quickened Isaiah 57:1-2 to me. They then understood that the Lord who knows the future was saving her from a terrible tragedy, and this helped comfort them in their time of grief. God's ways are perfect. Let us fully trust Him. I believe this scenario will be repeated prior to the

Isaiah

Great Tribulation. The Lord will take some of the righteous home to be with Him to spare them from the atrocities that will take place during the end times.

57:3-4 - *“But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore. Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood.”* After speaking of the bliss of the righteous, the Lord turns to speak to those immersed in adulterous ways. He condemns the actions of the seed of the sorcerers and the whores, the seed of falsehood, children of liars, and the rebellious.

57:5-6 - *“Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks? Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; they, they are thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these?”* Can they really expect that God would relent and not punish them for their immorality and idolatry? The two, as we have said before, so often go together.

57:7-8 - (NIV) *“You have made your bed on a high and lofty hill; there you went up to offer your sacrifices. Behind your doors and your doorposts you have put your pagan symbols. Forsaking me,*

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you uncovered your bed, you climbed into it and opened it wide; you made a pact with those whose beds you love, and you looked on their nakedness.” They made open show of their adulteries. They did not know any shame.

56:9 - *“And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell.”* The NIV translates “the king” as “Molech,” but the Hebrew is “Melech,” which is a name of a king. Here the Lord rebukes His backslidden people for going to the king with a present of ointment and perfumes. Incidentally, this is the normal practice in the Middle East to gain entrance into a king’s presence.

However, they were going to the heathen king of Assyria, as Hosea 12:1 clearly declares. “Ephraim feedeth on the wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt.” By entering into alliances with the worst form of heathenism, they brought themselves down to the gates of hell.

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57:10 - *“Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.”* Although they were wearied, going from one heathen king to another for help, they desperately resolved to continue their idolatrous ways.

57:11 - *“And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?”* In reality, they were going to the very ones who were their enemies of whom they were afraid. They did not return to the Lord, nor did they reflect upon all His wondrous ways of old. Yet, the Lord seemingly overlooked what they were doing instead of punishing them. This reminds us of Isaiah 30:18, “I will wait that I might be gracious unto you”; and Acts 17:30, where Paul states that God winked at their days of ignorance. This last phrase is a very reliable translation of the original Hebrew text and is so rendered in some versions.

57:12 - *“I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.”* All their efforts and works are going to be of no avail whatsoever because God is going to judge them.

Isaiah

57:13 - *“When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.”* The Lord says to Israel, “When you cry out because of the enemy, let the companies of soldiers that you have hired from other nations come and save you. But know this: they will flee away. Therefore, put your trust in the Lord and you will inherit the land and Mount Zion.” May we learn this essential lesson. Only in the Lord can we find deliverance.

57:14 - *“And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.”* Then the Lord will say, “Take away every obstruction and obstacle from My people so that they might come to My holy mountain.” This refers to all those who have come to put their trust in the Lord.

57:15 - *“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”* Here the Lord declares His nature as the

altogether Holy One. Then He most graciously reveals the virtues required of us to fellowship and dwell with Him—a contrite and humble spirit.

King David spoke in a similar vein in Psalm 51:17, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” May the Lord work within us that holy contriteness and humility, a sense of true brokenness and lowliness, so that we are very aware of our nothingness and we become totally dependent upon Him.

57:16-18 - *“For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.”* Now the Lord speaks of restoration to His people. The Lord does not admonish us forever. If He did, we would be like a child who is always being corrected and finally gives up and becomes lawless. That is why a pastor must be so careful that he does not “beat up” and verbally abuse the sheep of his congregation (1 Pet. 5:2). People need encouragement. The way is difficult enough without the

Isaiah

shepherd ruling over them in legalism. Please do not misunderstand me. I hunger and thirst for true holiness. But it comes by grace, not the external trappings of the law. The Lord then puts His finger upon the problem—His people are given over to covetousness. Therefore, the Lord was angry with them and hid His face from them.

Now He sees their repentant heart and will heal them. Like a physician who must first wound in order to bring out the infestation and then pours in the wine and the oil, so the Lord—the Great Physician—promises that He will again lead and comfort His chosen ones. Then the Lord differentiates between the righteous and the wicked in the concluding verses of this chapter.

57:19 - *“I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him.”* It is the Lord who will create words of praise within the lips of His people. We will offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, which is the fruit of our lips, and give thanks to His name (Heb. 13:15). He will speak peace to those who are far away in captivity, as well as to those who are the defenders of Jerusalem in the last days. God again promises healing to His people.

Isaiah

57:20 - *“But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.”* Now the Lord addresses the wicked and depicts their plight. The wicked experience awful churning within their hearts. They do not know the serenity of mind and deep calmness of heart that is the blessed portion of the righteous.

57:21 - *“There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”* This section finishes as the previous section did in Isaiah 48:22. We see it in their troubled walk, we hear it in their speech, and we see it in their wrinkled brow. Oh, the torments that the wicked experience because of their choices. Yet, if they would but turn to Him, they would find rest for their souls (Mt. 11:29).

Part Sixteen

THE DELIVERED

(58:1 - 66:24)

CHAPTER 58

1st Prophecy - The True Fast of the Lord

58:1 - *“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”* We can be so blind that it is necessary for the Lord to give the command that we must be shown our sins. Yet, religious people are often the most blind, spiritually speaking. When Job was going through his terrible trial, his friends could not pinpoint his real problem. It was left to a much younger man, Elihu, to point out to Job the error of his ways. We can't just tell people they are sinning; we have to be precise.

58:2 - *“Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.”* It is a nation who, in its own eyes, is doing the right things. They delight to seek the Lord, inquire concerning His Word, and even ask the Lord with respect to matters of justice. Their delight is the Lord Himself. However, the Lord does not meet with them because there is sin in their lives. The fault lies with the pastors for not showing them where they were erring.

Isaiah

58:3 - *“Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.”* They were conscious that the Lord was not responding to them when they were fasting. So the Lord gives the reason for it—because when they fast they still oppress their laborers. They were simply fasting out of religious zeal, not out of a pure heart.

58:4 - *“Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.”* They fasted with the prime purpose of gaining ascendancy over their opponents, or neighbors. It would be like seeking to manipulate God to work on our behalf in an evil matter. Sometimes people fast and pray with perverse motives.

58:5 - *“Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?”* It was an external fast, in the sense that those who fasted went through all kinds of self-denial. However, this is not the fast that the Lord desires.

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58:6 - *“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”* The Lord desires a spiritual fast which breaks the chains of wickedness, when men and women turn to righteousness with respect to their dealings with one another and break every yoke that they have placed on one another. Spiritually speaking, it is to pray for one another and break the spiritual strongholds in each other’s lives. This is the fast that the Lord delights in.

58:7 - *“Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?”* The true fast is to forget about ourselves and think of the needs of others. We should feed the hungry, clothe the desolate, and care for and give shelter to the homeless. We should also care for our own relatives. First Timothy 5:8 says, “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” Those who perform the fast of the Lord in truth and righteousness will be rewarded.

Isaiah

58:8 - *“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy [rear guard].”* If we do this, the Lord will raise us up in light and glory and we will enjoy not only healing, but also divine health. In fact, this is one of the keys to receive healing. We will be known for our righteousness, and the glory and presence of the Lord will be our protection.

58:9 - *“Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity.”* Then our prayers will be heard and the Lord will come to us. We will stop the vile habit of criticizing and accusing others. With respect to this sin, I have noticed that those who accuse others are so often guilty of the same sin (see Rom. 2:1).

58:10 - *“And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.”* If we show compassion to the needy, then we will have light in our times of darkness, and the Lord will bring us into a place of prominence.

Isaiah

58:11 - *“And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”*

Thus, the Lord continues with these beautiful promises:

- 1.) Guidance.
- 2.) Our souls will be satisfied when others are experiencing spiritual drought.
- 3.) He will make our bones fat, which means He will provide natural food.
- 4.) Our hearts will be like a well-watered garden, which is taken from Song of Solomon 4:12-16. It speaks of our hearts being filled with all the wonderful fruits of the Spirit as enumerated in Galatians 5:22-23.
- 5.) Then we will have, as Jesus said in John 4:14, the well of the water of the life of the Spirit springing up continually from the inner most recesses of our beings.

58:12 - *“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”* Our spiritual seed, in whom our inheritance lies, will build up those places that were once fruitful but have become barren through neglect, despair, or discouragement. Our spiritual seed will build up the foundations of many generations. This is one of the most glorious promises in the

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whole of Scripture—that our spiritual seed and influence will extend far beyond our life span. One of the great aspects of a true revival is restoration. Those breaches that have been created between God's people, either individually or denominationally, will be healed. Finally, there is the thought of our spiritual seed being the restorer of the paths (or dwelling places) where people once worshipped.

58:13 - *“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words.”* The promises in verse fourteen are conditional, as are all promises in holy Scripture, and are predicated upon these six qualifications in verse thirteen.

- 1.) To do His will and not our own pleasure on the Lord's day.
- 2.) To delight in His day and the possibility of going to church, and be joyful in His house of prayer.
- 3.) To speak respectfully of the ministers of the Lord, remembering that they are holy by virtue of the fact that they are called, chosen, and representative of Him.
- 4.) To honor the Lord at all times, remembering that He will honor those who honor Him.

Isaiah

5.) Also, not speaking our own words, remembering that we are called to be the messengers of the Lord and to speak even as the oracles of God.

6.) Finally, to not walk in our own ways, but at all times to choose the things that please Him.

58:14 - *“Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”* If we do the things prescribed in verse thirteen we will enjoy the blessings of verse fourteen. This is the way to experience the joy of Jesus. He should be our joy and supreme delight. Thus, we will “ride upon the high places of the earth,” meaning that we will be more than conquerors through Him who has loved us.

CHAPTER 59

2nd Prophecy - The Iniquities That Separate From God

59:1-2 - *“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”* In chapter fifty-nine, the Lord deals with the sin of His people.

Isaiah

He is explaining to His people that He is still well able to save them, but their sins prevent Him from so doing. This is a very important lesson for each and every one of us to learn. We must deal with sin in our lives if we are to expect God to fight for us. Sin also separates us from communion with the Lord.

59:3-8 - *“For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. They hatch cockatrice’ eggs, and weave the spider’s web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.”*

The sins of Israel can be enumerated thusly:

THE SINS OF ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF ISAIAH

- 1.) They have shed innocent blood.
- 2.) They are liars.
- 3.) They speak of wickedness continually.
- 4.) No one calls for justice.
- 5.) No one pleads for truth.
- 6.) They trust in idols.
- 7.) They continually bring forth evil doings.
- 8.) The deceptive and worthless nature of their works is contrasted to viper's eggs and spider's webs, which are very deadly and also very fragile, meaning their evil works cannot sustain them.
- 9.) Thus, the analogy of the fact that these evil works, likened to spider's webs, will not be able to clothe them.
- 10.) They commit acts of violence.
- 11.) They waste and destroy.
- 12.) Because of their crooked paths, those that follow them will not know peace, even as they themselves do not.

Isaiah

Let us take heed to this sorry situation and seek to walk uprightly and honestly ourselves.

59:9 - *“Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.”* The Israelites cry out concerning their pitiful state in verse nine. Because they have not walked uprightly, they receive no justice in their dealings with others and they walk in spiritual darkness.

59:10 - *“We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men.”* Their spiritual blindness is likened to blind men who cannot find their way, even when it is noonday. It is very terrible to have once known the light, and to then walk away from it and become spiritually blind. It is characterized by the plaintive plea, “Tell us what God is saying now.” They no longer hear from the Lord like Saul of old, whom God refused to answer when he cried to Him. Whole congregations and denominations are in this plight. They go from convention to convention, or conference to conference, seeking the word of the Lord, yet they never find Him.

Isaiah

59:11 - *“We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us.”* Here is that terrible spiritual mourning for their own plight, and the reason is clearly given now.

59:12-13 - *“For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.”* Sin separates us from God. With that separation comes the absence of the anointing and communion with the Father of light (see Psa. 51:11). As the Lord said in Matthew 6:22-23, “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

59:14 - *“And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.”* Therefore, as has already been stated, there is no justice or

judgment. This principle can be seen in nations that do not walk according to the light of the gospel. Their governments and courts of law are places where judgment and justice are corrupted.

There are many missionaries who regularly find this to be the case when they approach many Third World governments for permits and permissions to carry on their missionary activities. The government officials make promises, but do not fulfill them, or else require bribes to provide documents that are the legal rights of the petitioner.

59:15 - *“Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.”* Many times we have had government officials look us straight in the face and blatantly lie. What can be done? Prayer makes a way where there is no way. We have seen absolute miracles where God has changed the hearts of the government officials to grant what they had previously refused. It is a fact that, as this verse says, honest people suffer at the hands of the unrighteous. When people turn from their wicked ways and begin to uphold God's standards, they are persecuted by others.

Isaiah

59:16 - *“And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.”* There are in some cases no intercessors who cry out to the Lord to change the situation. Yet, in this case, the Lord Himself brought salvation.

59:17 - *“For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.”* The Lord clothed Himself with His righteousness. Here is the picture of the Judge of all the world about to take vengeance upon those who commit iniquity. One point we must emphasize is that the Lord may be slow to anger, but there comes a day when He acts in judgment.

59:18 - *“According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense.”* It must be unequivocally stated that everyone will have to give an account for the deeds done in this life. I believe a few scriptures will assist us to understand the importance of leading a life of godliness and holiness all the days of our life. Revelation 20:12-13 says: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books

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were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”

There comes a time when we become fixed in our course, whether it be that of good or evil. Revelation 22:11-12 says: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” To conclude, let us remember the warnings of the Apostle Paul in Second Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

Verse eighteen continues with a warning that the Lord will judge His enemies. The reference to the isles is speaking of the Gentile (non-Jewish) nations, and in particular of those nations which will rise up against Jerusalem in the last days.

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59:19 - *“So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”* Because of the Lord’s judgments upon His enemies (which will be looked at in more detail in Isaiah chapter 63), all nations from the east to the west from that time onwards will fear the Lord.

Then there is this beautiful little scripture that we so cheerfully and rightfully take out of context, that the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against our enemies when they come against us like a flood. This applies particularly to the last days when the Lord will fight for Jerusalem. However, it is a comfort when God quickens it to us. When it seems that we are going to be overwhelmed in a given circumstance by the superiority of the enemy forces, we can sit back and see them stopped in their tracks by that invisible standard of the Lord.

59:20 - *“And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.”* This applies to the second coming of the Lord. Paul quotes this verse in Romans 11:26 to prove that Israel will be restored to the Lord and to communion and fellowship with Him when He returns again. The Lord will redeem the Jews who turn from their wicked ways.

Isaiah

59:21 - *“As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.”* The Lord promises to make a covenant with His people that His Spirit and His Word will never depart from their seed. I believe this is a promise for all who live godly in Christ Jesus. The Lord will do so for our natural and spiritual seed. May the Lord grant that we are also partakers of this covenant.

CHAPTER 60

3rd Prophecy - The Promised Glory for the Last Day Church

60:1 - *“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”* For the Israelite, this is the glorious hope when the Lord returns. It is also the hope for the days of the millennium when the temple that Ezekiel saw will be built. However, as we look more closely at the whole of this passage, we see that there is definitely a glorious expectancy here for the universal Church in the last days.

Isaiah

60:2 - *“For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.”* This promise is for a time of intense darkness that will envelop the world, signifying wars and rumors of wars, famines, and pestilences everywhere. Also, “gross darkness the people” would indicate great spiritual blindness and moral decadence. It is a time that Paul describes as “a falling away” during the days that precede the manifestation of the Man of sin (II Thess. 2:3).

Obviously, the events referred to here will take place in the last days of the Church Age. Great darkness will be upon the world and great light and glory upon the Church. It will be reminiscent of the Exodus from Egypt (see Ex. 10:21-23, 14:19-20). The visible glory of God will be seen upon His people in these last days. This is confirmed by the Apostle Paul in Second Corinthians 3:7-11. I have seen visions of this great visible glory that will be the portion of the Lord’s loved ones in the last times, and it will be a time of great glory.

60:3 - *“And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”* The glory of God will be so evident that the unsaved will rush to the Church in the end times.

Isaiah

60:4 - *“Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.”* The impact of the glory of God upon the Church will be so far reaching that the Church will even influence those who hear of the wonders of God from afar.

60:5 - *“Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.”* Great revival brings unity among the brethren and the ministers, and they flow together because of the enormity of the task that confronts them. This was true to an extent in the Charismatic revival of the sixties and seventies. Every denomination experienced the infilling of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, with the result that ministers from every denomination throughout the world met weekly to talk and help one another. The churches of virtually every denomination were filled to overflowing. This is a picture of what it will be like in the last days of the Church Age.

60:6 - *“The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the*

Isaiah

Lord.” It appears that these verses apply more particularly to earthly Jerusalem. The nations mentioned in verse six are the descendants of Abraham from Keturah (Gen. 25:2,4). They are situated in present-day Yemen, the place in ancient times where spices, jewels, and gold abounded. These nations will come to Israel and show forth the praises of the one and only true God.

60:7 - *“All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.”* Then the nations of Kedar and Nebaioth, descendants of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13), will come to minister to the redeemed of Israel. They will be accepted by the Lord, and their offering will be accepted too.

It is interesting that Ishmael reappears again. There is always the thought in the Word of God of the two companies within the Church. There are those who have the promises, like Isaac, and there are those who are carnal, like Ishmael. There are always these two groups. The spiritual seed of Isaac will be exalted, but the spiritual Ishmaelites will also come into the house of God and worship Him in

Isaiah

the last days and in the millennium. There will be a great restoration in the last days, but the fact remains that it is Isaac who inherits *all* the promises.

60:8 - *“Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?”* This is a picturesque description of the ardent desire that these nomads will have to come to Jerusalem—like doves seeking their homes in the round towers of the battlements of the city.

60:9 - *“Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.”* All those dwelling in the isles of the sea, the Gentile powers and the ships of Tarshish, with Spain leading the way, will bring the sons of Israel from afar. They will bring their gold and silver because the Lord will glorify Jerusalem. Though this is spoken of concerning the millennial age, I believe that there will not be a lack of finances in the last day Church either. Great wealth will come into the Church, enabling it to fulfill all of God's purposes.

Isaiah

There is ample proof in holy Scripture that all nations will have a part in the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem during the millennial reign. Haggai 2:7 says, “And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.”

60:10 - *“And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.”* Therefore, the kings and rulers of the Gentile nations will minister unto the Jews because, even though the Lord smote Israel for their wickedness, in the end they will find favor with Him again. Romans 11:28- 29 says: “As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

60:11 - *“Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.”* This is quoted in Revelation 21:25, but refers there to the new heaven and the new earth, of which the millennial city and temple are types. The gates of Jerusalem will never be closed in the millennium because of all the multitudes that will come into it. In times of revival, the church doors are virtually always open

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because people are hungry for the Word of God. In past revivals, some churches have had services every night, which ended at midnight and then they reopened the church again at 7:00 a.m.

60:12 - *“For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.”* In the millennium, awesome judgments will come upon the nations who refuse to serve Israel and their King—the Lord Jesus Christ (see Zech. 14:16-19). Nations that reject God in times of revival are diminished.

60:13 - *“The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.”* As in the building of the temple of Solomon, Lebanon will again have the privilege of supplying the timber to beautify the place of the Lord's sanctuary.

60:14 - *“The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.”* All the sons of the nations that will come against Israel and Jerusalem in particular during the last siege, will not only bow down before them, but also declare

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that they are indeed the city of God. This is especially noteworthy in our days, because many of the Arab nations are seeking to deny the existence of Israel as a nation. John Wesley experienced this. He was rejected by one generation, but the next generation accepted him.

60:15 - *“Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.”* Throughout the millennial reign of Christ upon earth, Jerusalem will be the joy of all generations. It will be greatly honored by the literal presence of the Lord in her midst. Yet, the Church must enter into all the fullness that God has provided for Israel. So we can see that the Church in the last days will be the joy of many generations. However, before we can come into this place in God, we have to experience rejection and being forsaken by others (see Jer. 30:17).

60:16 - *“Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.”* The thought of “sucking the breast of kings” simply means that Jerusalem will be nourished by the rulers of the

Isaiah

nations during the millennium. When all this comes to pass, Jerusalem will know that the Lord is their Savior and Redeemer. All that the Lord has promised them will then come to pass.

60:17 - *“For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.”* There will be an abundance of riches, and all their officials will promote peace and righteousness. It certainly will be a government of righteousness, which is difficult to find in this day and age. Also, the last day Church will be characterized by righteous leaders.

60:18 - *“Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”* The terrible violence and lawlessness that will precede the coming of the Lord will give way to a thousand years of peace and tranquillity.

60:19 - *“The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.”* This again is a scripture that is found in Revelation 21:23, but in the context it is clear that it applies to the new heaven and new earth.

Isaiah

60:20 - *“Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.”* Certainly, in the time of the new heaven and new earth, all that Jerusalem, and all that we too, have suffered will come to an end. Returning to the millennial reign, there is another glorious promise. If ever you have been a pastor, you would understand the sorrows of the ministry because many of the Lord’s people are not righteous. They break their pastor’s heart by not living uprightly. Therefore, to any pastor, verse twenty-one is one of the most reassuring promises.

60:21 - *“Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.”* God promises that if we remain faithful to Him, eventually we will be rewarded with a congregation that is righteous when we return to rule and reign with Him in His millennial kingdom. However, that does not mean that the Gentile nations will be upright; some will be far from it. This is speaking of the congregations of the Lord.

60:22 - *“A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.”* The other quality that the Lord promises here is that all will partake of His strength which

is so necessary to fulfill the tasks that lie ahead for us in the thousand years that follow this dispensation.

CHAPTER 61

4th Prophecy - The Anointed Messenger

61:1 - *“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”* This is the chapter of the breaking forth of the children of Israel in the millennium. However, it begins in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, and commences with His anointing at the Jordan River. The Spirit of the Lord is the first of the seven Spirits of the Lord enumerated for us in Isaiah 11:2. They are represented in the Tabernacle of Moses by the candlestick, consisting of seven lamps. The Spirit of the Lord is the center lamp. It is the anointing that is given to us when we stand to preach and minister in the name of the Lord. It is the anointing that enables us to deliver His message.

Isaiah

Specifically, the Lord was anointed to preach the gospel to the meek. As it is written in Psalm 25:9, “The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.” The New Testament translates the word meek as *poor* (Lk. 4:18). Basically, the gospel finds its greatest fruitfulness among the needy. First Corinthians 1:26-27 confirms this. “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” Then the Lord was sent to bind up the broken-hearted, and to pour in the wine and the oil. What a need there is for this in our day with nearly one in every two marriages ending in divorce. Broken hearts abound with sons and daughters falling into sin at very early ages. The Lord was sent to proclaim liberty to the captives, to break their chains of sins, and to bring them out of their prisons that they might enjoy the liberty of the sons of God.

61:2 - *“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.”* Christ quoted this very passage in Luke 4:17-20. “And there was delivered unto [Jesus] the book of the prophet [Isaiah]. And when he had opened the book, he found the place

Isaiah

where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.”

The Lord stopped on a comma and between those two phrases there is a period of two thousand years. *“The acceptable year of the Lord”* was the time of Christ, and *“the day of vengeance”* is obviously the time of the Great Tribulation. All those who have mourned because of all the iniquities and atrocities that have been perpetrated upon the earth (cf. Ezek. 9:1-6), as well as in the Church in these last days, will be comforted at the end of the tribulation period.

61:3 - *“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.”* Those who dwell in Zion, who have mourned because of the iniquities in His Church and in the world, who have been reduced to ashes,

Isaiah

and have gone through the fires of affliction will be clothed upon with the beauty of the Lord. Psalm 90:17 says, “And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.” The key to receiving beauty is to be reduced to ashes.

Then they will also have the glorious oil of joy, which is given to those who love righteousness and hate wickedness (Psa. 45:7). Because of the heaviness which iniquity brings upon those who are battling evil, the garment of praise is given to them. Praise lifts oppressions; therefore, let us be a praising people.

The end result of all these blessings is that we will be trees of righteousness. This is also the thought brought out in Isaiah 4:3, where it is expressly stated that those who are left in Zion will be called holy. The price of holiness is very great, but it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

61:4 - *“And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.”* Now we continue to examine the fruits of the Gospel that the servant of Jehovah, the Lord Jesus Christ, proclaims to Jerusalem and

spiritually to His Church. This is a confirmation of the promises of Isaiah 58:12. We would do well to meditate upon the qualifications that these chapters enumerate.

Then we will be enabled to enter into the promises and ministry of those who will build “the old waste places.” These are areas in the Church that for generations have been desolate and unfruitful, and even whole denominations that have not been bringing forth the fruit and power of the Spirit.

61:5 - *“And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.”* In the literal sense, this applies to the fact that in the millennium the Gentile nations will be the servants of Israel. Yet, at the same time, there is also the thought that people who we do not even know in many countries around the world will look after the congregations and churches that the Lord will raise up in our fellowships worldwide.

61:6 - *“But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.”* Those who are true servants of the Lord Jesus will be known as His priests and ministers during the millennium (see Rev. 20:6). The material blessings of the unsaved will be given to us (see Psa. 45:12).

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61:7 - *“For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.”* A wonderful aspect of the gospel and the goodness of God is that for the shame we have been caused to endure, we will receive a double portion of His blessing. Remember Job chapter forty-two! Also, one consistent promise that is extended to us is joy. Praise the Lord, we will have an everlasting joy!

61:8 - *“For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.”* One of the common errors of the backslider is to think that he can atone for his sins by giving a large offering to the work of God, especially if he has stolen goods that rightfully belong to others. I have noticed that backsliders will tithe double and even triple in an effort to avoid prosecution, thinking that the Lord will fight for them.

However, the Lord applies this scripture in all its rigor. The malefactors so often find themselves judged with severity and spend time in prison. For those who may remember, certain well-known televangelists might serve as useful reminders to walk the straight and narrow road. They tried to avoid

Isaiah

prosecution by giving double and triple tithes, but all their tithes were to no avail, because they tried to cover their sins by giving.

For those of us who walk uprightly, God will direct our work, our ministry, and professions in truth. Furthermore, He will make an everlasting covenant with us. Although the covenant is not specified, it appears that it is relative to our seed, both spiritual and natural.

61:9 - *“And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.”* This is one of the perennial blessings that the Lord holds out to us throughout holy Scripture. He promises that our spiritual sons and daughters will be known among the people. Our inheritance lies in our seed. To have a seed that is blessed of the Lord and that follows us is to have fruit that will accrue to us throughout many generations. Praise the Lord!

61:10 - *“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”* Then the Lord and

Isaiah

His faithful servants who partake of these glorious promises break forth into an ode of joy. Contemplating the blessings of the Lord, He likens them to a bridegroom and bride who deck themselves with ornaments and jewels. Oh, the joy that will be ours when we finish our course. We will be clothed upon with the garments of salvation and the righteousness of our God.

61:11 - *“For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”* This verse is very true, especially in times of revival. Those of us who lived in the sixties and seventies saw the Lord do this through the Charismatic revival. With great expectancy, we anticipate that the Lord will come forth in excellent majesty in the time of the latter rain outpouring during the feast of tabernacles. It is then that the Church will be brought to maturity and perfection.

CHAPTER 62

5th Prophecy - Beulah Land

62:1 - *“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”* In this beautiful pronouncement from the throne of God in the heavenlies, we have a spiritual and prophetic truth that we do well to consider. First, let us consider the prophetic truth of this verse. It applies to the fact that the Lord will bring to pass all that He has promised to earthly Jerusalem. He has declared His intention to make Jerusalem a joy and rejoicing throughout the world. This will be accomplished in the millennial reign of Christ upon earth.

There is also a spiritual truth behind this verse. Jerusalem represents the Church. The Lord will, therefore, make the Church resplendent with His wonderful salvation, and fill her with His righteousness and glory.

Isaiah

62:2 - *“And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.”* As in Isaiah 60:1-2, there is again the declaration that the unsaved will see the righteousness of God, as well as the visible glory of God, manifested in our lives.

The promise of a new name is repeated in Revelation 2:17, where it is promised to the overcomer. This blessing of a new name reveals our call and ministry, as well as the particular aspect of the Lord’s character that He wishes to work out in our lives. I believe that we can know our new names.

62:3 - *“Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.”* This is alluded to in Zechariah 9:16, as well as in Malachi 3:17, concerning His chosen ones who are like jewels in His crown. Not only do we have an inheritance, but the Lord also has an inheritance. What is His inheritance? The Lord’s inheritance is His people (Deut. 32:9).

62:4 - *“Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.”* In its history, Jerusalem has been just that—forsaken and desolate. It was

Isaiah

ransacked on many occasions, and endured siege after siege and numerous captivities; the notable ones being the Babylonian ransacking in 586 B.C. and the Roman ravages of A.D. 70. In modern times it has known domination by the Saracens, leading to several crusades organized by popes. Later, it was dominated by the Turks, and then the British had responsibilities for the city and the land. Finally, in 1948, Israel regained partial independence with the wars of 1967 and 1973 enabling it to govern much of the territory ruled by King David.

However, through negotiations much of the land which her enemies could not hold by force is being given back at the bargaining table. According to Joel 3:2, the land will eventually be divided; although it will be the Antichrist who will finally determine the lines of demarcation of the land (Dan. 11:39). However, the Lord declares that Jerusalem will be called Hephzibah after He returns; for the Lord will delight in her. She will also be called Beulah, for the Lord will be married to her, meaning that He will be her protector and provider.

62:5 - *“For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”* It is very important that we understand

Isaiah

what the first part of this verse is saying. In the natural, it is normal for a young man to marry a virgin. Taking this thought into the spiritual realm, our spiritual sons will marry us. What does that mean? Well, in marriage the man provides for the girl. So, our spiritual sons will care and provide for us, even like they would care and provide for a wife.

The first part of this verse is a portion of scripture that the Lord quickened to me many years ago. Now in my later years, it has blissfully been fulfilled. My spiritual sons most graciously care for all our natural and ministerial needs associated with the work for which the Lord has given us responsibility. Without them we would not be able to function. They take care of many of the overseas seminars, finances, the care of the churches, Bible schools, and orphanages that we have throughout the world.

What a blessing they are, and I thank the Lord for the fulfillment of this promise in our lives. Then we also trust that the second part of this verse will also be true—that the Lord will rejoice over us even as He will over Jerusalem. As recorded in Isaiah 51:18-20, what a difference this is to former days when Jerusalem brought forth no sons that could help her and the Lord found no pleasure in His city.

Isaiah

62:6-7 - *“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence. And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”* These verses reveal a truth that we ignore to our peril. When the Lord makes a promise and the time for its fulfillment is only a short time away, it is accomplished through the ministry of intercession.

This is confirmed in the ministry of Elijah. When God said He would send rain, rain did not just come; but it had to be prayed into existence by the prophet Elijah (see I Kgs. 18:41-46). All promises are realized through God’s sovereignty, and through the Holy Spirit travailing through man. May we cry out to God to give us the spirit of intercession, so that we give Him no rest until He brings His Church to glory.

62:8-9 - *“The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: But they that have gathered it shall eat it and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.”* In Israel’s history, they have

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often experienced harvesting their grain only to have the fruits of their land consumed by their enemies. One notable occasion would be in the time of Gideon when he had to thresh in secret (see Jud. 6:1-6, 11).

Now the Lord promises that those days will be gone forever in His millennial reign. However, we need to cry out for the fulfillment of this promise in our lives. Far too often we work and others benefit from our labors, leaving us impoverished. But God can do for us now what He will one day do for Israel as a nation. Let us enjoy the fruits of our labors, both natural and spiritual.

62:10 - *“Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.”* The ruins of Jerusalem from the final siege will be cleared away so that His people that are taken captive in the last siege can return. Spiritually, it is a cry from God the Father for us to deal with all the bondages, hindrances, and stumblingblocks, so that His people can be free to serve Him, and not stumble.

62:11 - *“Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.”* The Lord's

Isaiah

coming is at hand, and His good will upon Jerusalem will be accomplished. This will, of course, be fulfilled at His second coming.

62:12 - *“And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.”* In the millennium the Jews will be a holy people, having been purged of all their sinful ways. They are the redeemed of the Lord, whom He will cause to come from all the places where they were taken captive by their enemies. Jerusalem will be the most desired place in all the earth, and people will come to her from all over the world.

This is also a promise for the last day Church. Ephesians 5:25-27 says: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” The Lord is going to have a Church that is holy. The Church will be sought out in the last days. During the Welsh revival at the turn of the century people came from around the world to see what God was doing in Wales. That is what will happen again in the last days. Praise the Lord!

CHAPTER 63

6th Prophecy - The Judgments Upon Edom (63:1-6)

63:1-2 - *“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?”* In Isaiah chapter thirty-four, the Lord declares that there will be great judgments upon Edom in the last days. The reasons for this were discussed in that chapter. Edom, which is the habitation of Esau (the elder brother of Jacob), has kept perpetual anger toward his brother Jacob (or Israel).

In the last days, this perpetual anger will rise to its boiling point. They will be foremost in attacking Israel. Therefore, the Lord has reserved for Himself the privilege of judging them when He returns. His garments will be dyed with the blood of the Edomites (the modern day kingdom of Jordan).

63:3 - *“I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my*

Isaiah

garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” The Lord explains why His garments are red with blood. It is the time of the Lord’s winepress.

This is mentioned again in Joel 3:13 (NIV), “Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow—so great is their wickedness.” This is speaking of all the nations who will come against Jerusalem in the last days. This is repeated in Revelation 14:20 (NIV), “They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses’ bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.” This measurement would be approximately 200 miles, the length of the eastern boundary of Israel.

Revelation 19:15 says, “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” This wholly supports the interpretation that the Lord Jesus Christ will tread down His enemies at His second coming. There will apparently be no nation willing to execute judgment upon the Arab nations at this time. Therefore, the Lord will be alone in executing judgment upon them for all that they have done to Israel.

Isaiah

63:4 - (NIV) *“For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come.”*

This is the time spoken of in Isaiah 61:2. That for which we have waited some two thousand years occurs at His second coming after the acceptable year of the Lord has run its course.

63:5 - (NIV) *“I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm worked salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me.”* He repeats this theme again that there is no one to help Him. Obviously no nation is going to discipline those that rise up against Israel in the last days. It may well be that they have had enough of Middle East ventures by then.

63:6 - (NIV) *“I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground.”* This sixth prophecy ends with the reiteration of the fact that in His anger the Lord will tread down Edom by Himself.

7th Prophecy - Isaiah's Intercession For Israel - 63:7 - 64:12

63:7 - (NIV) *“I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us—yes, the many good things he has done for the house of*

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Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses.” The prophet now rehearses the tender loving-kindnesses of the Lord and His mercy which endures throughout all generations.

63:8-9 - *“For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”* His initial opinion of His children is like that of any parent, that they are very good. He thought they would be true to Him. In all their distresses, He was also a partaker of their afflictions. God is the Heavenly Father, and as with any parent, He feels the anguish, heartaches, and hardships of His children. Therefore, when they were afflicted, so was He.

One dear former student of ours asked his aged father how long he should expect to care for his children, who were then in college. His father responded by saying, “You have to care for them for the rest of your life.” Even when my parents were well into their nineties, they were still concerned about my wife and I in our afflictions. They would always ask if there was anything that they could do to help us. Then after my father died, my mother wanted to fly across the Atlantic to help me care for my

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paralytic wife. Natural parents are always responsible for their offspring. So the Heavenly Father pitied His children Israel all through their wilderness experiences.

63:10 - *“But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.”* Parents are good to their children when they obey. However, if their children do wickedly, they are forced to take the side of righteousness against them. The Lord had to side against His own children Israel because of their wickedness. But again, because of His great compassion, the Lord remembers those of old who interceded on behalf of Israel.

63:11-12 - *“Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?”* The Lord remembered Moses, and the Lord had compassion upon Israel because of Moses’ intercession. This is a truth that flows through Scripture.

We see it often with respect to the kings who sat on the throne of David. Even hundreds of years after the death of David, the Lord would have compassion upon His people because of His covenant with

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David, a man after His own heart. The little often repeated phrase “*for the sake of David my servant*” is used by God to justify His clemency toward these kings (see I Kgs. 11:13, 15:4, II Kgs. 8:19). How wonderful it is to have such a relationship with the Lord, that for our sake, He would show mercy to our natural and spiritual children.

63:13 - “*That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?*” Here is the manifestation of His gentleness, not only toward Israel, but toward us all. It is shown also through the concern of Jacob when speaking to Esau in Genesis 33:12-14, “Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.” Let us softly and carefully lead the flock that the Lord has given us, so that they do not stumble.

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63:14 - *“As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.”* As cattle that go down into a valley to rest, so the Spirit of the Lord caused Israel to rest often during their wilderness journey. It reminds us of Psalm 23:2 where David said, “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.” The Lord restores our souls in the heat of the journey.

63:15-16 - *“Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.”* He reemphasizes the fact that God is their Father, although their earthly father, Abraham, is ignorant of them. He is the everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6).

63:17 - *“O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants’ sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.”* Then the prophet cries out in a vein which is very similar to that of Moses in Psalm 90:3, “Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest,

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Return, ye children of men.” This is a principle of God—when His people do not walk uprightly, He causes them to err in doctrine.

Ezekiel 20:24-25 says: “Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers’ idols. Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.”

63:18 - *“The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.”* Then the prophet bewails the fact that the children of Israel have been in the land for a relatively short duration. This is depicted in very graphic terms in Psalm 74:3-4: “Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary. Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs.” The adversaries referred to here are the Babylonians.

63:19 - *“We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.”* Then the prophet pleads with the Lord to remember that He was never the God of the Babylonians and they were never called by His name. The prophet reminds the Lord that the Israelites are truly His people.

CHAPTER 64

64:1 - *“Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.”* Now the prophet travails in true intercessory prayer for God’s intervention on behalf of His people. Isaiah, who has such an understanding of the greatness of God, appeals to the Lord to show forth His mighty power.

64:2 - *“As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence.”* The prophet is jealous for the name of God. He is so intertwined with the work and nature of his Lord. This is how we should be also. We should always be concerned for the good name of the Lord to be upheld and magnified in every circumstance, just as a bride is so careful to seek the honor of her husband’s name.

64:3 - *“When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.”* The prophet calls to the Lord’s recollection the wondrous things that He did in the past. Psalm 66:3-6 emphasizes this truth: “Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee. All the

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earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah. Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.” Then he breaks into prophetic declarations of that which the Lord will yet do in the last days.

64:4 - *“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.”* The prophet Isaiah speaks now with true prophetic insight concerning the Lord’s purposes for the last days. It is a verse that Paul quotes in First Corinthians 2:9. It is clear that the Lord intends to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ask or think in our days. As we wait upon Him, I believe that the Lord will indeed reveal these wondrous works to us, even as Paul says in First Corinthians 2:10.

64:5 - *“Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.”* The Lord meets with those who work righteousness. How then can Israel be saved, seeing that they

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have worked against the Lord and sinned grievously against Him? Their hopeless condition is now described.

64:6-7 - *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.”* One very important truth that applies to all mankind is that our righteousness cannot save us. In God’s eyes it is as filthy rags. No one in Israel was calling upon the name of the Lord. No one was seeking His face; for God had hid Himself from Israel because of their sinfulness.

64:8 - *“But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.”* So the prophet, taking the place of a priest, pleads again with the Lord to remember that He is our Father and that we are the work of His hand. Furthermore, the prophet says, as he did in Isaiah 45:9, that the Lord is the Potter and we are the clay. It is He that can make us new

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again, even as a potter can remake and reshape a vessel that has been marred upon the potter's wheel (see Jer. 18:1-6).

64:9-12 - *“Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?”* Then Isaiah paints a very sad picture of the devastation in Israel due to the Babylonian invasion that he has been shown by the Lord in a vision. With a plaintive beat, the prophet pleads with the Lord in these closing verses of this prophecy. It is to the eighth prophecy that we must go now to hear the Lord's response to the intercessory prayers of His servant.

CHAPTER 65

8th prophecy - The Peculiar Nation Who Will Replace Israel

This prophecy opens with an amazing reaffirmation of the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:21, *“They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.”*

The Lord declared through Moses that because Israel provoked Him to jealousy with their idols, He would recompense them by turning to another nation. This nation is, of course, the Church. For in First Peter 2:9 it says, *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”*

65:1 - *“I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.”* The Lord here is clearly

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indicating that He is going to reveal Himself to a people that have never known Him. In a certain sense, this has already been foretold in type through the Gentile king Cyrus, who is a type of Christ. Also, Christ Himself is spoken of prophetically as the Light of the Gentiles in Isaiah 49:6.

65:2 - *“I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.”* The reason for the Lord turning to the Gentiles as their Savior, and not to Israel, is because they were rebellious children. They walked after their own thoughts.

65:3-5 - *“A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine’s flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.”* The Lord is now enunciating the sins of His people. They were filled with rebellion (v. 2), idolatry (v. 3), they committed sacrilege by eating the flesh of swine and other abominable things forbidden by the Levitical law (v. 4), and sacrificed to the dead (v. 4). They also

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said that they were holier than others, thinking that they had attained unto a higher degree of sanctification from these forbidden and mystical rites (v. 5). Because of all these abominations, the Lord determined to judge the impious.

65:6-7 - *“Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.”* The significance of this phrase is that the Lord will cause the generations living at the time of the Babylonian invasion to bear the punishment of the sins of their forefathers.

This is a truth that must be understood. It occurs quite frequently in Scripture. One notable example is the three year famine in David’s days for the sins of Saul against the Gibeonites (II Sam. 21:1). The whole nation suffered a generation later. Another example of this form of judgment is spoken of by the Lord in Matthew 23:35, “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew

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between the temple and the altar.” Therefore, we also can suffer for the sins of our forefathers. If our family is under a certain curse, we should inquire of the Lord if it is because of the sins of our forefathers and ask Him to reveal to us the remedy to the curse.

65:8 - *“Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants’ sakes, that I may not destroy them all.”* When juice is still found in a cluster of grapes and men say, “Don’t destroy it because there is yet some good in it,” so the Lord looks upon Israel. This is a point that Paul makes in Romans 11, saying that the Lord has not cast away those whom He foreknew. All the early apostles were Jews, as were all those who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

65:9 - *“And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.”* The promised seed is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He is the Elect of God and will inherit the land of Israel. Also, the servants of the Lord raised up in the first resurrection will dwell with Him, particularly those Old Testament saints who were faithful and fulfilled their courses.

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65:10 - *“And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.”* Here is the blessed pastoral scene of the millennial era. The beautiful coastal plain of Sharon, and the valley of Achor which was a symbol of trouble in the days of Joshua, will together be emblematic of the quiet, tranquil fruitfulness of the millennial reign of Christ.

65:11 - *“But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number.”* Then turning once again to the Babylonian era, the Lord denounces those sinners among His people who have turned to heathenistic practices. That troop and that number, spoken of in the most derogatory of tones, refers to those who have left the true worship in Zion and succumbed to preparing food and drink for congregations of heathen worshippers.

65:12 - *“Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.”* They will be slain by the sword of the Babylonians

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because they did not hearken to the voice of the Lord speaking through His prophets. They chose evil instead of those things which please God.

65:13-15 - *“Therefore thus saith the LORD GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the LORD GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name.”* Here the Lord contrasts the lot of the wicked and the lot of His faithful servants. The faithful rejoice, while the wicked howl with gnashing of teeth. Their name will be cursed and they will be slain. Their families and descendants will no longer use their surname.

65:16 - *“That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.”* In this verse, speaking again of the millennial era, we are shown a dispensation of piety and true worship of the God of truth; and also the blessed promise that

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all the troubles of the former ages of rebellion will be forgotten. They will even be hidden from the eyes of God Himself.

65:17 - *“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”* We are looking now more at the ages that follow the millennium than the golden age of Christ’s reign upon earth. During that period of a thousand years there will be constant reminders of past ages. As Revelation 21:1 declares, this is the period that will immediately follow the great white throne judgment when the books will be opened and everyone will give an account of their deeds done in the flesh.

65:18-19 - *“But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”* Now the Lord is speaking of the joy with which He contemplates the New Jerusalem descending down from heaven, so beautifully described in Revelation 21. However, the succeeding verses are also millennial promises. When the

longevity is specified, it is clearly referring to millennial age; for in the ages to come there is everlasting life.

65:20-23 - *“There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.”* A beautiful scene of industry and rest now unfolds. In the millennium, there will be the planting of vineyards and the building of houses. There will no longer be fear of war and everyone will enjoy the fruits of their own labors. The promised life span is extended to a hundred years from the promised seventy years in our times. But the sinner who walks not in the ways of the Lord will be accursed. This is clearly referring to the millennial age. People will die in the

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millennium because death reigns where there is sin; and there will still be original sin in the millennium, except for saints with glorified, new bodies.

65:24 - *“And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”* This blessed seed will know immediate answers to prayer. The Lord will answer them before they have even finished praying.

65:25 - *“The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”* Now to complete this blessed pastoral scenario, the Lord promises that even the animal kingdom will know freedom from fear. This blessed state is that to which the Apostle Paul alludes when he says that the whole of creation yearns for the manifestation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19-23), because the whole of creation was placed under sin’s yoke after the fall of Adam and Eve. The animals, who were created by God to reveal His glory, became antagonistic toward each other. The weaker animals have had to flee from their predators, but this will change in the millennium. Their carnivorous natures will be removed, and they will eat the grass of the field together.

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The last phrase, *“they shall not hurt upon my holy mountain,”* applies to the Lord’s saints in all generations. Remember, David could not build the temple because he had shed much blood, even though it was in the service of the Lord. The blood of mankind or animals is not to be shed by His holy ones. It deprives them of the blessing of dwelling in His holy mountain.

CHAPTER 66

9th prophecy - The Birthing of Zion

66:1-2 - *“Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”* This exclamation from the Lord is very similar to what He said to King David when he wanted to build Him a house for Him to dwell in (see I Chron. 17:4-5).

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The greatness of God precludes Him from being able to be contained in a house made by mortal man. However, He repeats the qualifications already mentioned in previous chapters for being able to dwell with the living God—having a poor and contrite spirit and holding His Word in holy reverence.

66:3 - *“He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.”* The standards of the Lord for the millennial reign are now revealed.

It is clear that the Lord is displeased when people shed the blood of animals. Therefore, we do well to examine even in our dispensation the whole question of blood sports such as hunting, bull fighting, and the like. This verse even suggests that those who do so are walking in a different path to the Lord.

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66:4 - *“I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.”* Again we have the awesome warning that if we choose a way that is contrary to the will of God for our lives, then God will choose our delusions. This is repeated in Ezekiel 20:25, and culminates in the last days when the Lord will send strong delusion upon those who love unrighteousness so that they will even believe the Antichrist (II Thess. 2:10-11).

66:5 - *“Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.”* Now the Lord speaks a word of hope to those who have been oppressed by their brethren in the Body of Christ. Many of us have experienced being asked to leave our churches because we have embraced present truth. However, when the Lord visits His Church, He will appear to our joy, but to their shame. The Lord spoke in a similar vein in John 16:20-22. But, the Lord is also a God of judgment, as is now made clear.

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66:6 - *“A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies.”* The Lord will send forth His judgments from Jerusalem against all His enemies in the last days. This is confirmed in Zechariah 12:5-6, 14:12.

66:7 - *“Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.”* Now the prophet brings forth the theme of the man child. This scripture and event relates to that which John saw and recorded in Revelation 12:5, *“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.”* Thus, we must assume that this is a company of overcomers brought forth by spiritual Zion at the time of the Great Tribulation when Satan is cast down from heaven.

66:8 - *“Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.”* Thus, it would also appear that there is going to be a breaking forth of an overcoming company as well as a birthing in natural Zion.

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66:9 - *“Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.”* The Lord will cause a great birthing of true believers in the last days.

66:10 - *“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.”* Jerusalem will be greatly blessed as the Lord brings forth this company of true believers. It seems clear that both natural and spiritual Jerusalem are indicated here. There will be a great rejoicing by all those that espouse Jerusalem’s just cause when the Lord turns their captivity.

66:11 - *“That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.”* The Gentiles are looked upon as children, and Jerusalem as the mother, who will then nourish them with her blessings.

66:12-13 - *“For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted*

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in Jerusalem.” Thus, we have the image of Jerusalem again as the spiritual mother, and the believing Gentiles as her children whom she nourishes. The Lord will accord peace and comfort to His beloved city during the millennial period.

66:14 - *“And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.”* Here the Lord once again differentiates between the great blessing and joy of heart that His servants will enjoy while His enemies will bear His indignation. These two sides of His nature must never be forgotten.

66:15-16 - *“For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many.”* This is a depiction of the second coming when the Lord will descend with fire and with chariots of the angelic host to slay the wicked (cf. Rev. 19:11-14; Jude 1:14-15).

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66:17 - *“They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine’s flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.”* The object of the Lord’s great anger and wrath is those who worship idols. The mention of swine’s flesh brings to mind the ultimate desecration and sacrilege of the temple by the Antichrist who will offer swine’s flesh upon the altar in Jerusalem.

66:18 - (NIV) *“And I, because of their actions and their imaginations, am about to come and gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see my glory.”* This refers again to the second coming when the Lord will gather all nations against Jerusalem. Then shall He set up a sign which is the sign of the Son of man—the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 24:30).

66:19 - (NIV) *“I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations—to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations.”* Those who escape of the nations that come against Jerusalem (cf. Zech. 14:16)

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will be sent as witnesses to those nations that have not known the glory of the Lord. Specifically mentioned are the nations of:

Tarshish - Spain.

Pul - a people that are included in modern day Egypt.

Lud - has also been identified with Libya.

Tubal - those who inhabit an area close to and around the Black Sea.

Javan - is a name often given to the Greeks.

66:20 - (NIV) *“And they will bring all your brothers, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the Lord—on horses, in chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels, says the Lord. They will bring them, as the Israelites bring their grain offerings, to the temple of the Lord in ceremonially clean vessels.”* Those who have escaped the devastation upon the nations that have encamped against Israel will in turn be sent back to their lands to escort the captive sons of Israel back to dwell in their own land. Those who return from captivity will be a holy offering unto the Lord like the grain offering in olden times.

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66:21 - (NIV) *“And I will select some of them also to be priests and Levites, says the Lord.”* The Lord will take some of those who return into His service (see Isa. 61:6).

66:22 - (NIV) *“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me, declares the Lord, so will your name and descendants endure.”* The Lord will cause the name and the descendants of those who return to remain forever before Him. Now comes the grand finale of the book of Isaiah. It concludes with a most awesome warning to those who transgress against the Lord.

66:23-24 - (NIV) *“From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me, says the Lord. And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”* Clearly, as we have seen in other scriptures, there will be a return to certain segments of the age of the Law for Israel in particular. This is seen in the sacrifices mentioned in connection with the temple of Ezekiel, the temple that will be constructed in the millennium and finished about fourteen years after the second coming. (Please see our book on Ezekiel for more details.)

Isaiah

The new moons and sabbaths will be reinstated. Everyone will come to worship the Lord at specific times. One aspect will involve gazing into the open pit where the carcasses of the transgressors will plainly be seen enduring eternal torture in the Lake of fire.

The Lord Himself made allusion to this when He said in Mark 9:43-47: “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.”

Thus, the millennial reign will be a rule with a rod of iron. In spite of this, there will be those who elect to transgress. These will suffer the torments of eternal damnation. Furthermore, their torments will be visible from an open pit situated near Jerusalem.

CONCLUSION

The book of Isaiah, apart from displaying with awesome prophetic exactitude future and past events, is a book of warnings. Isaiah depicts the eternal blessings of the just and the eternal torments of the wicked. May we all heed these ominous warnings and seek by His grace to live a life of holiness and reverence before Him all the days of our life. Amen!

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS

SOUTHERN KINGDOM KINGS OF JUDAH		NORTHERN KINGDOM KINGS OF ISRAEL	
Rehoboam	17 yrs.	Jeroboam I	22 yrs.
Abijah	3 yrs.	Nadab	2 yrs.
Asa	41 yrs.	Baasha	24 yrs.
		Elah	2 yrs.
		Zimri	7 days
		Omri-Tibni	4 yrs.
		Omri	8 yrs.
		Ahab	22 yrs.
Jehoshaphat	25 yrs.	Ahaziah	2 yrs.
Jehoram	8 yrs.	Jehoram (Joram)	12 yrs.
Ahaziah	1 yr.	Jehu	28 yrs.
Athaliah (queen)	6 yrs.	Jehoahaz	17 yrs.
Joash	40 yrs.	Joash	16 yrs.
Amaziah	29 yrs.	Jeroboam II	41 yrs.
Uzziah	52 yrs.	Zechariah	6 mon.
		Shallum	1 mon.
		Menahem	10 yrs.
		Pekahiah	2 yrs.
Jotham	16 yrs.	Pekah	20 yrs.
Ahaz	16 yrs.	Hoshea	9 yrs.
(co-reigned with Jotham for 3 yrs.)			
Hezekiah	29 yrs.		
Manasseh	55 yrs.		
Amon	2 yrs.		
Josiah	31 yrs.		
Jehoahaz	3 mon.		
Jehoiakim	11 yrs.		
Jehoiachin	3 mon.		
Zedekiah	11 yrs.		
586 B.C. - Jerusalem Destroyed.			
Judah went into Babylonian Captivity.			
		722 B.C. - Fall of Samaria. The ten northern tribes of Israel were scattered during the Assyrian invasion.	

THE KINGS OF EGYPT

The Egyptian History has been divided into thirty dynasties by Manetho, the Egyptian priest who lived during the reign of Ptolemy I (305-282 B.C.). It has been accepted by scholars throughout the centuries that followed as being based upon excellent native sources.

11th Dynasty	2134-1991 B.C.
12th Dynasty	1991-1786
Hyksos rule	1710-1540
18th Dynasty	1552-1305
Tuthmosis III	1490-1437
Amenophis III	1390-1353
Amenophis IV \ Akhenaten	1361-1345
19th Dynasty	1305-1198
Rameses	1305-1304
Sethos I	1304-1290
Rameses II	1290-1224
Merenptah	1224-1214
20th Dynasty	1198-1069
(Setnakht and Rameses III-XI)	
21st Dynasty	1068-945
(Psusennes I, Amenemope, Siamun, Psusennes II) 22nd Dynasty	945-715
Sheshonq I (Shishak)	945-924
(in 925 he invaded Israel)	
Osorkon I	924-889
Sheshonq V	889-874
Osorkon IV	730-715
25th Dynasty	716-664
Shabako (Shabaka)	716-702
Shebitku (Shabataka)	702-690 B.C.
Taharqa (Tirhakah)	690-664
26th Dynasty	664-525
Tanwetamani	664-656
Psammetichus I	664-610
Neco II	610-595
Psammetichus II	595-589
Apries (Hophra)	589-570
Amasis (Ahmose II)	570-526
Psammetichus III	526-525
Ptolemy I (Soter)	323-282
* Judah annexed by Ptolemy I in 320	
Ptolemy II (Philadelphus)	282-246
Ptolemy III (Euergetes)	246-222
Ptolemy IV (Philopator)	222-205
Ptolemy V (Epiphanes)	204-180

THE KINGS OF ASSYRIA

Shalmaneser I	1274-1245 B.C.
Tukulti-Ninurta I	1244-1208
Adad-shumaidina	1224-1219
Nebuchadrezzar I (Babylonia)	1124-1103
Tiglath-pileser I	1115-1077
Ashur-dan II	933
Ashurnasirpal II	883-859
Shalmaneser III	859-824
Tiglath-pileser III	745-727
Shalmaneser V	727-722
Sargon II (Fall of Samaria in 722)	722-705
Sennacherib	705-681
Esarhaddon	681-669
Ashurbanipal	669-627
Sinsariskan	627-612 B.C.
* Nineveh falls to Nabopolassar of Babylon	612
Ashurballit (Held out at Haran)	612-609
* End of Assyrian Empire	609

THE KINGS OF SYRIA

Hiram I of Tyre	979-945 B.C.
Rezon	955-925
Hezion	925-915
Tabrimmon	915-900
Ben-hadad I	900-860
Ethbaal I of Tyre	898-866
Ben-hadad II	860-843
Hazael	843-796
Ben-hadad III	796-770
* Jeroboam II of Israel dominates Syria 770-750	
Rezin	750-732
* Damascus falls to Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria in 732 B.C.	

THE KINGS OF BABYLON

Nabopolassar	626-605 B.C.
Nebuchadnezzar	605-562
Amel-Marduk (Evil Merodach)	562-560
Neriglassar	560-556
Labasi-Marduk (9 months)	556
Nabonidus	556-539
Belshazzar	553-539
* Babylon falls to Medes and	

THE KINGS OF PERSIA

Cyrus	539-530 B.C.
Cambyses	530-522
Smerdis	522
Darius I	522-486
Xerxes (Ahasuerus)	486-465
Artaxerxes I	464-423
Darius II	423-404
Artaxerxes II	404-359
Artaxerxes III	359-338
Arses	338-336
Darius III	336-331

THE KINGS OF GREECE

Alexander the Great	331-323 B.C.
His Four Generals:	
Cassander - took Macedonia	
Lysimachus - took Thrace	
Seleucus - took Syria	
Ptolemy - took Egypt and Palestine	