

# EXPOSITORY NOTES ON THE PROPHET ISAIAH

by

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## ISAIAH CHAPTER SIXTY-THREE

### THE WARRIOR CONQUEROR FROM EDOM

HERE we have the wonderful picture of Israel's Redeemer with garments red with the blood of their enemies, coming up from the East - from whence their enemies generally came. Syria was pressing upon them at this time and Assyria would come to them through the lands of Moab and Edom, and so, looking to the last days, to the time of their great trial in the tribulation period, Isaiah depicts Him as a conqueror coming toward the land, driving His foes before Him, taking vengeance on Israel's adversaries in order to redeem His chosen people. He had looked for someone to help. There was no one, and so He came Himself. Just as He came Himself to die for their sins on the Cross, so He is to be their final deliverer from their foes.

Remembering the salvation here is from their enemies, deliverance from every power that has oppressed them, bringing them into blessing in their land, this majestic passage should be noted carefully.

**“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? 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 garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come”** (verses 1-4).

This passage has often been misapplied. The words, **“I have trodden the winepress alone,”** have often been used of our blessed Lord going through the agony of Gethsemane's Garden, and there is a sense in which one might think of Him there as **“treading the winepress,”** but the whole context here shows it is treading the winepress in judgment on the foes of Israel. It links with Revelation 14:15-20, where we have the vintage, and the vine of the earth is fully ripe and is cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. It is the Eastern figure. They gathered their grapes, threw them into a great winepress, and then, taking off part of their garments, with bare feet the young men stepped into the winefat, trod out the fruit, and became spattered with the red blood of the grapes. It was always a time of great rejoicing.

Among the Greeks this was a festival in honor of the god Bacchus, or Dionysius, but among the Hebrews, too, there was the annual treading of the grapes, and the picture here is God putting into the winepress all the enemies of Israel, all who have sought to destroy His chosen people, and then looking for someone to tread that winepress. There was no one. **“I looked. . . there was none.”** So He came. **“I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none”** to help me.

He says, **“I will stain all my raiment.”** His garments are looked upon as stained with the blood of Israel’s foes. In Revelation 19 we have the wonderful vision of the Lord descending from heaven, pictured as a mighty warrior astride a great white charger.

There it is said He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, His own precious blood, the blood that poured from the wound in His side and would naturally stain His vesture. It is the symbol of His love for His people. But here in Isaiah His garments are stained with the blood of His enemies - it is the day of vengeance of our God.

When that day comes, all those who are found in opposition to God will be destroyed. Look carefully into the prophetic Word, and link it up with the book of Revelation, and it will be evident that there are two different characters of judgment upon the world at the time of the Lord’s second advent. There is the warrior judgment, when the nations will gather together and the Lord will descend in power from Heaven and destroy them - that is the treading of the winepress which we have here.

Then there is what might be called the sessional judgment when the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all His holy angels with Him. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another - the shepherd dividing the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25).

There He is not dealing with the nations that have been maintaining a vicious attitude toward God and His people, but those who will be judged in that day according to their attitude toward His messengers of Israel as they have gone through the world proclaiming the coming of the King.

These two aspects Of one judgment may be distinguished but not separated. The Lord Jesus is revealed in flaming fire taking vengeance on those that know not God, those that obey not the Gospel, who have had every opportunity to be saved and have turned away and taken the place of enemies of God and His people.

In the sessional judgment it is the nations as such, to many of whom the Gospel message had never before gone, who are judged according to their attitude toward His people. The sheep, for instance, are not saved because of what they did to His people, nor are the others lost because of their bad treatment of them. It is a question in either case of whether they had faith in Christ or not. If there was real faith, it was manifested by their treatment of His messengers.

Where there was no faith, it would be manifested by their indifference to them.

Judgment is always according to works and so He speaks of their attitude in each instance toward those who have carried the message. **“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these [My brethren], ye did it not to Me.”**

In Isaiah 63 the treading of the winepress is the warrior judgment when all found in definite, open opposition to God and His people will be destroyed when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in flaming fire.

**“And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth. I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. 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”** (verses 5-9).

This precious portion applies to God’s care over all His people in any dispensation, but here He is primarily dealing with the suffering saints of the last days, and also with those that might be suffering for the truth’s sake in Isaiah’s own day. Yet it may be taken to heart by God’s afflicted people in any time, because He is always concerned about His saints. Weymouth’s beautiful paraphrase of I Peter 5:7 is, “Casting all your care upon Him, for it matters to God about you.” So here **“in all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them.”**

God is not an unmoved spectator as He gazes upon the sufferings of His saints. His heart of compassion goes out to everyone of them, and if He permits the suffering to go on, it is because He sits as a refiner of silver, waiting to purge them from all dross, that His own countenance may be fully manifested in them. What a comfort a passage like this will be to the remnant of Israel in the last days when suffering terribly under the Beast and the false prophet but waiting for the manifestation of the King.

He will come and their sufferings will end, and they will enter into all the blessings that He has predicted.

**~ end of chapter 63 ~**

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