

INITIATION INTO ISAIAH

by

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CHAPTER FIFTY-SIX

THEME:

The blessing of Israel in the Millennium under the new covenant.

REMARKS:

This chapter which follows the salvation of God in chapter 53 and its overture to Israel in chapter 54 and to the world in chapter 55, is not a retreat to Mt. Sinai, but rather a victory march through the arch of triumph into the Millennium. It is a forward movement which is the logical outworking of what has preceded. It pertains particularly to Israel and radiates out into a widening circle of global benefits. This is all posited on the New Covenant.

For finding fault with them, he saith. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt: because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people (Hebrew 8:8-10).

In this chapter our attention is directed from the great events of the future to the more practical aspects of daily life in the kingdom. The emphasis is ethics and not events; practice and not prophecy. All of this should influence our living today. The study of prophecy is not to entertain the curious, or intrigue the intellect, but to encourage holy living.

OUTLINE:

1. **Grand PARTICULARS of the Future Kingdom.** Verses 1-8
2. **Sorry PREDICAMENT of the Present Kingdom.** Verses 9-1J

COMMENT:

Verse 1—**Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.**

None of the prophets anticipated a long interval before the establishment of the Kingdom. For them it was in the immediate future. The salvation spoken of here is the national salvation of Israel. This is what was in the mind of the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:26.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11:26).

Anticipation of the coming salvation was to be an incentive to do justice.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure (I John 3:3).

Verse 2—**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.**

The Sabbath is to be restored after this day of Grace and the Church is removed to the place prepared above. This will be during The Great Tribulation and Millennium. In the meantime we are not to be judged according to a Sabbath day. The Sabbath was an arrangement between God and Israel.

Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed (Exodus 31:16-17).

Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them (Ezekiel 20:12).

There was no merit in observing the Sabbath for itself—their lives were to be such that their observance of it meant they kept it.

Verse 3—**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**

The Gentile in that day is not to feel he is an outsider because of God's peculiar arrangement with Israel; to the contrary he is invited to step up and share the blessings. An eunuch could not serve as a priest under the Mosaic economy. A physical handicap will shut no one out in the future.

Verse 4—**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;**

Verse 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.**

The handicapped, the strangers and all outcasts are invited to accept God's gracious overture of a position that is better than a son or daughter and a security that is everlasting. This the Law could not afford.

Verse 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;

The stranger will be given a new heart that he might love the Lord.

Verse 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.

This is the verse from which the Lord quoted when He cleansed the temple the second time. It was God's original intention that the temple was to be for all peoples irrespective of their race, tongue, class or condition. It had long ceased to function as such in Christ's day. The church today is as far removed from its primary objective as the temple.

Verse 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.

The Kingdom is to be worldwide in its extent and will include members of every family of the human race in its content. This is the intent.

Verse 9—All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.

Our vision is shifted from the lofty contemplation of the glorious future kingdom to the sorry condition of the then existing kingdom. God was permitting the nations of the world to come in like wild and ferocious beasts and they were to rob and pillage His people. Assyria had already broken in and Babylon was soon to follow; later others would come to plunder and destroy.

Verse 10—His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

The reason that God permitted them to come was because of the weak and inadequate leadership of the people. They were blind as watchmen. They are like dogs which are lazy. They are called dumb dogs. The kings, priests, and false prophets were held responsible for the welfare of the nation and its destruction was laid at their door.

Verse 11—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.

They were greedy dogs that sought their own personal interests rather than the welfare of the nation. Their covetousness blinded them to the imminent dangers that pressed upon the nation.

Is there not a lesson here for America? As we stand on the threshold of a new year, the tragic plight of our nation is made doubly so because of the sad lack of leadership in most fields today, neither political party offers capable and sound leadership as we face a grave world crisis. Selfish interests continue to fatten at the public trough while America dwindles from a first rate power to something obviously below this. There is a crying need for godly men who have spiritual insight—we have had too many “**shepherds who cannot understand.**”

Verse 12—**Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.**

They drowned their sad plight in drink and faced the future as drunkards and blind optimists.

Again, America could learn a lesson from this simple passage of Scripture. America is fast becoming a nation of alcoholics, habitual and social drinkers, no nation was ever able to survive, regardless of its strength and size that became drunken.

- Babylon went down in a bacchanalian orgy.
- Rome was destroyed by booze and not barbarians.
- France lost out because of liquor.

Can America beat the game? Are we the exception to the rule? Common sense has only one answer and spiritual sense confirms it.

~ end of chapter 56 ~

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