

EXPOSITORY NOTES ON THE PROPHET ISAIAH

by

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ISAIAH CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

EXULTANT SONG OF THE REMNANT

IT IS with growing interest and increasing joy that we move on now to contemplate the exultation of the remnant of Israel who will become the nucleus of the new nation after the powers of evil which have sought their complete destruction shall have been dealt with by the Lord Himself at His Second Advent. For this remnant “**the time of the singing**” (Song of Solomon 2:12) will at last have come. Down through the centuries the cries of misery and lamentation have been loud and long because they knew not the time of their visitation, but when at last they look upon Him whom they have pierced and recognize in the once-despised Galilean their own promised Messiah their hearts will well up with praise and thanksgiving to the Lord their God who henceforth will be their everlasting portion. Let us consider the song, verse by verse.

“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” (verse 1).

They who had been so grievously misled in the past will then come to realize that the Lord’s counsels of faithfulness and truth have remained unchanged in spite of the fact that when the Lord Jesus appeared to bring in the blessings so long awaited, they fulfilled their own Scriptures in rejecting Him and giving Him up to the death of the Cross. But God made that very Cross the great altar upon which the true propitiatory sacrifice was offered for the sins of the world.

Nor did He change His plan because they said, “**We will not have this Man to reign over us.**” For the time being the One whom they refused to acknowledge as king was taken up to glory and seated, in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1, at God’s right hand. During the long years of His personal absence from this earth, Israel has become the nation of the wandering foot, seeking rest and peace in vain because the Prince of Peace, who alone could give what their hearts yearned for, was to them a stranger. But in that coming day they will recognize and adore Him and so enter into fullness of joy.

“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. Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee” (verses 2, 3).

These verses clearly indicate the destruction of all God-defying Gentile power in the time of the end. The leaders of the Jews declared of old, “We have no king but Caesar.” Unspeakably terrible have been their sufferings under the Caesars ever since, but at the end of the great tribulation, the time of Jacob’s trouble, all the powers that have oppressed them will be destroyed and they will be freed forever from Gentile tyranny and persecution.

“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” (verse 4).

Doubtless this verse may be interpreted as applying to the entire period of Israel’s scattering and distress for although the nation as such was rejected by God when they rejected His Son, nevertheless, during all this present age there has remained an election of grace; Jews who in their anguish and misery have turned to God and have found in the Holy Scriptures the revelation of His Son as their Messiah and Saviour. To these He has ever been a refuge and a comfort, even in the midst of trial and sorrow, enabling them to rejoice in His unfailing love.

“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. 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” (verses 6, 6).

Coincident with the destruction of the Beast and the False Prophet, as we read in Revelation 19, will come the fulfillment of the prophetic Word in regard to the return of the Lord and the establishment of His throne upon Mount Zion. From thence shall the law go forth into all the world, and men everywhere among those who have been spared from the judgments of that awful day will be invited to revel in the riches of God’s abundant grace.

He will spread His table, not only for Israel but for the saved from among the Gentiles too, as indicated in Revelation 7. We certainly are not to take this sixth verse as referring to some literal feast, but to the spiritual refreshment which will be offered to all in that day.

“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” (verses 7, 8).

Ever since sin came into the world, men have been blinded to the eternal truths of God’s Word. As we read in Ephesians 4, “**having the understanding darkened, . . . through the ignorance that is in them.**” But when the LORD Himself appears in glory, this blindness will pass away, not only from the eyes of Israel who are now unable to understand their own Scriptures because of the veil that is upon their hearts, but from the eyes of the Gentiles as well.”

The apostle quotes from verse 8 in opening up the truth of resurrection in I Corinthians 15.

He shows that this passage will have its partial fulfillment at what we know as the Rapture, when the dead shall be raised and the living changed, and this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality. Then, indeed, will come to pass that of which Isaiah here speaks. For all the children of God, living and dead, at that time, death will be swallowed up in victory.

That there will be a further fulfillment at the end of the great tribulation is evident from Revelation 20:4-6, for the first resurrection will include not only the saints of this and past ages, but also those who will be put to death for refusing to worship the Beast and his image during the days of the great tribulation. Together these will constitute the heavenly company, while the spared of Israel and the nations will enter into the millennial kingdom here on the earth.

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 9).

One can imagine something of the exultant joy of the remnant as they look upon the once-despised Jesus and see in Him the God of their fathers manifested in flesh. “**Lo,**” they cry, “**this is our God; we have waited for Him.**” Under His beneficent but righteous reign, their wanderings come to an end and they enter into possession of the land promised to Abraham and confirmed in the promise to David.

“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. 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” (verses 10-12).

Moab, which we have already seen speaks of the pride of a false religious profession, will no longer be a menace to the peace of God’s people. He will utterly destroy everything that would mar the joy of that day of blessing. This will be brought about, not by human effort, not by man’s ingenuity, but by the Lord Himself, who will spread forth His hands in judgment upon those who refuse to bow to His will, and in grace upon those that put their trust in Him.

~ end of chapter 25 ~

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