

EXPOSITORY NOTES ON THE PROPHET ISAIAH

by

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ISAIAH CHAPTER SIXTY-SIX

THE END OF THE LORD MANIFESTED

IN THIS last chapter again we find that God stresses the failures of His people, and then closes by telling of the wonderful conditions that will prevail in the days of the kingdom, and gives another glimpse of the new heavens and the new earth.

“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 . . . 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” (verses 1-3, 5).

Once more it is emphasized that He who fills heaven and earth cannot be confined to any house here, yet deigns to dwell in the heart of the lowly and the contrite. **“To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word,”** he who walks carefully fearing lest he might go contrary to the Word of God. And those that tremble at the Word may have the assurance that He himself will ever undertake for them. He is not looking for great ability nor wonderful eloquence on the part of His servants, but for a heart subject to His truth. And when He finds that He will intervene on behalf of His people.

But those who are merely formalists, who do not know the realities of spiritual things, will look down upon them with contempt, think of them, perhaps, as fanatics and accuse them of all kinds of folly. So here He says, **“Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name’s sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified.”** But God says it is for His name’s sake.

So the remnant of Israel will be despised and looked down upon by those who do not take their place of repentance before God, but the Lord shall appear to their glory and their enemies shall be ashamed.

Chapter sixty-six gathers together the threads of God’s ways of holiness and grace. Heaven is His throne, yet He dwells with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit (chap. 57:15).

The offerings of those who have only a form of pleasing Him are an offense. They have chosen their own ways, but God will choose too, and bring their fears upon them, because when He called and spoke they did not answer nor hear, but did evil and chose what did not please Him (chap. 65:12). Yet those who heard His voice heard the promise: **“Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear”** (chap. 65:24).

The Lord had said to His people that He would give them peace like a river, and speaking as God the Creator He said there would be peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near (chap. 57:19). But the solemn assurance is twice given also: **“There is no peace, saith the Lord [my God] unto the wicked”** (chaps. 48:22; 57:21).

“As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem” (verse 13).

Compare chapters 40 and 61 for God’s plan and design for His people. The Hebrew word translated “comfort” in this verse is from a root meaning *“to sigh!”* It says, “As one whom his mother sighs with, so will I sigh with you.” We know how a loving mother enters into the sufferings of her children. Taking the little one in her arms she sighs with him as he sobs out his grief upon her bosom. So does God feel for us in our trials. Of old He said concerning Israel when they were in Egyptian bondage, **“I have surely seen the affliction of My people. . . I know their sorrows; and am come to deliver them.”**

He is ever the same in His concern for His afflicted children. His great heart of love is moved with compassion as He beholds the ravages that sin has made and the sufferings that it has entailed upon all mankind. Yet we are so slow to refer our troubles to Him, thinking of Him as a stern Judge rather than a tender, loving Father.

“For, behold, the Lord will come with fire . . . to render his anger with fury . . . For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh . . . I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory” (verses 15, 16, 18).

The whole book of Revelation bears witness to this.

“And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

“And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

“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” (verses 19-24).

In chapter 65:22 we read of the longevity of the people in the millennium: **“as the days of a tree shall be the days of My people.”** If one dies at one hundred years of age, he shall be counted as a child, and yet the presence of death and the curse would indicate that death will come only to any who definitely rebel against the King, who sin against Him. And then those who are in the place of blessing will see from time to time the dead bodies of those who are slain, where **“their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”** The Lord Jesus quotes Isaiah’s words again and again when referring to the final estate of the eternally lost (Mark 9:43-48).

And so the book ends with God’s holiness and glory manifested and magnified as well as His divine compassions.

“Here Thy bright character is known,
Nor dare a creature guess
Which of His glories brightest shone
The justice or the grace.”

Meanwhile it is true for us as for God’s ancient people,

“Upon the wings of every hour
We read Thy patience still.”

~ end of book ~

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