

(Continued from part 22)

As I said last week, it would be easy for us to rush through Isaiah if studying the entire book and jump from one majestic snowcapped mountain peak to another and miss some important truths hidden away in short verses that tell about our Savior and the salvation He provides. Our purpose is not a study of the entire book but looking at some of the names and titles that are given to Christ in Isaiah's prophecy.

There are many passages that reinforce the over all message of hope in the coming of the Messiah when brought together as a whole. They may not "stand on their own," but when seen in the context of the whole they are significant and very profound.

We concluded last week with Christ pictured as the Faithful Judge according to Isaiah 16:6-7 and how that is ultimately fulfilled when He is shown to be the "Lord of righteousness" according to Jer. 33:15-17, when He returns at the second coming and how that relates to Christ as final judge in the context of the book of the Revelation.

We begin this morning by seeing Christ as A Savior and Champion in Egypt.

The Egyptian religion was a complex polytheism. However, in Isaiah chapter nineteen Isaiah sees Egyptians worshipping Yahweh. It is interesting that by the first century A.D. there were over a million Jews living in Egypt, and Onias IV built a Jewish Temple in Egypt in 160 B.C. The Roman emperor Vespasian closed it in A.D. 71. Before the coming of Christ there were Jewish synagogues covering the land of Egypt, and the Old Testament was translated into Greek at Alexandria.

However, the passage as a whole is not talking about Jews worshiping in Egypt, but the Egyptians worshipping Yahweh. "In that day," says Isaiah, "there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD near its border" (Isa. 19:19). "And it will become a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them. Thus the LORD will make Himself

known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the LORD and perform it" (vv. 20-21).

This "Savior and Champion," literally "Mighty One," is the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah knows only one Deliverer. This passage is Messianic. Men have carried the message of salvation to Egypt and the people have believed. The good news has been preached there and men have believed on the Lord. The LORD God has made Himself known to the Egyptians. At Pentecost the knowledge of the Lord went out to the land and people believed on the Deliverer, the Mighty One. Before Egypt fell prey to Islam in 640 A.D. there was a flourishing church in Egypt. Will there also be a time in the future when it will again flourish? Let's pray to that end.

#### A Key for the House of David

Perhaps Isaiah 22:22 may be considered more of a messianic application than a specific messianic prophecy. However, the description of the key to the house or dynasty of David is applied to the risen Christ in Revelation 3:7. Just as the master of the house has a key and complete authority over it, Eliakim has been entrusted with the key to the house of David. The responsibility of the government, security and safety rests on his shoulders. Jesus Christ, as the Anointed of Yahweh, bears the complete responsibility for the Kingdom of God. Christ exercises complete sovereign authority over the Kingdom. He alone is the Head of the house of David.

#### A Costly Foundation

In chapter twenty Isaiah says the nation has misplaced its confidence in the false security of Egypt. The Lord declares that He will provide His chosen foundation for Israel as opposed to the proud drunken kings of Ephraim and the fading flower of her glory in Is 28:16

"Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,

**A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed." Is.28:16**

The leadership believes in its falsehood and deception. God, however, provides a measuring-line for a sure foundation. In "His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great" the Lord cancels Jerusalem's covenant with death and warns her of coming judgment.

The very names God uses of Himself indicates the seriousness of the situation. The "Lord" (Adonai) LORD (Yahweh) is the one who is speaking.

The costly, tested stone is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "costly cornerstone for the foundation." The Lord God is the one who has "firmly placed" this foundation stone.

**"He who believes in it will not be disturbed." We could replace the italicized words with Him referring to the Lord Jesus. He is the only sure foundation in life. Peter resolutely declared to the religious leaders, "Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead . . . He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDER, but WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:10-12).**

The apostle Paul borrowed Isaiah's idea and declared, "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). In Ephesians 2:20-22 he reminds the Ephesian church,

**"Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."**

Peter uses the same allegory when writing about the church as a living stone.

**"BEHOLD I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED" (1 Peter 2:6).**

Cf. Romans 9:33; 10:11; with Psalm 118:22; Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17).

No one can be truly disappointed once they have trusted and come to rest in Jesus Christ.

Isaiah gives a song of praise for God's grace following on the heels of the account of universal judgment in chapter twenty-four. In chapter twenty-five Isaiah pictures the Lord throwing a lavish banquet for the worshippers who have come to Mt. Zion for that purpose (v. 6). It will be a time of full enjoyment in the perfected Kingdom. God will have removed the spiritual blindness of the people and they worship Him (v.7). The Lord will achieve His eternal purpose in salvation and judgment. He is faithful and true.

The Veil of Unbelief is Removed

The apostle Paul speaks of God removing the veil of blindness and unbelief in Second Corinthians 3:12-18. The Holy Spirit removes the veil so we can "behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord." We are "being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (v. 18). The Lord will swallow up the covering that is over all peoples. He removes the spiritual blindness so we can see Jesus.

But He does even more because He gets to the heart of our problem. It is interesting to observe the removal of the spiritual veil of ignorance and unbelief and the swallowing up of death. Isaiah reaches the height of understanding of the resurrection in the Old Testament. "He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken" (Isaiah 25:8). With boldness Isaiah says, "He will swallow up death for all time." He uses a word for "swallow" that is equivalent to making a thing disappear. He destroys it so thoroughly that there is no trace left of it. God doesn't merely remove it, but completely wipes it out, including all footprints of it.

All evidence of it is gone when He removes it.

Paul paraphrases this great promise and adds part of Hosea 13:14 in his great chapter on the resurrection of the believer. He says,

**"But when this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY. O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:53-57, cf. vv. 12-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Revelation 1:17-18; Daniel 12:2).**

Romans 5:12 reveals to us, that the source and cause of death is sin. Death entered into the world by sin (Genesis 2:17), and it came to its ignoble end when sin was dealt its final blow at the cross.

The apostle John sees in his vision the same thing Isaiah sees in God's compassion, grace and power over death. He sees God among His people,

**"and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4).**

God deals with death and the cause of death--sin. The final conqueror is conquered! Not only do we see His awesome power in dealing with sin and death, but also His tender compassionate touch that removes all traces of sin and death. Just as a tender mother, He removes the tearstains from a child's face.

Isaiah resounds his note in 26:19,

**Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.**

This new insight is startling and fresh in the Old Testament. Those who have died, belong to the Lord and for that reason they shall live. This is the same message we hear in the New Testament. God's dead are those who in His Name have actually

died physically. Though they were dead, they still were his dead. Isaiah "clearly introduces the doctrine of the resurrection of the body." The "dead" are "corpses" and these "will rise."

They will receive eternal life. "Your dead shall live." This is a rare note in the Old Testament but here it sounds forth clearly.

Here is a clear indication of the resurrection hope in the Old Testament.

"You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy. . . " "Dust" of death is a reminder of the dead bodies in the parallel. "For your dew is as the dew of the dawn (lit. "lights"), and the earth will give birth to the departed spirits." The "dew" is figurative of the invigorating life giving dew in a desert. The invigorating life that God alone can give causes the "departed spirits," literally "shades" (shade like existence) to return to full life. God raises the dead. The one true living God sends a refreshing dew to give newness of life to those who have been reduced to the dust of the earth.

Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ gives hope against the fear of death. Death will no longer be a terror for humanity. By His death Jesus Christ swallowed up death in victory. When He returns He will make it disappear. He will abolish it to the extent that there will be no longer any trace of it. Jesus advances the thought when He said,

"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds, to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:25, 28-29).

Our understanding of this truth effects what we believe about suffering (Romans 8:18-28), the spiritual world (8:31-39), our resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:20-28), our spiritual victory (Hebrews 12:1-2), our faithfulness to Christ (Revelation 2:10-11), and more

Yes, let your imaginations leap with joy! Jesus is risen from the dead! Death has

been defeated once-and for all in the resurrection of Jesus.

So let's focus for a bit on the New Covenant fulfillment of what Isaiah was writing about.

The Blessing of the Resurrection Change: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed (15:51-52).

The problem with which Paul is dealing here is the exact opposite of the one that faced the Thessalonian believers. Thessalonian Christians: In 1 Thessalonians 4, the question was whether those who have died in Christ receive the same benefit as those who are alive and remain.

Corinthian Christians: Here the question is whether those who are still living receive the same benefits of those who already died

Will those who died receive what we get? Will we get what those who have died receive?

The answer to both questions is YES! We who are still alive at the time of Christ's return will be changed. How will this take place? Verse 52 goes on to describe how this will happen. There are three specific points in this description.

This change is INSTANTANEOUS: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (15:52). This will not be a gradual process like the growing of a seed into a plant. It takes place in a single instant.

The change takes place at the LAST TRUMPET: at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised (15:52).

This phrase tells us WHEN this change will take place. It will take place at the time when the last trumpet is sounded. The sounding of God's great trumpet is a common theme

throughout the Scriptures.

It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown; and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem. (Isaiah 27:13).

### 1. The Victory of the Resurrection:

But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory" (15:54).

The history of the world has been a history of open warfare. This war has been against death. It started in the Garden of Eden and it will finally conclude at the coming of the Lord in victory. Notice the study in contrasts:

Perishable, Mortal, Death puts on imperishable, puts on immortality, is swallowed up in victory

### 2. The Celebration of the Resurrection:

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; <sup>57</sup> but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (15:55-57).

Paul breaks into a song of victory. We don't know the tune, but we can see the chiasmic format of the song.

O death, where is your victory. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory

O death, where is your sting?

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. What does Paul mean when he says that the power of sin is the law? There is something about the law that entices people to sin. When I was a lot younger, there was a television show called "Candid Camera." They would play practical jokes on people and catch it on film. One such joke involved a hole in a wooden fence and a sign under it that said, "Don't look



through this hole." What happened? People who had walked by ignoring the hole now stopped, looked both ways and then looked through it.

There will come a day when sin will lose its power. It will be in that day when we shall see Christ and we shall be like Him. It shall be that day when our love for Him shall be consummated and when law in any form will no longer be needed.

### 3. The Motivation of the Resurrection:

**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord (15:58).**

In view of the future Paul has predicted, he now gives an admonition for the present. It is a twofold admonition.

First, we are to be steadfast and immovable. This is a reference to your stability. How do you become stable? By having a solid foundation. By being grounded in the Word. By holding fast to proper teaching, to sound doctrine.

There is also a second admonition. This is not about works, deeds or earning rewards. We are to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. It is not enough to have a solid foundation. It is not enough to be grounded in the Word of God. Those teachings must accomplish their work in you and bring forth fruit. This is about the practical part of having sound doctrine. It is always contending for the Gospel, this is the labor that is not in vain.