

The Millennial Kingdom; The Tribulation; Isaiah's Prayer

Isaiah 62-63

Isaiah 62 - *"For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. ² The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will name. ³ You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.*

⁴ You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called Hephzibah (My delight is in her), and your land Beulah (married); for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. ⁵ For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

⁶ I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent ⁷ and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

⁸ The Lord has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength: "Surely I will no longer give your grain as food for your enemies; and the sons of the foreigner shall not drink your new wine for which you have labored. ⁹ But those who have gathered it shall eat it and praise the Lord. Those who have brought it together shall drink it in My holy courts."

Background Notes

In Isaiah's predictions about the future at the end of Isaiah 60, some details were difficult to interpret. Did these verses apply to the future millennial kingdom of Christ on this earth, or did they apply to the new heavens and new earth of the future Eternal State?

However, we don't have to speculate in chapter 62. The details in this chapter clearly refer to the future kingdom of Christ on this earth.

Doctrinal Point (for Isaiah 62)

The godly of Israel await the blessings of Christ's millennial kingdom.

Verses 1-5 declared the Lord will not rest until Israel is restored - not only to her Land, but to the Lord as well. Then the nations will see her righteousness and glory and beauty (v2-3). Then she will no longer be forsaken and desolate - she will be a delight to the Lord! He will rejoice over restored Israel, including the restored Land, just as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride (v4-5).

The picture of the bridegroom and bride is not a prophecy about Christ and the Church. *In the context*, restored **Israel** is in view, **not** the Church. (Don't become confused by the teachings of "replacement theology," that the Church has replaced Israel, and the blessings God promised to Israel should now be transferred to the Church.)

In verses 6-9, we see that God had appointed watchmen to pray for the coming peace of Jerusalem. They were to continue praying until all enemies of Israel will be subdued and Jerusalem brings praise to the Lord. Who are these watchmen? These are the godly believers down through history who have prayed for God's chosen people and their nation. Some commentators suggest that the watchmen may include angelic intercessors. This may be so, but certainly it includes godly believers through the years.

In verses 10-12, Isaiah looked beyond the return of the Jews from their coming Babylonian captivity to the return of restored Israel to the Land, in preparation for the return of the Lord. The godly of Israel await the blessings of Christ's millennial kingdom.

As we continue on to **Isaiah 63**, we'll start with the beginning of Isaiah's great prayer on behalf of the nation, verses 7-14.

Isaiah 63:7-14 - *"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses. ⁸ For He said, "Surely they are My people, children who will not lie." So He became their Savior.*

⁹ 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 bore them and carried them all the days of old. ¹⁰ But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, so He turned Himself against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.

¹¹ Then he remembered the days of old - Moses and his people - saying: "Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them, ¹² who led them by the right hand of Moses, with His glorious arm, dividing the water before them to make for Himself an everlasting name. ¹³ Who led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, that they might not stumble?" ¹⁴ As a beast goes down into the valley, and the Spirit of the Lord causes him to rest, so You lead Your people, to make Yourself a glorious name."

Background Notes

We started chapter 63 with verses 7-14 of Isaiah's prayer so we can reiterate a point we've mentioned before about the prophet Isaiah's theology. The inspired prophet Isaiah definitely believed and taught **the doctrine of the Trinity**. The word "Trinity" is not in the Bible, but the doctrine of the Trinity is certainly taught in Scripture. The doctrine of the Trinity is that **God is one in essence but three in Persons** – the Person of the Father, the Person of the Son, and the Person of the Holy Spirit.

In our talk on Isaiah 48 we mentioned that Isaiah 48:16 is probably one of the clearest and most concise statements of the Trinity in the Old Testament. In Isaiah 63, the Trinity was mentioned again. “*The Lord*” [Yahweh] was obviously God the Father. God the Son was mentioned as “*the Angel of His Presence*” (v9). (We believe, in the Old Testament, that “*the Angel of the Lord*” was the pre-incarnate Son of God.) The Holy Spirit was mentioned at the end of verse 10: “*they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit,*” and again in verse 11: “*Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them,*” and again in verse 14: “*And the Spirit of the Lord causes him to rest.*”

Doctrinal Point (for Isaiah 63)

The enemies of Israel await the judgment of God’s “Day of Vengeance.”

Isaiah 63:1-6 - “*Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah - this One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”* ² *Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? “I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes.* ⁴ *For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come.*

⁵ *I looked, but there was no one to help, and I wondered that there was no one to uphold. Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me, and My own fury, it sustained Me.* ⁶ *I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, made them drunk in My fury, and brought down their strength to the earth.”*

The “Day of Vengeance” was also mentioned in Isaiah 61:2. In view of the way the Lord quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 at Nazareth (see Luke 4), ending his quote in mid-sentence, it is obvious that God’s Day of Vengeance awaits the Lord’s second advent, when He returns to set up His kingdom. The enemies who will be judged will be the enemies of restored Israel. The enemies will be crushed like grapes in a winepress when the Lord returns! Restored Israel will be saved and delivered by the Lord Himself (v5-6).

God’s Day of Vengeance was pictured here as the Lord angrily treading out grapes in a winepress. The red color splashed on His garments was the blood of those who hate the Lord, and who hate His plans for His people.

Why was the Lord seen coming from Bozrah and Edom (v1)? Was this just a play on words, because Edom means “red”? Or was Edom just representative of all the enemies of Israel, as a number of commentators suggest? Perhaps – but I think there’s more here. Edom is southeast of Jerusalem, and Ezekiel 43 predicted that the glory of the Lord will return to the millennial Temple from the east. The Lord was seen here as coming in glorious apparel. And in the book of Revelation, it appears the “Armageddon” campaign of the nations against Israel in the last days will not be confined only to the Jezreel Valley in the north. It will extend down the Jordan Valley to ancient Edom, to completely surround Israel. (Thus the distance of 200 miles, mentioned in Revelation 14:20.)

The Lord will judge and annihilate all of these armies when He returns. It appears He will end up in ancient Edom before proceeding in victory in Jerusalem. It's interesting to note that the same image of the winepress and blood is used of God's day of wrath in Revelation 14. The enemies of Israel await the judgment of God's "Day of Vengeance."

Practical Application

Don't grieve the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ Look down from heaven, and see from Your habitation, holy and glorious. Where are Your zeal and Your strength, the yearning of Your heart and Your mercies toward me? Are they restrained? ¹⁶ Doubtless You are our Father, though Abraham was ignorant of us, and Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O Lord, are our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.

¹⁷ O Lord, why have You made us stray from Your ways, and hardened our heart from Your fear? Return for Your servants' sake, the tribes of Your inheritance. ¹⁸ Your holy people have possessed it but a little while; our adversaries have trodden down Your sanctuary. ¹⁹ We have become like those of old, over whom You never ruled, those who were never called by Your Name."

This is one of the great prayers of the Bible. In his prayer on behalf of the nation, Isaiah confessed their sins and acknowledged that they had grieved the Holy Spirit of God: *"But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, so He turned Himself against them as an enemy..."* (v10). As a result the Lord had to turn against them.

Verse 17 was written from a judicial sense. When people choose to go against God, God allows them to stray from His ways, and He may allow their hearts to become hardened.

This prayer was written from the prophetic viewpoint of the people who were already in captivity in Babylon, because in verse 18 the Temple was seen as already destroyed. The prayer will be typical of the prayers of the godly remnant of the last days as well.

But there was good news in this prayer! Based on God's deliverance and preservation and provision for His people in the past, as a loving Father He would deliver His people in the future - from their coming captivity in Babylon and their future troubles in the last days.

The practical application for us in this great prayer is this: while we are assured of our eternal future, it is very possible for us to grieve the Holy Spirit in this life. Ephesians 4:30 says, *"Do not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God."* How do we grieve the Holy Spirit? We grieve Him when we complain about our life circumstances, or when we criticize God's ways in our lives. We grieve Him when we rebel against the Lord in any way - as ancient Israel did. So remember - don't grieve the Holy Spirit!