

INITIATION INTO ISAIAH

by

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CHAPTER SIXTY-THREE

THEME:

The wrath of the winepress when Christ comes in judgment and the lovingkindness manifested toward His own.

REMARKS:

The content of the first six verses of this chapter is in contrast to the last section. It seems out of keeping with the tenor of this entire last section of Isaiah. Judgment precedes the Kingdom, and this is the divine order.

The Early Church Fathers associated these first six verses with the First Coming of Christ. They mistook the winepress as the sufferings of Christ on the cross. Such an interpretation is untenable, as the blood upon His garments is not His blood but that of others.

Also, the day of vengeance has been identified already with the Second Coming of Christ and not His First Coming, as the Lord Himself clearly stated (compare Isaiah 61:2 with Luke 4:18-20).

Most commentators have followed this detour which has eventuated in confusion. The Lord Jesus shed His own blood at His First Coming, but that is not the picture presented here, he was trodden on at His First Coming, but here He does the treading.

OUTLINE:

1. **The WRATH of the WINEPRESS Revealed When Jesus Comes the Second Time.** Verses 1-6
2. **In WRATH the SAVIOUR Remembers Mercy Toward Those Who are His.** Verses 7-19

COMMENT:

Verse 1—**Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.**

The form here is an antiphony.

Those who ask the question concerning the One coming from Edom are overwhelmed by His majesty and beauty. There was no majesty and beauty the first time, he comes from Edom in the east, and we are told elsewhere that His feet will touch the Mount of Olives on the east. Edom and Bozrah are geographical places and are to be considered as such, but this does not exhaust the mind of the Spirit. Edom stands for the flesh and the entire Adamic race. This is the judgment of man.

The Lord Jesus Christ answers that He is judging in righteousness and that He is always the Saviour.

Verse 2—**Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?**

The spectators see that there is blood on His beautiful garments just as if He had trodden the winepress.

Verse 3—**I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.**

The King picks up the figure of the winepress and states that He has trodden it alone, he is the Judge of all the earth. The language here is awe-inspiring and an expression of terror, “**trample them in my fury.**”

He went through the winepress for sinners when He was here the first time, and now those who refuse to accept His salvation must go through the winepress. You will note that it is “their blood” and not His. Just as grapes burst open, thus their blood spurts out. This is frightful, but sin is frightful.

Verse 4—**For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.**

This is His judgment of the earth when He comes, and it is defined here as “**the day of vengeance.**”

Verse 5—**And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.**

He wrought salvation alone, and judgment is His solo work.

Verse 6—**And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.**

This is the end of man’s little day.

Verse 7—I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

The entire content and intent changes abruptly at this point. It is like coming out of darkness into the sunlight of noonday. It is a transfer from black to white. Our God is “**glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.**” This is only one aspect of His many attributes, he is good, and exhibits loving-kindness, he also is a God of mercy. If these attributes were not in evidence, we would all be consumed.

Verse 8—For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

His people here are Israel. It is as if He had high hopes of them but they disappointed Him.

Because He was their Saviour they would not lie. Does He not expect us to walk well pleasing to Him, “**lie not one to another**”?

Verse 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 bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

How tender are these words, he entered into the sufferings of His people.

Verse 10—But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

Verse 11—Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?

This refers directly to Israel, but it is a picture of the entire human family. There are some expositors who do not feel that the reference here is to the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead. The Old Testament does not contain such a clear-cut distinction, so they argue. We believe the reference here is to the Holy Spirit.

Verse 12—That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

Verse 13—That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?

Again God harks back in history to their deliverance out of Egypt.

Verse 14—As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

He continues their history.

Verse 15—Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

The prophet and the people plead with God to look upon their great need and desire.

Verse 16—Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

God was the Father of the nation Israel, but there is no thought in the Old Testament that He was the Father of the individual Israelite. It is a corporate term and not a personal one in the Old Testament, while it is personal in the New Testament and not corporate. Abraham was the father of the nation and not of each individual Israelite.

Verse 17—O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

This is a pleading prayer.

Verse 18—The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

The enemies have trodden down God's sanctuary but they, in turn, will be trodden down. In Isaiah's day this had not yet been fulfilled.

Verse 19—We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.

They surrender completely to God. This should be the attitude of the Christian today—complete yielding to God.

~ end of chapter 63 ~

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