

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 55
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Christ's Charge to Peter by Raphael Cir 1515

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah
Message Fifty-Five
LITTLE APOCALYPSE OF ISAIAH PART VII
February 23, 2020
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THE RESTORED AND CONVERTED ISRAEL

Isaiah 26:1–15

¹In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will he appoint for walls and bulwarks. ²Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth faith may enter in. ³Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. ⁴Trust ye in Jehovah for ever; for in Jehovah, even Jehovah, is an everlasting rock. ⁵For he hath brought down them that dwell on high, the lofty city: he layeth it low, he layeth it low even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. ⁶The foot shall tread it down; even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.

⁷The way of the just is uprightness: thou that art upright dost direct the path of the just. ⁸Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Jehovah, have we waited for thee; to thy name, even to thy memorial name, is the desire of our soul. ⁹With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee earnestly: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

¹⁰Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully, and will not behold the majesty of Jehovah. ¹¹Jehovah, thy hand is lifted up, yet they see not: but they shall see thy zeal for the people, and be put to shame; yea, fire shall devour thine adversaries.

¹²Jehovah, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou hast also wrought all our works for us. ¹³O Jehovah our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. ¹⁴They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all remembrance of them to perish. ¹⁵Thou hast increased the nation, O Jehovah, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land (ASV, 1901)

THE BLESSINGS SEEN IN ISRAEL

Isaiah 26:1–2

¹In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will he appoint for walls and bulwarks. ²Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth faith may enter in (ASV, 1901).

At the end of the campaign of Armageddon where the nations of the world conduct a siege of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:1–3), the Jews will be warned to flee out of the city before the destruction comes. God gives them this prophecy several times in Jeremiah's book (50:6–8; 28; 51:5–6; 45; 50). In the battle for Jerusalem, the Jewish military leaders will be so energized that they appear to strike down the enemy as quickly as fire burns up dry wood. The feeble among the Jews take on the strength of David. The brave among the Jews take on the strength of the Angel of Jehovah (Zechariah 12:4–9). The national mourning for Jesus takes place (Zechariah 12:12–14), their regeneration follows and then the celebration described here in Isaiah chapter twenty-six. They are so happy that they begin to sing because of their salvation after the demise of the Antichrist and his armies. *We have a strong city, Jerusalem.* This does not mean that it was then strongly fortified, but that God would guard it, and that thus it would be strong. Jerusalem was easily capable of being strongly fortified (Psalm 25:2); but the idea here is, that Jehovah would be a protector, and that this would constitute its strength.

Salvation will God appoint for walls. That is, He will himself be the defender of his people in the place of walls and bulwarks (ramparts) to the saved citizens of Israel. A similar expression occurs elsewhere referring to God's protective provision of the saved (Isaiah 60:18; Jeremiah 3:23; and Zechariah 2:5).

The regenerated people are returning; and this cry is made that the gates of the city may be thrown open, and that they may be permitted to enter without obstruction because the protective defenses against the Antichrist's forces are no longer needed. *That the righteous nation which keepeth the truth,* who, during their long captivity and intercourse with heathen nations, have finally confessed the name of Jesus and begin to worship the true God.

TRUSTING GOD

Isaiah 26:3–6

³Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. ⁴Trust ye in Jehovah for ever; for in Jehovah, even Jehovah, is an everlasting rock. ⁵For he hath brought down them that dwell on high, the lofty city: he layeth it low, he layeth it low even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust ⁶The foot shall tread it down; even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy. (ASV, 1901).

Now comes a confession by the pilgrims who return to Jerusalem following the Tribulation in peace and security. Those whose minds are steadfast have a strong conviction, a firm attitude, and are never *driven and tossed by the wind* (James 1:6). These people will finally put all their trust in God. They will be kept "*in perfect peace,*" just as Israel itself will be in the Messianic Kingdom.

And this peace is not only perfect in its nature, but it also provided in abundance. It is a peace that has no limits, no bounds, no measure. It was what Jesus declared to give to us.

John 14:27–29

²⁷Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe (KJV).

Because of their firm conviction and trust in the LORD, those who are in the strong city now call upon all the redeemed Israelites to enter in, that is, also to trust in the LORD forever. The speakers fully recognize the frailty of sinful mankind, human stubbornness and rebellion against the commandments of God, and that mankind is therefore worthy of being punished by spiritual death. They also acknowledge God's love and mercy, his faithfulness through which mankind can receive His provision of salvation.

God's power and faithfulness are described as *an everlasting rock*. God is also called the *Rock of refuge and God of salvation* (Isaiah 17:10). This image is found frequently in the book of Psalms (Psalm 18:2; 31:2; 62:7; 71:3; 144:2). The Lord is the sure and unmovable foundation on which people can stand firmly at all times for comfort in distressful situations. God may leave His people in unpleasant situations but He provides the means to endure them.

The image of the rock, however, gives an image of steadfastness. Jesus is frequently referred to as a Rock or Cornerstone. So, besides the rock, God is also praised as the jealous and dynamic God in all His saving acts throughout history. This is evident from His judgment against the lofty city (Isaiah 25:12). The pride and haughtiness of mankind are struck down.

Now Isaiah announces the fate of the lofty city as being laid low. The Antichrist's armies had trampled the faithful in such a way that they became poor and helpless. But now, after the city's downfall, the picture will be reversed. The former oppressors will now be trampled under-foot. It will be by the feet of the people of Israel. All this will happen in that day when the LORD will return making an end of sin and breaking the will of the nation Israel.

BLESSINGS COME TO THE RIGHTEOUS

Isaiah 26:7–9

⁷*The way of the just is uprightness: thou that art upright dost direct the path of the just.*
⁸*Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Jehovah, have we waited for thee; to thy name, even to thy memorial name, is the desire of our soul.* ⁹*With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee earnestly: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness (ASV, 1901).*

Expanding on the requisite trust the prophet affirmed that the nation's people must live righteously. He says that only then will God smooth out their path through life. That does not mean righteous people never have any problems. Isaiah was reflecting the truth that certain consequences follow one's actions so that if a person lives according to God's rules he will have favorable consequences. Contrarily, if one disregards God's Word he will experience negative consequences. Adherence to the Bible's doctrine produces the most favorable life God provides. The remnant walk according to Scripture stated as God's laws and yearn for God. Those who refuse to heed God's ways learn of God's righteousness when they are eventually judged. In other words, the hard way and *possibly* too late to be saved. Judgement is a necessary corollary to rightlessness.

THE WICKED DO NOT LEARN GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 26:10–11

¹⁰*Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully, and will not behold the majesty of Jehovah.*

¹¹*Jehovah, thy hand is lifted up, yet they see not: but they shall see thy zeal for the people, and be put to shame; yea, fire shall devour thine adversaries (ASV, 1901).*

When *favor be showed to the wicked*, they just continued to pursue unrighteousness. *In the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully*. Even good examples will not convert the wicked man. Though he live in a land of righteousness, where God and his Law are acknowledged, where true religion is professed, where the gospel is preached, he will continue to be wicked, *will he deal wrongfully*; he will not behold—or, consider—the majesty of the Lord. Nothing can change the truly wicked.

Jehovah, thy hand is lifted up, yet they see not. The Hebrew is more graphic. It states, *Lord, thy hand is lifted up, [but] they see not. They shall see to their shame thy jealousy for thy people; yea, fire shall devour thy adversaries*. God's jealousy burns like fire (Psalm 79:9; Zephaniah 1:18) in the cause and protection of his people. That is, the redeemed.

PEACE COMES FROM GOD ALONE

Isaiah 26:12–15

¹²*Jehovah, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou hast also wrought all our works for us.*

¹³*O Jehovah our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.* ¹⁴*They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all remembrance of them to perish.* ¹⁵*Thou hast increased the nation, O Jehovah, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land (ASV, 1901)*

God arranges peace for His redeemed. They realize that everything that occurs, whether good or bad, has been controlled through the hand of God. Now the Israelites plead that He grant them peace. They reference and acknowledge that He brought about whatever happened to them. The prophet declares his faith that just as retribution came to the Jewish people for their sins, so too will they enjoy their blessings in the future. The people plead for God to grant them peace, for without peace any and all other blessings are worthless. Isaiah explains why Israel will be rewarded the blessing of peace. Throughout the Tribulation, the nations under Antichrist tried to become their masters. They oppressed and persecuted the people and tried to force them to adopt other religions, but Israel remained steadfast in its dedication to God alone and declared that their God is the only God. It has been this way for a long time. They have rarely merged into the nations wherein they lived. They have always maintained their separation. *They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise* refers to the nations who will not live in the Messianic kingdom. God punished and destroyed them, and eradicated any memory of them as well.

This summary verse also illustrates the difference between Israel and other nations. God grants them the land promised in the Abrahamic Covenant and the Land Covenant.

NEXT MESSAGE: THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE PART VIII

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