

ISAIAH 26 PERFECT PEACE AND EVERLASTING STRENGTH

This chapter is a song of holy joy and praise, which celebrates the great things which God had promised to do in the foregoing chapter for His people against His enemies and theirs. It was prepared to be sung when that prophecy was first accomplished by the return of the Jewish exiles out of Babylon, but it was also written for the support and assistance of the faith and hope of the Lord's people in all ages. In light of those prophecies of Gospel-grace in chapter 25, it is very fitting that they should be followed by a song in which we give God the glory and take to ourselves the comfort of that grace! The days of victory and triumph for the Lord's people in the Old Testament (such as the days when the Jews were liberated from Babylonian captivity) were to be a foretaste and a picture of that great Gospel-day of spiritual freedom and eternal salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, for all His redeemed children.

All who are inside the strong walls of Christ's Church are safe and easy; they enjoy a holy security and serenity of mind in the assurance of God's favor. This is His promise (verse 3): "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace" – inward peace, outward peace, peace with God, peace of conscience, peace at all times, and peace under all circumstances. This peace shall be put into the possession of every one whose mind is stayed upon the Lord. Those who trust in Him must have their minds stayed upon Him; they must trust Him at all times and under all events – firmly and faithfully adhering to Him, with entire satisfaction in Him. And God will keep such persons in perpetual peace. When evil tidings are abroad, they shall not be disturbed by frightful apprehensions arising from them; for their hearts are fixed, trusting in the Lord (Ps. 112:7). Whatever we trust in the world for, it will only be for a moment; all that we may expect from it is confined within the limits of time. But whatever we trust in God for – that will last as long as we shall last! For in the Lord Jehovah – in Him Who was, and is, and is to come – there is a Rock of ages, and a firm and lasting foundation for faith and hope to build upon. And the house that is built upon that Rock will stand up in any storm.

The words in verses 5-11 are plain, but they are very gracious expressions to the people of God. Worldly oppressors will endeavor to crush them, and they will try their hardest to make the name of Christians extinct from the planet. The Lord's children will be humbled on earth, and they will be brought under

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ *God's people triumph in their safety and security under His Divine protection – verses 1-4*
- ❖ *They are made to triumph over all opposition, even in the worst of times – verses 5-11*
- ❖ *Isaiah encourages God's people to wait upon Him for glorious deliverance – verses 12-21*

humbling Providences. But Jesus measures out to them all that is necessary for them, and no more. As for their oppressors, Jesus sees them all and knows them all; and He keeps an account of all their malice. And woe unto them when God arises to punish! (Ps. 12:5) Their high and lofty cities shall be brought level with the dust – not by a mighty conquering army, but even by the weak footsteps of the Lord’s own poor and needy ones! (verses 5-6)

In the meantime, however, our troubles must never turn us away from our God! The way that He has laid out for His people (verse 7) is a steady course of obedience and holy living, and it is happiness for us that He makes our way so plain. Even when we are in the darkest and longest night of affliction, we must desire Him with all our souls (verse 8). It will be a great comfort to us to wait for God, and to keep up holy desires toward Him in the darkest and most discouraging times. Yet in order to do this, we must pray to Him! We make nothing of our religion – no matter what our profession may be – if we do not make heart-work of it. If we have union with Christ, we cannot help having communion with God. And even though we may come with our prayers ever so early in the morning, or ever so late at night, we shall find the Lord always ready to receive us (verse 9).

Many comforting words for the Lord’s people are found in this portion of Scripture, but these are the ones with which the prophet concludes this chapter: “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” O what blessedness is contained in these words! Here are all the persons of the Godhead inviting Christ’s children, and taking them by the hand to bring them into God’s hiding-place. As the Lord said unto Noah, “Come thou and all thine house into the ark” – so He says now to all who, like Noah, enter the Ark of Jesus for the saving of their household. And He Who takes them by the hand and leads them is the same Almighty hand that shuts them in (Gen. 7:1-16; Heb. 11:7). But what are these chambers which are here spoken of? Surely they are the chambers of His covenant of redemption – in which are found all the attributes and perfections of the Father; all the fullness of right and interest in the Person, blood, righteousness, and grace of the Son as Mediator; and all the precious comforts and influences of the Holy Spirit. These chambers are the chambers of the Lord’s love, promises, grace, and mercy. Here His children find shelter from all evil, and ride out the storm of God’s wrath in the safety of the Ark, Christ Jesus!

Lord, we pray for grace to rest upon You; for in You, there is everlasting strength and peace. Hide us in the chambers of Your love, grace, and mercy! Amen.

