

EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH

Message #36

Isaiah 27:1-13

I recently saw an old interview with Judy Garland about the song that made her famous “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” from the *Wizard of Oz*. She said that the reason why she felt this song became so loved is because all people have a hope that there is someplace out there where there are no problems and sorrow, a place of eternal happiness and hope.

When one carefully studies the Bible, one soon sees that there is such a place. For the believer in Jesus Christ it is heaven and for the nation Israel it is the Promised Land. Israel has been promised that one day she will be in her land enjoying the blessings of God, at total peace in total righteousness. That day is discussed right here. This is the kingdom for Israel for which she was to pray “Thy Kingdom Come.” The “in that day” formula found in Isaiah projects us into God’s future, and the future for Israel is very bright for she will have a kingdom and a King.

THERE IS COMING A FUTURE DAY WHEN ISRAEL WILL BE NATIONALLY SAVED AND ETERNALLY ENJOYING THE BLESSINGS OF GOD IN HER PROMISED LAND.

This passage may be broken down nicely into three “in that day” futuristic messages that God communicates:

“IN THAT DAY” MESSAGE #1 – God will completely destroy Satan. **27:1**

As we have already seen, there is coming a day when God is going to pour out His wrath on the world and destroy all in it (Isaiah 24). But that is not all. All Bible expositors agree that this verse predicts a time when God will destroy all hostile powers, but this also predicts that He will destroy the source behind the power. He is also going to target Satan and destroy him.

Verse 1 introduces us to some person named “Leviathan” described as being a “serpent,” a “fleeing serpent,” a “twisted serpent” and a “dragon.” **There can be little doubt that these names are names which are being revealed by God to describe Satan, because many of these very titles are specifically given to him in Revelation 12:9; 20:2.**

During Isaiah’s time, many nations around Israel had myths about sea monsters and one of those was given the name Leviathan. Biblically speaking, the name “Leviathan” seems to refer to some large multi-headed sea monster who needs to be destroyed, but was almost impossible to destroy because of the dangerous threat he is to the world (Psalm 74:14; 104:25-26; Job 3:8; 41:1). The fact is the actual being behind all myths, fairytales and superstitious religions is Satan.

When this name, Leviathan, is used in reference to Satan it refers to the fact that he is a very dangerous, monstrous-type angelic person who cannot be tamed or caught. Sometimes the “sea” concept is metaphorical for Gentile nations (i.e. Revelation 18:17-18).

So I understand this name to be a reference to the fact that Satan is the real monster of the whole world. He is the one behind all false religions and myths that keep people from the truth of God.

The name “serpent” is used to refer to his crafty, slithering nature and work. Satan is a cunning deceiver who leads people away from truth, especially through a works system of religion (II Corinthians 11:3, 4, 13-15). By Isaiah describing him as a “fleeing” serpent, he means that Satan is one who runs and flees when under threat (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 140). By Isaiah describing him as the “twisted” serpent, he means he is a being of crooked ways, torturous ways (Ibid., p. 649). Satan is a being who will never lead anyone in a straight way, but in ways that are twisted and torturous.

The name “dragon” is a reference to Satan’s ferocious nature and work. It is used in the Bible to describe his dangerous and destructive character and work (Revelation 12:3-4, 7, 9; 20:2). Satan is no friend of anyone.

Obviously, if we are to have a world in which righteousness and peace reign, this diabolical monster must be removed. God predicts right here that this is just exactly what He will do.

God says I am going to take My fierce, great and mighty sword and kill him. What God will do is bind him for 1000 years in the bottomless pit (Revelation 20:2). Then He will release him for a short time and cast him into the eternal “Lake of Fire” where he will burn and be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10).

You and I do not know what a world would be like without satanic influence and neither does Israel. But one day we will all know because we will live in a world in which Satan is gone. Jesus Christ will rid this world of Satan and anything satanic.

“IN THAT DAY” MESSAGE #2 – God will completely bless and will have completely judged Israel. **27:2-11**

There is no possible way that any can honestly read the Bible and not see that God has a special plan for Israel. There is coming a day in which all people in the world will be able to sing and they will be singing about God and about Israel. As near as I can determine there are two specific truths that are brought out:

Truth #1 - God will keep and protect and bless Israel. **27:2-6**

There is coming a day when everyone in the world will realize God is Israel’s God and every blessing we have is connected to Israel and comes directly from God. Satan will be gone and will not be able to deceive the world anymore. The time of these specific blessings will be after the Great Tribulation during the Millennium.

There is coming a day when God will Personally take care of Israel as His own special vineyard (v. 2). In the Bible there are at least three different vine-related groups: **1) Israel** is God's future fruit producing vineyard (**Isaiah 27**); **2) The Church** is Christ's present fruit producing vine branch (John 15) and **3) The God-rejecting world** is God's future wrath receiving vine cluster (Revelation 14:18-19).

In this text, God is referring to Israel and her future. God says that after He has restored Israel they will literally plant vineyards and He will personally bless them (Amos 9:14-15). He, Himself, will take charge of Israel. He will see that it is watered and guarded day and night (**v. 3**). No one will be able to harm Israel or do anything against Israel ever again. God's wrath will be gone (**v. 4**). **He will never again have any anger aimed at Israel**, and should anyone do anything against God or His nation, He will judge them instantly and completely.

In view of this, God challenges Israel to rely on Him, to rely on His protection, to make peace with Him. Israel is looking to all the wrong places for protection and peace. She needs to look to God. God is her strength, God is her refuge and God is her salvation. God is a God who loves people to make peace with Him. The only way to do that is to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). Before you are justified, you are an enemy of God, you are alienated from God, you are in a hostile relationship with God and are in war. But God offers you an opportunity to enter into a peace relationship with Him through faith in His Son. When Israel finally gets to the place where she realizes Jesus Christ is her Messiah and Savior, she will have the peace she is looking for right now.

Verse 6 makes it very clear that in the days to come, Israel will take root and she will blossom and be fruitful and the whole world will know it and experience blessings because of it (Zechariah 14:8). We cannot read the Bible without seeing that God intends to regather Israel and bless her as never before. This is seen in the Old Testament in many passages (Psalm 67, 68; 102:12-16) and also in the New Testament (Acts 15:17; Romans 11:15). God intends to regather Israel and bless Israel for this is the clear testimony of Scripture.

There is a program on TV called "This Old House." Builders take an old house and go in and completely redo it, and the end result is, it is beautiful. That is exactly what God will do for Israel's land. He will redo it. It will have a complete makeover, a land filled with His presence and blessing.

Truth #2 - God will judge and purify Israel. **27:7-11**

There can be little doubt that God has judged Israel more than all the other nations of the world. But the fact remains, Israel is still here and has not been annihilated.

The pronoun "them" refers back to **verse 6** and is a reference to Israel. God says this is what I will do to Israel:

(Promise #1) - Even though God will judge Israel, He will not destroy her like enemies.
27:7

In this verse God makes it clear that He has never punished Israel the way He will totally destroy His enemies. God has allowed Israel to be struck, slaughtered and slain and yet He has not destroyed them like He has other nations. During the Tribulation the entire world will be slaughtered, including many Jews. However, in the end Israel will be left standing.

When God brings difficult trials and troubles into His people's lives, it is not for the purpose of destruction but construction. He wants us trusting Him. He wants us built up on His Word.

(Promise #2) - God will judge Israel through exile . **27:8**

Make no mistake about this point; the only reason Israel is not in her land right now enjoying it is because of God. As John Oswalt said, God has "driven Israel out like a tumbleweed before a driving windstorm" (*Isaiah*, p. 311). God has blown the nation Israel out from her land all over the world and she still hasn't come home. The top five countries where Jewish people have been scattered since 1945 are: 1) United States; 2) Russia; 3) Great Britain; 4) France; 5) Canada (Martin Gilbert, *Jewish History Atlas*, p. 112).

God says in Isaiah, the way I am going to judge Israel is by not permitting her to live in her land. I will banish them or drive them away from the land, and that is literally what God has done. He started using powers from the east in Isaiah's time to do this and has continued to use other powers to this very day.

(Promise #3) - God will purify Israel. **27:9**

God will use this process of judgment to purify Israel. She will finally be brought to the point where she turns to Him and her iniquity will be forgiven and her sin will be removed.

Notice when this happens. All the idolatrous systems of religion will be gone. Israel will realize that Jesus Christ paid the "full price" for her sin. She will no longer rely on her altars or system of religion. Her suffering could not atone for her sin, only Jesus Christ could do that and the suffering that will hit her will eventually bring her to this conclusion.

(Promise #4) - Jerusalem will be an abandoned city before God fulfills this. **27:10-11**

God is going to permit Jerusalem to become a place barren of His people and His blessings. Jerusalem will become an isolated city and this city will be like a desert city for grazing cattle. The cattle will be so hungry that it will strip the branches of trees bare for food and then the women will use the branches to build a fire.

Now notice carefully **verse 11**, the reason why God is doing all of this is because His people "are not a people of discernment." The greatest evidence of her lack of discernment was when Jesus Christ was on this earth presenting Himself as her Messiah and King by incredible miracles, and not only did she not accept Him as King, she killed Him on a cross. This nation still lacks discernment.

If you show most Jewish people all of the O.T. prophecies concerning her Messiah and then show how Jesus Christ met every one of the predictions, they still do not get it. They still are not a people of discernment.

God wants His people discerning when it comes to Him and His Word. God is the Creator and He has done so much for Israel and she just doesn't get it and that is exactly why He has withheld His compassion and grace.

Israel will have to go through some very lean times until she learns to trust in the Lord; but when she finally gets to the place where she does, the blessings of God will all be hers.

“IN THAT DAY” MESSAGE #3 – God will completely regather all Israel. **27:12-13**

There are some very significant things ahead for the world and for Israel. God is going to thresh that Promised Land and route out all enemies and bring them one by one into the land. God will blow the trumpet and His people will come home.

The “Feasts of Trumpets” took place on the first day of the seventh month and trumpets were blown in anticipation of the wonderful joy of a future kingdom. Israel is waiting for a trumpet to blow signaling it is time for them to enjoy their land.

We who live in the Church Age are also waiting for a trumpet to blow signaling it is time for us to go up to heaven (I Corinthians 15:50-58; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

J. Vernon McGee said, “This section reveals that God definitely intends to restore the nation Israel to the Promised Land ...” Then he goes on to say the real question here is whether you believe the Word of God (*Isaiah*, Vol. 3, p. 259).

God is going to thresh a very wide area and gather all of His people. All the land boundaries that He established in the book of Genesis (Genesis 15:18), from the Nile to the Euphrates, will be hers. All of the people will go to the Holy mountain of Jerusalem to worship God. The Holy Person who will be there in Person is none other than Jesus Christ.

There is no place in history where you can find that this prophecy has been fulfilled, which means it is yet to be fulfilled. God is going to go get Israel and bring her into His land.