

ISAIAH 63

WHO IS THIS IN BLOODY GARMENTS?!?

We cannot properly enter upon our study of this chapter, without first looking up to the Lord and asking for His blessing upon it. Surely there was never a more glorious description of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, than that which is here given to the Church in the language of prophecy – many hundreds of years before His first Advent! The mighty Conqueror Who is here described is said to be coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah. And the victory that is here spoken of is Christ's personal conquest of salvation – in which, as the Scripture saith, there was no other person with Him!

The prophet opens the chapter with a question, as if he was surprised at what he beheld! He sees One coming toward him, under a character that he could not explain even to himself. He beholds a Man coming up as if from war, but He is not tired nor weary; in fact, He seems to be traveling in great strength! And yet His garments are like those of the most lowly servant, who had just come up from treading the grapes in the winepress – a job which was always performed by the lowest of the people. The Prophet is awe-struck with such a view; and he asks, "Who is this?" – to which the Lord, in great grace, instantly gives an answer: "It is I, mighty to save!" And Isaiah could not help perfectly understanding, by that description, Who it was that he was seeing in his prophetic vision. None except Jesus, the promised Savior, could be mighty to save; for salvation is found in "none other name" (Acts 4:12).

The Prophet asks how it came to be that One Who is so great and glorious should now appear in an office that is so lowly and humble. This is and will be the everlasting subject of wonder, praise, and joy among all of the Lord's redeemed ones – to all eternity! Behold the humility of Jesus! He emptied Himself of His glory, and came to earth as the Suffering Servant! Surely, by this humiliation, as well as by His obedience and death as the Mediator, the law of God has been more honored and glorified than it could ever have been by the unsinning obedience and death of angels and men, to all eternity!

The winepress which Jesus trod was the winepress of the wrath of God, into which our nature deserved to have been thrown; and had it not been for Jesus' interposition, we surely would have been thrown in there, and remained there to be crushed for all eternity (Rev. 14:19). And well might Christ add the fact that there was none with Him in the winepress from among the people; for the sins which He carried, when He was made sin for us – if they had been laid upon His people, they would have crushed the whole human race in ruin forever! But what a sweet thought that He Who carried our sins and sorrows ful-

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ The victory of the Lord Jesus over all spiritual enemies – verses 1-6
- ❖ The lovingkindnesses and mercies of the Lord toward His people – verses 7-14
- ❖ The prayer of the Church toward her Lord and Savior – verses 15-19



filled the whole work of our redemption Himself! Upon Him, the Father laid the iniquities of us all. And since Jesus' own arm worked out our salvation, will we not give Him, most cheerfully and thankfully, all the praise?

The latter part of this chapter (as well as the next) seems to express the prayers of the Jews, acknowledging God's great mercies and favors to their nation. They confess their wickedness and hardness of heart; they entreat His forgiveness, and deplore the miserable condition under which they have so long suffered. The only-begotten Son of the Father became the Angel or Messenger of God's love to them. He had come to redeem them with tenderness, yet they murmured and resisted His Holy Spirit – despising and persecuting His prophets, and rejecting and crucifying the promised Messiah.

All of our comforts and hopes spring from the loving-kindness of the Lord, and all of our miseries and fears are a result of our sins. But the Lord Jesus is the Savior; and when sinners seek after Him Who has saved and fed His purchased flock in past ages, and Who has led them safely through dangers – then there is good reason to hope that they are discovering the way of peace! For example, it is noteworthy to see how often the redemption of God's people from Egypt, and their blessings in the wilderness, are alluded to in different parts of the Word of God – such as here in verses 11-14. Hereby the Holy Spirit taught the Church to exercise faith for all that was still in the future, by recounting the Lord's goodness for all that He had done in the past (Ps. 77:3-12). Who can read this account of Jesus taking part in all the afflictions of His people in the wilderness, without having their hearts led forth in love and praises to the Redeemer Who will continue to be with His people to the end?

Do we want an example of how to pray? Here is a most blessed one, in verses 15-19 – beautifully blending supplication and praise, and holy pleadings and waitings. Here the exiled Jews beseech the Lord to look down upon the sorrowful condition of their once-favored land. Would it not be glorious to His name to remove the veil from their hearts, and to return them to the tribes of their inheritance? But the Babylonian captivity, and the after-deliverance of the Jews, were only foreshadows of far greater events which are here foretold; for the Lord looks down upon us, His people, in tenderness and mercy. O Lord Jesus! “Our Redeemer from everlasting” is Your name! (verse 16) Your people have always looked upon You as the God to Whom they might appeal! You will hear the prayers of those who belong to You, and You will deliver them from those who are not called by Your name. All blessings are in You; and whatsoever we ask in Your name, believing, we shall receive! (John 16:23-24)

Lord Jesus, we bless Your name for being our Great Redeemer Who is mighty to save – for You are united with God, in Your Divine nature; and You are also united with us, since You are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh! Amen.