

**CALVARY PANDAN
BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 63

ISAIAH

CHAPTER 63

Theme: "The favour of the LORD
toward His people!"

THEME VERSES

Isaiah 63:17-19 (KJV) "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. **18** The people of thy holiness have possessed *it* but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary. **19** We are *thine*: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name."

INTRODUCTION

The punishment of God upon the enemies of Israel must not cause Israel to be arrogant or enter into a state of putrefaction whereby Israel can do whatever she wants and believes that the Lord will not punish her! This is not the Lord of the Bible. He is no respecter of persons, especially when it comes to His judgement upon all man. Obviously the enemies of the Lord and God's people will be justly punished by Him. They will never escape from His omnipotent

judgement. If they are not judged in this life, they will be judged in the life to come with an even more severe judgement that is eternal. If God were to show mercy to them, He would judge them now while they are still alive on this earth so that they can repent of their sins and turn to the Saviour.

In the case of Israel who had observed and tasted repeatedly this protection from the Lord, she must never become complacent as if she could do whatever she wanted to including committing the sin of idolatry and the Lord would not do anything to her. This is a most unbiblical thinking, which will result in a grievous punishment from the Lord. Though it is common to think that since I am a child of an important and powerful person, I can do whatever I want and my father will take care of and protect me regardless of my right or wrong doings. This might be true in many instances when it comes to the standard of the world. But when it comes to the Lord, such reasoning is sin.

In fact, God will deal with His people on a higher plane of holiness since His people have been given the perfect Word of God to guide them. When more has been given, more is definitely expected. Israel must live up to her expectation and be a godly witness to a whole world that is dying in sin. Any nation of the world that hinders Israel's duty to shine forth the light of Christ will be dealt with by God as we can see from the first few verses on this chapter of Isaiah. But when Israel commits sin, Israel too will be

punished. But since Israel is to shine for Christ and the world needs the light of Christ to shine brightly, the Lord will want Israel to return back to Him and will never be cast off completely. The dealing with Israel is more of restoration i.e. chastisement rather than punishment. There is no second Israel. In the New Testament, God will replace Israel (cf. Romans 9-11) when Israel rejected the Jesus of Nazareth as their Christ. Until then, Israel will still be the only national witness of God's grace and mercies. Hence the favour of the LORD would still be upon Israel.

OUTLINE

1. The Enemies of God Punished! (vv.1-6);
2. The great goodness of The Lord upon Israel (vv. 7-14);
3. The Lord is the Father of Israel (vv. 15-19).

COMMENTARY

The enemies of God punished! — 63:1-6

The destruction of Edom was completed when Isaiah began in verse 1. Using two rhetorical questions, Isaiah introduced the Judge of Edom who is none other than the LORD Himself. He asks who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah! Bozrah was the ancient capital city of Edom. When the capital city is destroyed, it means that the nation is destroyed. The redness of the garments refers to the

blood of the Edomites that was shed because of the LORD's judgement against her. The LORD is also described here as the One who is glorious in his apparel travelling in the greatness of His strength. This means that the judgement of the LORD was swift and no one could stand against Him. The LORD replied and declared for all that hear that He speaks in righteousness and He is mighty to save! Every word that proceeds out of His mouth is characterised by righteousness even when sinful man rejects His Word and His judgement! The words of the LORD will forever be righteous regardless of man's acceptance or rejection. He is mighty to save just as He is mighty to punish! He is able to save all and always on His terms.

Isaiah asked the LORD why is His garment red like the ones who tread in the winefat i.e. winevat or winepress. The LORD's reply was that He has trodden the winepress alone. He did so in His anger and trampled them in His fury. Their blood was sprinkled on His garment and all His raiment was stained by the blood of God's enemies. This means that many died because of the righteous judgement of the LORD. The vengeance of the LORD was in His heart. The year of the redeemed has come. The word for year and day are to be understood as one in terms of sense. The word for day when applied to the Edomites in their judgement refers to immediate judgement. In the case of Israel, the word for year refers to a long period of their subjugation under the Edomites but now it is also

their time for deliverance. In the case of the Edomites, it was time for judgement whereas for the Israelites, it was redemption.

No one will be able to stand in the way of the LORD's judgement against His enemies. They will be summarily dealt with by Him. When He looked to see if any would come to help Israel but no one came. The LORD does not need any help from anyone to accomplish His work. The LORD Himself brought salvation to Israel. His fury sustained Him in His punishment against the enemies of Israel. They were made drunk in God's fury i.e. behaved like drunkards running here and there without any knowledge of where they are going. They will be brought down and their strength will be seen as nothing against God.

The great goodness of The Lord upon Israel — 63:7-14

Isaiah now speaks to Israel on behalf of the LORD. He mentions the loving kindness and the praises of the LORD according to all that He has done for Israel. He calls this "the great goodness toward the house of Israel." Israel did not deserve God's great goodness. This was based upon God's mercies and the multitude of His loving kindnesses. God's people never fully realize that it has always been and will always continue to be based upon God's mercies and loving kindnesses that they are saved and chosen to be His witnesses on this earth. There is no room for arrogance only gratitude. When blessings come, they must be

thankful and not see them as their right.

The LORD says that surely Israel is God's people. They will not lie. Israel has the truth. The people of God will reflect the truth of God for that is the most important reflection that must shine forth and brightly into a world that is soaked and covered by deceptions and lies. Satan is the Father of lies! Everywhere we turn our heads, we see lies. The LORD will always be the Saviour of His people. They must not lie but tell the truth at all times. In the history of Israel's sufferings, the LORD has always been there to deliver her. In His love and pity, He redeemed Israel. He carried them and watched over them all the days of old. There was never a time when the LORD slept and Israel had to fend for herself. The LORD always cares for His people.

However, Israel has not always behaved well before the LORD. In fact Israel behaved badly. Israel rebelled against her loving God. They vexed Him. The LORD had to become her enemy so that Israel will stop sinning. He fought against them. Then the LORD remembered the days of old. He remembered Moses and His people. He was the One who brought Israel out of Egypt through the Red Sea. He put His Holy Spirit into Moses so that he could do God's will. He led Moses with His glorious arm to divide the water that all might leave Egypt. The LORD remembered the early days of Israel's birth. When a child has grown and is rebellious, a loving parent cannot help but recall those

early days when the child was born. Tenderness and mercy will flood the heart of the parent as He remembers the days of old very tenderly. Compassion will then follow and soon help and deliverance as well. The LORD led Israel with a strong hand and made for Himself a glorious name that the God of Israel is all powerful and He is the one living and true God and beside Him, there is none other.

The Israel in the time of Moses was also rebellious just like the Israel in the time of Isaiah. God helped Israel in the time of Moses. The LORD will also help Israel now and always. Israel will always have a special place in the heart of the LORD because Israel is God's nation that He gave birth to.

The Lord is the Father of Israel
— 63:15-19

Isaiah's appeal was to the LORD to look down from heaven and see from the habitation of God's holiness and His glory what Israel is going through. He cried rhetorically for the zeal and strength of the LORD to be upon Israel. The sounding of God's bowels and mercies i.e. compassions and love toward Israel ought to move the heart of the LORD to come to Israel's aid. Isaiah said that the LORD is indeed Israel's Father. Abraham was ignorant of Israel because Israel did not exist when Abraham died. Israel the grandson of Abraham could not acknowledge i.e. pay attention to them now as he is also dead. Israel knew that his descendants will become a nation when he brought them into Egypt but he cannot help Israel in

Isaiah's time because he is also dead like Abraham.

But the LORD is Israel's Father and Redeemer. His Name is forever. He never dies. He lives forever. Isaiah cried to the LORD acknowledging His sovereign power even in the area of repentance. Isaiah is not blaming the LORD for Israel's rebellion and waywardness. He simply said that Israel's rebellion is in the sovereign control of God for if God cannot control evil and wickedness then how can He be sovereign! Therefore Isaiah says why did the LORD make us err from His ways of righteousness and harden (made intractable) the hearts of Israel so that Israel will not fear Him. He pleads with the LORD to return and humble Israel so that Israel will learn to fear the LORD and stop sinning. He asks the LORD to be merciful for Israel's sake that Isaiah called Israel the LORD's servants and the tribes of His inheritance.

Israel was called the people of God's holiness and they possess the sanctuary of the LORD for a little while only. Israel's adversaries have trodden down the LORD's sanctuary. The sanctuary here refers to the land rather than the Temple, which was located in Jerusalem. They have invaded the Land and taken Israel into captivity. Israel belongs to the LORD. The enemies do not belong to the LORD for the LORD did not govern them and they were not called by the Name of the LORD. These are the reasons that Isaiah brought before the LORD for His intervention. Amen.

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Isaiah 62:1-12

TUESDAY: Isaiah 62:1-12

WEDNESDAY: Isaiah 62:1-12

THURSDAY: Isaiah 62:1-12

FRIDAY: Isaiah 62:1-12

Discussion Questions

1. What do you say to someone who believes that there is no Hell because God is so loving and merciful that He would not allow Hell to exist for eternity? The judgement of God against sinners who die in their sin is annihilation.

2. When we serve the LORD by defending Christ's Name and God's holy and perfect Word, are we considered as "helping" God?

3. Do you consider lying as a small sin? Do you agree that a person who is a perpetual liar cannot be considered a Christian? Support your reason with Scriptures.

4. Do you think that it is acceptable to recall the time of a child's birth in your arms when you are facing him now as a rebellious grown up and you have to make a decision concerning his life? What if he is your son and you are the pastor?

5. Do you think that it is biblical to ask God to help and deliver for the sake of the church or you as a believer just as Isaiah pleaded for in verse 17?

6. Will the LORD look down upon a church today in compassion when a church goes bad? Would He intervene and save a church from bearing a false witness of the LORD or will He just let the false witness continue today?

7. What lessons have you learnt from this chapter about God's Word and about yourself?
