

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part LX: God's Encouragement To The Remnant Of His Delivering Power (Isaiah 51:1-16)

I. Introduction

- A. Sometimes God's people simply need to be encouraged to trust that He is willing and able to deliver them.
- B. Israel had this need when she was in Babylon, and Isaiah 51:1-16 offered her that needed encouragement:

II. God's Encouragement To The Faithful Of His Delivering Power, Isaiah 51:1-16.

- A. The Lord first encouraged Israel in captivity to trust He would deliver her based on the precedent of His powerful creation of her as a nation from the elderly couple, Abraham and Sarah, Isaiah 51:1-3:
 - 1. God called the upright remnant who sought the Lord to recall the rock from which they had been hewn and the pit from which they had been dug, that is, Abraham and Sarah, from whom God produced the nation when the couple was humanly no longer able to produce a child, Gen. 17:17; 18:11; 21:1-3; Isaiah 51:1-2a.
 - 2. Indeed, God had called Abraham alone and blessed and increased him, evidence of God's ability and will to liberate and bountifully multiply Israel once again though she was in dreary captivity, Isaiah 51:2b.
 - 3. The Lord then predicted He would comfort Zion and her waste places, making her wilderness like the Garden of Eden, with joy, gladness, thanksgiving and music being heard in the city, Isaiah 51:3.
- B. In Isaiah 51:4-8, God called Israel to be encouraged that He would defeat her foes and establish His Kingdom:
 - 1. God predicted that one day His law and justice would go out, becoming a light to the world's nations, with the nations waiting in hope for His power to be applied for them in His rule of law, Isaiah 51:4-5.
 - 2. The day would come when the universe and the earth's wicked inhabitants would be done away, but God's righteousness would still not fail, implying the righteous remnant would even then survive, Isaiah 51:6.
 - 3. The upright who knew what was right and had God's law in their hearts were thus not to fear the reproach of their current foes, for they would die while God's righteousness and salvation lasted forever, Isa. 51:7-8.
- C. Isaiah then offered a prayer to God for a second "Exodus" for Israel, this time not from Egypt, but for an "Exodus" from the Babylonian Captivity, Isaiah 51:9-11 (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1105):
 - 1. Referring *figuratively* to Egypt as the pagan mythological chaos sea monster, Rahab (Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, ftn. to Isa. 51:9; B. K. Waltke, Creation and Chaos, 1974, p. 9-12), Isaiah urged God to awaken and arm Himself as when He once cut the sea monster, Rahab, i. e. Egypt, to pieces in the Exodus, Isaiah 51:9. [In pagan cosmogenies, the sea monster Rahab (or Leviathan) restrained creation until a hero deity cut it up, releasing its body fluids from which the creative order sprang. Though not treating this myth as true, the Scripture writers occasionally (Isa. 51:9; Job 26:13; Ps. 89:10) referred to it for literary effect; *Ibid.*]
 - 2. God had then *literally* dried up the Red Sea for the redeemed to cross it in escaping Egypt, Isaiah 51:10.
 - 3. Thus, God promised to use His power to have Israel return in a new "Exodus," returning to the land in the Kingdom with singing and everlasting joy as sorrow and sighing flee away, Is. 51:11; *Ibid.*, B. K. C., O. T.
- D. In Isaiah 51:12-15, God encouraged the remnant who lived in fear of their enemies, contrasting the frailty of their human foes with His sovereign power as Creator God to help them:
 - 1. In an emphatic statement, the pronoun "I" (*'anoki*) is repeated and rendered, "I (Myself), I (Myself) am He . . ." (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 681) where God claims **He** is the One Who comforts the faithful remnant, so why should they fear a man who as their enemy was to die like the short-lived grass, Isaiah 51:12.
 - 2. God reminded the remnant that He was the Lord their Maker Who created the universe, asking why they should constantly fear the oppressor, for the oppressor's wrath would soon be gone with him, Isaiah 51:13.
 - 3. The bowed down prisoner would be soon released, not dying in the dungeon or lacking bread, for God his Deliverer was He Who as Almighty God churned up the sea for its waves to roar in power, Isa. 51:14-15.
- E. God then told Messiah He had put His words in His mouth and hid Him in His hand's shadow to plant a new universe and say to the remnant, "You are my people," v. 16; E. J. Young, The Bk. of Isa., 1974, v. III, p. 318.

Lesson: Based on the precedents of His creation of the universe, producing Israel from the elderly Abraham and Sarah and delivering Israel from Egypt, God promised to do great things again for the remnant, even creating a new universe of righteousness free of her past wicked foes. Thus, God's remnant was to be greatly encouraged.

Application: May we be greatly encouraged not to fear in current trials, for God the Creator and Helper of us Who has already done such great things for us will certainly do great things again for us with resulting great blessing!