

The Relationship Between The Testaments.

Isaiah 66:7-11.

Sunday evening, June 21, 2009.

I. Who is the Lord speaking about in Vs. 7 and 8?

- A. The answer is given in vs. 8 and 10. It is Jerusalem. It is the faithful remnant of Israel that continues to seek and to serve the Lord.
- B. The reference is to the birth of a male child; yet more than a male child, for a whole nation is in view. "Shall a nation be born at once?" Vs. 8.
- C. The male child is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the nation, the NT church; all those who are in Christ.
- D. Here then, we are given in a nutshell the relationship between the testaments; between God's Old and New covenant people.

II. The suddenness of the birth.

These words are wonderfully fulfilled in the coming of both the Lord Jesus and the NT Church.

Malachi had foretold: "... the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple; even the Messenger of the covenant in whom you delight. Behold He is coming says the Lord of host." Mal 3:1.

- A. When the Lord Jesus came the nation of Israel did not even know that it was "pregnant." The Lord's arrival was totally below the radar of national consciousness. Only a handful of people knew what was going on: Joseph and Mary, Zacharias and Elizabeth; the shepherds; the wise men, (who were most likely gentiles) and Simeon and Anna.
- B. Similarly with the Church. When the church was born on the day of Pentecost, at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Israel as a nation did not understand that it was "pregnant" with a whole new nation. A whole new entity that would grow up separately from her. Time and again she tries to make the church a part of herself in the book of Acts (see especially ch.15.) and also in the letter to the Galatian churches.

III. It was a supernatural work. Vs. 9.

- A. "Shall I bring to the time of birth and not cause delivery? Says the Lord."
 - 1. Israel after the flesh did not even know she was pregnant. Delivery had already happened before Israel was aware of it.
 - 2. God Himself had brought her to the time of delivery, both in the coming of the Lord Jesus, and in the coming of His Church, before Israel could comprehend what was happening and had happened. Only in retrospect did the faithful remnant understand through the preaching of the gospel. Even the apostles had to have their understanding opened by the Lord so that they would understand all that the Scriptures testified concerning the Christ. Luke 24:25-27,32.
- B. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb? Says the Lord."

In a parallel clause the same truth is stated again in slightly different words.
This is the Lord's doing and there is no stopping it.

IV. The relationship between Old and New administrations of the Covenant. Vss. 10,11.

- A. In these two verses the relationship between mother and child is laid down.
1. The glory of the mother is the child she has brought into the world.
For that, all those who have eyes to see ought to rejoice with her.
 2. All the glory and consolation and comfort of the child is its mother.
Sometimes the Church on earth forgets who birthed her. We would do well to remember the words of the Apostle Paul in Rom. 9:1-5.
"I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart for... my countrymen according to the flesh; who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises. Of whom are the fathers, and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen."
- B. The tragedy of the mother is that to this day she is largely unaware still that she brought forth a child into the world; both in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the entity of the Christian Church.
The veil is still on her heart. Yet the only glory that awaits her lies in recognizing the child she brought into the world in the Person of Christ and that of the Christian Church.
In owning them for what they are her glory will be full and complete.
- C. The tragedy of the child is that it appreciates its mother often so very little.
We are New Covenant Christians! The Old Testament does not really speak to us; we are not all that interested in it.
And yet, we can not understand the nature of New Covenant, and heavenly truth apart from the Old Covenant and the earthly shadows and illustrations it gives us of heavenly truth.
- D. Listen to Vs. 11.
"That you may feed and be satisfied with the consolation of her bosom." And:
"That you may drink deeply and be delighted with the abundance of her glory."
- E. These are statement given to the child of the New Covenant Church.
Do you feel this way about the Old Testament?
1. Only the Old Testament can give you an identity as the people of God.
 2. Remember, says the Apostle Paul, you do not support the root, but the root supports you. This he says about the Olive tree of the Old and New covenant people of God in Romans 11:18.
- F. The glory of all the OT institutions and history is the greater Moses and Joshua and David etc. it prefigured. The better Kingdom, Jerusalem, temple, priesthood, sacrifice and ministry we have become partakers of in New Covenant
- times. Yet we can only understand these better spiritual things by their tangible OT shadows. As such we are encouraged to drink deeply and to be delighted with the abundance of the glory of the OT shadows.