

Blessing And Cursing.
Isaiah 65:8-16.
Sunday evening, May 17, 2009.

I. Blessing...for the sake of the remnant. Vs. 8.

- A. The Lord always preserves a remnant for Himself.
And for the sake of that remnant He will often hold back the judgment.
When the judgment comes anyway, the Lord provides a way of escape for the remnant.
1. Abraham's intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah are an example of the former, as is Peter's reference to the longsuffering of God in 2 Peter 3:9.
 2. The preservation of Noah and the rescue of Lot are examples of the latter.
- B. This principle is illustrated in the passage before us by way of a bad vine that does have a good cluster here and there.
For the sake of the blessing contained in the occasional good cluster, one is heard as saying: "do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it."
For the sake of the remnant the Lord will hold back the judgment, and not bring a total destruction.

II. Specific blessings. Vs. 9,10.

- A. The promise of multiplying the godly seed.
"I will bring forth descendants from Jacob..."
- B. The promise of a special heir.
"And from Judah an heir of My mountains."
This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, for He arose from the tribe of Judah.
Our text mentions an heir in the singular; therefore a special heir is meant.
- C. "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks."
Sharon is the coastal plain of Palestine, beginning at Mount Carmel, and stretching south along the Mediterranean coast including the present Gaza Strip.
It is an expression of prosperity and safety expressed in the language of that day.
- D. "The Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down."
Achor means "trouble." It is a valley near Jericho where Achan caused Israel trouble by stealing some of the accursed things of Jericho and hiding them in his tent.
"The valley of Achor" became proverbial in Israel for whatever caused calamity.
"The valley of Achor" will become proverbial for joy and prosperity.
"I will give her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there as in the days of her youth; as in the day when she came up out of Egypt." Hosea 2:15.
- E. The remnant is defined as "My people who have sought Me." Vs. 10.
The promises of God are always given to a seeking people.
You can not be a seeker of the Lord in vain.
The critical thing in your Christian life is not how many, and what great heights you have attained unto; the critical question is: "Are you a seeker of the Lord."
As such you hold the promises of grace and salvation in your hands, for all those who seek do find, and to those who knock, the door shall be opened. Luke 11:9.

Applications:

1. The Lord does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. for the grace, and the “blessing” that is in such, He preserves the vine, and bears long with it.
2. The Lord is slow to anger and to judgment for the sake of His elect; the world does not understand that she owes her prosperity to the presence of the church in her midst.
3. When the judgment does come, He makes special provision for His remnant. So there was the ark for Noah; Zoar for Lot, Obediah for the 100 prophets of the Lord in the days of Ahab, and the ravens and a widow for Elijah.

So we may boldly say: ”The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

Hebrews 13:6.

II. The vessels of wrath. Vs. 11-16.

A. The vessels described.

1. They are those who forsake the Lord, (and turn to idols.)
2. Who forget My holy mountain, (the place and the way the Lord was to be worshipped.)
3. Who prepare a table before Gad, (the pagan deity of fortune.)
4. Who furnish a drink offering for Meni, (the pagan deity of fate.)

Application:

Are these not the gods of our own age? Fortune in the form of rampant materialism, and fate in the form of a universe controlled by no one; only brute natural forces dishing out whatever will be.

B. The judgment and the grounds laid out.

1. Numbered for the sword and appointed to the slaughter.
2. The grounds: “When I called you did not answer; when I spoke you did not hear, but did evil before My eyes, and chose that in which I do not delight.”

C. A contrast is drawn.

1. My servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry.
2. My servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty.
3. My servants shall rejoice, but you shall be ashamed.
4. My servants shall sing for joy..., but you shall cry for sorrow... and grief...
5. You shall leave your name as a curse; I will call My servants by another

name.

D. “Bless himself in the God of truth; swear by the God of truth...”

The Lord Jesus laid claim to being “the truth” and the “God of truth”

Hence this prophecy is fulfilled in the Lord’s people being called Christians.

E. The former troubles forgotten and hidden.

They are overtaken by the flood of blessings of the new earth which Isaiah breaks open in Vss. 17-25.

Application: For those who seek the Lord, blessing awaits, such as swallows up all sorrows. “the former things have passed away.” Rev 21:4.