

“In His Love and Mercy, He Redeemed Them!”
Isaiah 63: 1-10

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(All Scripture quoted from the NIV Bible unless otherwise noted)

I. Historical Background and Biblical Context

The first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah (like the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament) predict judgment after judgment upon immoral and idolatrous people. Israel has sinned; the surrounding nations have sinned; the whole earth has sinned. But God still has a remnant. Isaiah 60 promises that remnant who are now suffering a future of glory and peace. Judgment however, must come before this can be achieved. A righteous and just God cannot, will not allow such blatant sin to go unpunished forever.

Today’s passages are a continuation of the former chapter. In vv.11 of chapter 62, the prophet instructs His people (and us) to be on the look-out because the Lord has made a proclamation to the whole world that the Savior is coming. It further states that the Savior brings with him **reward** and **recompense**. The reward that He brings is Salvation to His people (those that believe and are obedient to His commands). The recompense is the re-payment for sin, disobedience and mistreatment of His people. Now as we enter chapter 63, we are given a glimpse of the how and the who of their and our salvation and redemption.

II. “In His Love and Mercy, God Redeemed Them”

1. vv. 1-2.

In this passage Edom’s significance is that it is an enemy of Israel. Therefore, Edom is a representation of the nations that hate Israel and more importantly, dishonor Israel’s God. Bozrah was one of its main cities (likely a capital city) whose name means “grape gathering”. The grapes to be gathered are the people who dishonor God. This depiction

of a mighty warrior returning from battle signifies the Lord's (Savior's) return from battle against His enemies.

Israel has been weakened by its sin and disobedience. They have no strength (righteousness) to fight for themselves. This valiant soldier, strong and mighty, wars for them. He is their vindicator and Savior. This Savior alone had the ability, strength and power to defeat the enemy, to purge the sin of the world and among His people. **Jesus is that Savior!** It is possible that the prophet sees ahead to Jesus' return from the battle that climaxes the "Day of the Lord" (**Rev. 19:11-16**). If Christ is the divine Warrior who will eventually triumph over sin in the world at large, the time is now to let him defeat sin in our own lives. The same God who saves the repentant righteous is the uncompromising judge of the stubborn and wicked. Most Christians are shocked to read such words as these, because we tend not to think about this side of God's character. But these words remind us of how deeply God hates sin, and of how grateful we should be for his salvation.

2. vv. 3-4.

Treading the winepress is used throughout scripture to symbolize the wrath or vengeance of God poured out on those that defy Him. Disobedience to the commands of God is defiance of God. Know that the Lord will not suppress His anger forever. The Lord states clearly in this passage that it was for "Me" the day of vengeance; the year for "Me" to redeem. He has/will exact vengeance on His enemies and redeem those who honor, trust and obey Him. **"The Battle is Not Yours, it Belongs to the Lord"**. Just as grapes were trampled and crushed under the feet of man, God has/will trample and crush those that dishonor, defy and oppress Him and His people. God has exacted His holy wrath on the enemy and He did it all by himself. There was no one righteous to assist. But He did not need any assistance to be victorious. The judgement was over and His garments were stained with the blood of His enemy.

3. vv. 5-6.

Through efforts of His own, by His own power and might, God redeems and achieves salvation for himself and by Himself. In his anger, as God pours out His wrath on the unrepentant, He states that His wrath “sustains” Him. This word can be interpreted in two ways within the context of this passage. First, it can be defined as the continuation of God’s wrath until completion. Secondly, it could be interpreted as justification of God’s wrath. Either is accurate. God’s divine vengeance and judgement on sinful man is justified and He will continue to purge sin unto completion in the last days when the final battle is won.

4. v.7.

Here we have a total shift from the six preceding verses. The blood and gore of the Lord’s exercise of righteous and divine judgement to the prophet’s prayer for God’s intervention in the sufferings of His people. The prophet begins with testimony of God’s great kindnesses. He reflects on the “Goodness” of the Lord in Israel’s history. Immediately note the prophet’s use of the plural of kindness. This gives a glaring indication that the Lord’s kindness towards Israel has been abundant and is worthy of praise for all He has done. The real blessing in this verse is that God did all these good things according to **“HIS”** compassions. The good that He had done for Israel had nothing to do with **“their”** actions or behavior. His goodness is a demonstration of His unfailing love and covenant with Israel. This is an example of the **“Faithfulness”** of God.

5. v. 8.

The prophet recalls the moment that God chose Israel as His people. Out of all the nations that were in the world He decided to have a covenantal agreement with Israel. God is sovereign, He is omnipresent and He is omniscient. He knew the folks He was dealing with. God knew they would stumble; but He also knew that there would always be a remnant.

“OUT OF ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, GOD CHOSE YOU!”**6. v. 9.**

The Israelites had been enslaved under the oppress of Egypt for 400 years when the Lord called out to Moses through a burning bush. The Lord heard their cries for help in their oppression and He was concerned for them. Through their cries for help, God felt the pain of their oppression (Ex. 3:7-10) and He saved them. Like a father with a small child, His Holy Spirit lifted them out of their bondage and carried them out of the grips of Egypt's oppression and slavery. But because of their disobedience (idol worship), they were destined to wander in the wilderness for 40 years. But even in spite of their blatant sin, God's love and mercy shown through. He led them through the desert with a flashlight in the form of fire by night, a cloud acting an umbrella to shade them during the day, fed them bread and poultry, kept them hydrated with water from a rock and in His faithfulness led them into the land that He had promised to them.

7. v.10.

Despite the covenant that was had with God and all the goodness and kindnesses the Lord had showered on Israel, there was rebellion on their part. Even in His omniscience, God was pained in His Spirit. God knew they would falter. He knew they would not remain true to the covenant they swore to uphold. This awareness however, did not prevent or relieve the sense of loss that the Lord experienced. They whom He loved enough to be in covenant with, to whom He had been faithful to save, faithful to provide for, faithful to protect, that He considered and called His children, were then treated as enemies.

III. Conclusion.

Let us not take for granted the loving kindnesses and faithfulness of our God, but hold fast to our call of obedience to Him!