

# God Of The Great Judgment - Part III

Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – Isaiah #35  
Isaiah 64 – April 26, 2017 – Wednesday

- I. THE CHARACTER OF GOD, 64:1-4
  - A. The Terribleness of God, 1-2
    1. Rend the heavens - the heavens are figuratively split open when the Lord comes to earth.
      - a. He came in creation and split the heavens, figuratively
      - b. He came in the flood
      - c. He came to Mt. Sinai
      - d. He came in to Egypt to deliver the Hebrews from bondage
    2. Mountains flow down
      - a. Not only physical mountains, which God can melt with his power
      - b. But even kings, kingdoms, and nations that may melt at his judgment.
    3. Melting Fire, 2
      - a. As we all know, fire can and does melt things.
        - (1) Melts things that are frozen and things that are cold
        - (2) Melts things that are hard, such as silver, gold, iron
    4. Boiling Fire, 2
      - a. Fire causes water to boil
      - b. It may make oil to boil
      - c. It may even make some metals to boil
  - B. The Trembling Nations, 2
    1. At God's presence, nations tremble
    2. Deuteronomy 2:25 *This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.*
    3. Jeremiah 10:10 *But the LORD [is] the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*
  - C. The Transcendence of God, 3-4
    1. God has already come down and has done many incredible things before the eyes of Israel
      - a. 1 Kings 18:38-39 (Elijah) – *Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.*
      - b. Hebrews 12:18 *For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,*
    2. Men cannot perceive the things of God; he is transcendent, 4
      - a. Paul quotes this verse in 1 Corinthians 2:9 *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*
      - b. Man cannot perceive or understand the words or the doings of God. He is

transcendent.

## II. THE CHASTISEMENT OF GOD, 64:5-7

### A. God Meets With Believers, 5a

1. God does and will meet with those who rejoice and who work righteousness.
2. We can rejoice only in the grace of God.
3. We can work righteousness only as God gives us grace and leads us to do so.
4. God works in and through men who rejoice in God and do righteousness through grace.
5. The word *meet* here in the Hebrew means to join together. It can also mean *intercession*, which means that the only way we can serve God is through the intercession of Jesus Christ, for he is the only man who the one mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5).

### B. God Measures Our Righteousness, 5a

1. God is wroth (angry), because we have sinned, 5b
2. Everyone has sinned, and all of us do sin.
3. Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
  - a. This verse says that we *have sinned*. This is in past tense.
  - b. This verse goes on to say that we *come short* of God's glory, which is present tense.
  - c. Believers have sinned, and believers do sin.

### C. God Meets Our Need, 5b

1. In our sins God continues to have mercy and grace upon us.
2. And God will save us; that is, he has saved us from the penalty and power of sin, but he shall save us from the presence of sin.

### D. The Magnitude Of Our Sin, 6

1. We are *all* as an unclean thing.
  - a. This alludes to Israel and their not being allowed to touch certain things and not to eat certain things, because they were unclean.
  - b. To God we are all, in our human nature, an unclean thing; and God, as it were, would not touch us if he considered only what we are in our human nature.
  - c. That is why it took a special and peculiar love for God to save us.
2. Our *righteousnesses* are as a filthy rag, 6
  - a. A rag is an incomplete garment. It is a torn garment, unfinished.
  - b. Our righteousnesses are of value only to men on earth if they are wrought in a good conscience for the benefit of others.
  - c. But God sees us only as a filthy rag, since we were broken in Adam and are not complete in Christ in our human nature without salvation.
  - d. The word *filthy* can indicate a soiled or even a bloody rag.
  - e. We are soaked in our own sinful blood and are ready to die unless we are made alive through Christ Jesus.
3. We do all fade as a leaf.
  - a. The word *fade* can also be translated *fall*.
  - b. We are like the autumn leaves that fall from the trees.
  - c. Every person is falling in his sins, heading closer and closer to death and hell if he is not redeemed and snatched from death by Jesus Christ through his shed blood.
  - d. It is our iniquities, says verse 6, that have taken us away from God.

- e. We as God's people, although we are not heading to destruction, we are in need of chastisement.
- 4. None that calleth upon thy name, 7
  - a. There are *none*, or relatively none (there are very few) who call upon the name of God with the purpose of stirring God up to come and deliver his people from bondage
  - b. God, it seems, has hidden his face from them, for Israel are in bondage to Babylon and so much desire to be delivered from that bondage.
  - c. But no one prays to God to that end, for they have simply given in (acquiesced) to this bondage, not realizing that God can and will deliver if they will cry out to him.
  - d. God has *consumed* them (taken them captive) because of their iniquities.

### III. THE CRY TO GOD, 64:8-12

#### A. Confession Of Sin, 8

- 1. In verse 8 Isaiah himself is declaring to God that God is their father.
- 2. He also admits that God is the potter and Israel is the clay, and Israel are a work of God's hand.
- 3. Just as we read in Acts 17:28 *For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*

#### B. Cry For Mercy, 9

- 1. Isaiah cries out to God not to be wroth (angry) with Israel.
- 2. He desires that God not remember their iniquities for ever.
- 3. He begs the Lord for this, because "we are all thy people."

#### C. Condition Of God's People, 10-12

- 1. The holy cities are a wilderness, and Jerusalem is a desolation (left empty).
- 2. Israel's beautiful house (the temple) is burned with fire where their fathers used to cry out to God in praise.
- 3. Their pleasant things are laid waste.
  - a. Israel at one time was called *the pleasant land*, for the Lord had prepared this land for Israel, a land flowing with milk and honey.
  - b. Now they are all waste due to Israel's sins.
- 4. Could it be that our country, our society, is in the shape it is in because of our own sins?

#### D. Consideration Of God's Purpose, 12

- 1. The final question comes to Isaiah.
- 2. He asked God if he will continue on and on to afflict Israel very sore.
- 3. Will there be an end to the suffering of God's people, their anguish, their desire to return to their land, the bondage due to their sin?
- 4. Will God afflict very sore? In other words, will the suffering become deeper and deeper? Will it continue to get worse and worse?
- 5. Evil usually gets worse and worse rather than better and better.

### IV. CONCLUSION

- A. We know that God has a reprieve for Israel. He will deliver them!
- B. But that is only because he promised that he would.

- C. Sinners are like leaves falling from a tree, and their righteousnesses are as filthy rags to God, but there is a reprieve. God will answer confession and trust and faith in Christ with an everlasting life.
- D. Israel came out of their bondage to go back into their land.
- E. But only those who had faith in the Messiah learned that they have life everlasting.