

Whence Comes Peace

Isa 27:4-5

1

4 “I have no wrath. Should someone give Me briars and thorns in battle, Then I would step on them, I would burn them completely. 5 “Or let him rely on My protection, Let him make peace with Me, Let him make peace with Me.”

2

At the end of chapter 26, in...

Isa 26:21

3

21 For behold, the Lord is about to come out from His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; And the earth will reveal her bloodshed And will no longer cover her slain.

The Lord is getting ready to exact judgment on the enemies of Israel and for their iniquity. When we look at chapter 26 it seems we see the progression of the nature, the extent of God’s dealing with His people. Note...

4

- A. His judgments inflicted on their enemies Isa 26:1
- B. His constant care and protection of his people, the Israelites Isa 26:2
- C. His mercy, as seen in His judgments Isa 26:7
- D. The purpose of His judgments, to recover them from idolatry Isa 26:9
- E. The restoration of the Israelites, on their repentance, to Him Isa 26:12

As Isaiah leads into our text passage in 27:4-5, he uses poetic metaphor to describe the judgments of God that will be brought, he speaks of...

Isa 27:1

5

27 In that day the Lord will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.

I find it sadly comical today to hear people try and explain this Leviathan, the twisted serpent, or the dragon, who lives in the sea. You will hear these described as some sort of mythical creatures that no longer exist, or that they are nothing more than representations of Satan. This does a great disservice to the power of God and to what He is trying to teach His people. Is Isaiah saying that God is literally going to take His great and fierce sword and kill this Leviathan? Obviously not. The illustration is that the God who has the power to destroy the fearsome monster of the deep can

easily avenge the Israelites against their enemies. But this does not mean that this Leviathan was some sort of mythical creature. Whatever it was or is, God created it. This is not the only occasion that the scriptures talk about the Leviathan. It is mentioned a couple of times in Job as well as a couple of times in Psalms. Whatever this creature was or is, it was real and created by God.

This is one of those points that happen in a discussion where a quick aside can be good. The fossil record is loaded with fossilized bones from dinosaurs. It would be foolish to try and deny that these animals ever existed. They did exist. What happened to them so that they are no longer here in the form that they once were, we don't know. There are a lot of opinions concerning that, but there is one thing we know for absolute certainty, God created them.

We might have a little difficulty following the poetic prose being used in this passage, but the main drift, I think is discernible. God is guarding Israel, His vineyard, His people, and before Him its foes are as weak as thorns and briars, whose final end is to be burned. We see in the passage what might almost appear as a challenge to the enemies of the Israelites to try and stand against the might of God, but I'm not so sure that's the idea. I see in this a statement to these enemies, try as you might, you are nothing more than a nuisance like briars or brambles might be, fit for only destruction, but you don't have to be.

There are some thoughts from this passage I would like to look at in this lesson...

- 6**
- 1) The Wrath
 - 2) The Love that is not turned aside by hostility
 - 3) The reliance which ends separation
 - 4) The peace that this grasp brings

God wants for all men, even His enemies and the enemies of His people to come to a recognition of who He is and what He can and has done for them.

The first point then is this...

- 7**
- 1) The Wrath

As we looked at in...

Isa 26:21

8

21 For behold, the Lord is about to come out from His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; And the earth will reveal her bloodshed And will no longer cover her slain.

There is a wrath that is reserved for those who choose to ignore God. The Psalmist writes...

Ps 79:5-6

9

5 How long, O Lord? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire? **6** Pour out Your wrath upon the nations which do not know You, And upon the kingdoms which do not call upon Your name.

How often do we hear...

10

“God is Love, and will Forgive Everyone”

There is no truer statement, God is Love, and truly wants all men to be saved, but why must that eliminate the possibility that God might manifest wrath against those who choose to not be faithful in their obedience. Man’s relationship with God is strained, not because of anything that God is or has done, but because man sins. That makes men the enemies of God.

James 4:4

11

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Paul elaborates on this idea in...

Rom 6:12-13

12

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, **13** and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

The world, read sin, is the realm of the enemy of God and all of God’s children, Satan. If we are to avoid the wrath of God by being righteous in His eyes, we must avoid the world.

That is a choice that every person who ever lives has to make.

13

Will I be a friend of God or will I be His enemy?

Someone may not even be conscious that they are making this choice, but they make it none the less. We make it by the lives we choose to live. We make it by the things we choose to say. We make it by the way we choose to treat others. The point is, we make it. No one else makes it for us. We make it when we choose to love the God that first loved us...

1 John 4:19

14

19 We love, because He first loved us.

Here then is our next point...

15

2) The Love that is not turned aside by hostility

Any antagonism, any hate, any animosity is wholly on man's part. Yes, it is true, when man chooses to disobey and live faithlessly, of a necessity that turns God away. But let’s make a point here that is vital...

16

It isn’t MAN that God turns from, it is man’s ACTIONS

God loves His creation and wants to have a covenant relationship with all of it, namely man. But God cannot and does not abide sin, so He turns from it.

All of God's attributes, His grace, His mercy, His holiness, and His righteousness, all that God is and does, is defined by His righteousness and the acts of His righteousness which flow from His attributes, are in opposition to the deeds of the man who has set himself in opposition to God.

Ps 34:16

17

16 The face of the Lord is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Peter quotes this passage in...

1 Peter 3:12

18

12 "FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL."

The point of this thought is that if it were not, He would not be God. But still, God loves all men. Isn't that what we see in our text?

19

"I have no Wrath"

I think that the idea in this is that man's hostility does not incite God's. He wars against the sin because He still loves the sinner. His love comes with a rod, but, at the same time, it comes with the spirit of meekness. God bends to sue for our amity.

I am struck by the tender pleading of Paul, and ultimately of God, through Paul's writings...

2 Cor 5:20

20

20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

What more can God do than what He has already done? He gave Himself for our sins so we would not have to perish eternally. The next point is...

21

3) The reliance which ends separation

Look again at the passage from Isa. 27...

22

4 "I have no wrath. Should someone give Me briars and thorns in battle, Then I would step on them, I would burn them completely. **5** "Or let him rely on My protection

There are two things that Isaiah brings forth as the options for not just the enemies of the Israelites, as in the context, but for all men...

23

A) Briars and thorns

This seems like a pretty obvious reference to those that a thorn in side of God, if you will, people who have made the choice to seek anything or anyone other than God and His ways. They will be burned up, destroyed.

The second group is...

24

B) Those that rely on God

This group has a far different fate awaiting them...

Col 1:21-23

25

21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, **22** yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— **23** if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard,

God has given man the opportunity to be restored, reconciled, with Him through Christ if we will continue in the faith being firmly established there and steadfast in our commitment to it and to God. The dynamic is this; It is not the flight to the fortress, but the walls themselves, that keep those who hunt after the fugitive at bay. It is not man's faith, but the God on whom that faith is fastened, that brings peace to the conscience.

Here then is our last point...

26

4) The peace that this grasp brings

In Christ, God's wrath is stilled and He is turned from the fierceness of His anger. And remember, He was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. It is a one-sided warfare that men wage with Him, and when we abandon our opposition to Him, the war is ended. We have all heard the saying that it takes two to tango, allow me to change just one word of that...

27

It takes two to TANGLE

God has no desire to be at war with His creation. That is not why He instituted His Laws, nor why He punishes those who rebel against those Laws. It is not why He sent Christ to die for us. God loves us and His only desire is that we love Him in return. It is not God who chooses to war with man, but rather we who choose to war with God.

God's moral nature demands that He is against evil, but faith unites us to Him through Jesus, and, by our union with Christ, we receive in our hearts and souls the seed of a nature that has no desire for evil and in which God wholly delights and loves. To those who live by the l

Rom 1:16-17

28

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Paul makes pretty clear, if you would be righteous, you must live by faith in the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

From where does PEACE come from?

Col 3:15-16

29

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you,

The peace of God comes from allowing the Word of Christ, the Gospel, to guide us in our lives.