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LIFE-STUDY OF ISAIAH 51 - THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST IN HIS FOUR STAGES ACCORDING TO GOD'S NEW TESTAMENT ECONOMY(2)

III. IN THE STAGE OF HIS RESURRECTION

To consider Christ's resurrection and all the items produced in and through Christ's resurrection, we need to be calm and also to have a sober mind. The seed and the issue mentioned in Isaiah 53:10 and 11 imply a great deal. Because of this we need to include many items in the definition of Christ's resurrection in the New Testament. In his writings Paul explained and defined Christ's resurrection to the uttermost. In Paul's definition of Christ's resurrection, many items concerning the produce of Christ's resurrection are unveiled to us.

A. As the Processed Christ, the Last Adam, Becoming the Life-giving Spirit

In His resurrection, as the processed Christ, the last Adam, Christ became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17). After Christ's resurrection, His being processed was consummated. Originally, Christ was the very God in eternity past (John 1:1; Phil. 2:6). He was only God; with Him there was only divinity and all the attributes of this divinity. John 1:1 indicates this, saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then, four thousand years after man was created, almost two thousand years ago, the unique God became incarnated. That was the first step of His process. When He was incarnated, He entered into the "tunnel" of His process. By so doing, He became a man, a God-man. Outwardly, He was a man; inwardly, He was nothing less than God. After His incarnation, He was no longer merely God. As a little child born of Mary and lying in a manger, He was not only God but a God-man. It is wrong to say that only God was lying there in the manger, because He was lying there not only as God but also as a little boy. Likewise, it is wrong to say that only a boy was lying in the manger, because within that little boy there was God.

In His incarnation Christ lived as a God-man for more than thirty years. He traveled all around the holy land from north to south, mainly from Galilee to Jerusalem, on the west side of the Jordan. In such a narrow strip of land the Lord Jesus traveled back and forth for three and a half years. Although as a God-man He was very great, only once did He do anything to manifest His greatness. In Matthew 17:1-8, He ascended with His disciples, Peter, James, and John, to Mount Hermon and was transfigured before their eyes. Six days before, He had told His disciples that some among them would not taste death until they saw the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. In His transfiguration on the mount, His appearance was still that of a man, but His face shined like the sun, and His garments became as white

as the light. At that moment He was a man in glory. This was altogether a part of His process.

At the end of His incarnation, that is, at the end of His human life, He went voluntarily into death. Christ's death was wonderful in three aspects. In the human aspect, He was murdered. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter (Isa. 53:7), and He was slaughtered by man for three hours, from nine o'clock in the morning until noon. Then from twelve o'clock to three o'clock in the afternoon, God came in. When God put all our sins upon Him, He counted Him as the unique sinner in the universe. Thus Christ died a vicarious death for us, the sinners. On the cross God wounded Him, crushed Him, cut Him off from the land of the living, and judged Him (vv. 5, 6, 8, 10a). Because of this, His death was counted by God as a vicarious death for us.

During those three hours from twelve o'clock until three o'clock in the afternoon, the universe became dark, and the veil in the temple was split in two from the top to the bottom (Matt. 27:45, 51a). This means that Christ tore the separation between God and man through His death. Not only so, the earth was shaken and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had died were raised (vv. 51b-52). They were not resurrected yet, but they waited for some time. At the time that Christ resurrected, they also resurrected, and they came out of the tombs and entered into the holy city and appeared to many (v. 53). Where they went after this we have no way to trace. All these things indicate that Christ's death was not just a death caused by man, but a death carried out by God directly, according to His righteousness.

Then, in the third aspect, He Himself was willing to die. He was not forced or compelled to die, but He poured out His life, His soul, to die for us (Isa. 53:12b). In His resurrection Christ as the processed One, that is, the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit. In John 7:37-38, at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, the Lord Jesus stood and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." This word indicates that His believers would receive the Spirit. However, at that time the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified (v. 39). The Holy Spirit of God was there, but He was not there as the Spirit, because before Christ's resurrection the Holy Spirit of God had not been consummated. The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Jesus was glorified when He was resurrected. When Jesus entered into resurrection, He was immediately glorified. Thus, on the day of His glorification, that is, the day of His resurrection, He came back to His disciples as the Spirit. He did not come back to teach them; rather, He breathed on them and told them to receive Him as the Spirit (John 20:19-22). Before Christ's resurrection, such a Spirit was not yet.

Speaking for God: CHAPTER SIX

SEPARATING INTO THE HOMES TO BRING IN THE INCREASE

In our seeking before the Lord, we feel that the church in Taipei, the church in Singapore, the church in Manila, the church in Hong Kong, and even the church in Jakarta must all aim at having one thousand home meetings. Any locality with a population of more than three million must aim at dividing into one thousand small homes. Every small home should have eight to ten people, so one thousand homes will have eight to ten thousand people. We know that the more we divide into the homes, the more we multiply. Let us use a couple with ten children as an illustration. Suppose the parents keep all the children at home with them, so that the sons never marry and the daughters are never given in marriage. Eventually, the parents will get old, and the children will also become old. This situation is not normal.

If we release our sons and daughters, letting them marry, then there will be increase and propagation. Each additional marriage will afford one additional unit for reproduction. When three get married, there will be three units for reproduction; when seven get married, there will be seven units for reproduction. After a few years they will multiply to over twenty persons. Those who understand gardening know that in planting flowers, shrubs, or trees, it is hard for them to multiply if the farmer plants them close together, but if he separates them into groups, planting them in small groves, then they will multiply rapidly. Therefore, we must separate into homes; this will bring in the increase.

If we want everyone to function by preaching the truth for this kind of multiplication, then we must provide them an education on various levels. Only in this way can we raise up those who can preach the truth. Then in the Lord's Day morning meetings there will be no fear of having no one to give a message for the ministry of the word. If the elders take the lead to preach the Lord's word, then the saints will have a pattern to follow. When the saints see such a pattern, they will also go out to speak to others. Once this kind of atmosphere is started, the result will be that all the saints will be able to preach the Lord's word to those who are outside the church. Whether by proclaiming Christ, by expounding the Holy Scriptures, or by releasing the truth, after three to five years, their preaching will be able to cover all the districts in their locality. This is the Lord's way.

Satan, who is very cunning, prevents men from seeing the Lord's way. However, if we read Acts chapters two, four, and five, we can clearly see this principle of separating into homes. In the beginning the saints met from house to house (2:46). Then in chapter eight, due to the great persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem, "all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles" (v. 1). Thus, the disciples were scattered among various towns and villages, and they all announced the word of God as the gospel (v. 4). After the disciples

were dispersed, not only did they quickly spread throughout all of Judea, but they also reached Samaria. The record in chapter eight shows that in Samaria there were people who believed in the Lord. Afterward, Philip the evangelist also went there, and a church was raised up immediately.

This shows us that not long after they had been saved, the early believers in Jerusalem all became teachers, evangelists, and prophets. Moreover, when the churches were raised up, the believers also became apostles. If the local churches today would all practice this way, then the gospel would be preached rapidly throughout the entire earth. Whether in Taiwan, Southeast Asia, or the Western world, all would be gospelized rapidly. However, this all depends on whether or not we are willing to practice this and whether or not we do it right. If all of us are willing to practice this and we all do it right, then the result will be a success.

What we have fellowshiped should not be made into rules and regulations to be observed accordingly one by one. What we hope is that you would all bring this fellowship back with you for study and that you would pray much. If someone, after his study and prayer, can find a better way before the Lord, that would be wonderful. In principle, we need to help the saints by every means so that they all can understand the truth. God desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth. Not only so, we also need to help the saints so that they all could go forth and be prophets speaking for the Lord. (to be cont'd)

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for Boston Training Center that all the practical needs will be met.
- For daily exercise in God's ordained way training: prophesying on Lord's day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth and attend Lord's day meeting on time.
- Pray for migration to the 30 cities for shepherding and establishing churches. And for GTCA of the local people and gospel preaching in our daily living.
- For gospel preaching on West Valley College campus, as well as for English-speaking testimony in Campbell.
- For young people that they would have morning revival, pursue the truth and become gospel seeds on campus.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: Crystallization-Study of Isaiah, Week 19.
- Prayer meeting on Tuesday 7:30pm at Campbell meeting hall
- NorCal sisters blending conference will be held on 4/15-16, Please register via sister Tien or sister Tai before 3/25, \$20 per person.
- 3/27, South Bay blending on ICSC at Santa Clara 4:00pm ~8:00pm with dinner.