
Church in Campbell Weekly News

April 3, 2011

Issue 11- 14

LIFE-STUDY OF ISAIAH 47 – CHRIST AS THE CONVENANT AND AS THE LIGHT TO BE GOD’S FULL SALVATION

A. Christ as the Covenant to Be the Salvation of God

The concept of many Christians is that Christ serves God by love, by gentleness, by humility, or by kindness. However, Isaiah was different. Isaiah said that this Servant of Jehovah serves God by being a covenant. The Lord Jesus said that He would serve us by giving up His life (Mark 10:45), that is, by His death. Christ served us by dying for us, and that was to serve us by being a covenant. He said that He was the good Shepherd who would lay down His soulful life for the sheep that He might minister the divine life to them (John 10:10-11). Christ died for us that He might be life to us. These are the two things by which He serves God. He serves God by ministering life to us through His death and resurrection.

First, Christ established the new covenant according to God's righteousness through His redeeming death (Matt. 26:28). Then, Christ is the righteousness of God to us for our justification (Rom. 3:22; Gal 2:16). Christ also has become the bequests, the reality, the surety, the Mediator, and the Executor of this new covenant, the new testament, in His resurrection, for our inheritance of the promise (Heb. 7:22; 9:15-17). In the new testament as a will, there are many promises. All these promises are the bequests of that will. Christ is everything for that will, and He is every item of that will. Eventually, He is the will. We have often said that without Christ the Bible is empty. Christ is the reality of the Bible. This means

that Christ is the Bible. Without Christ, the new covenant, the new testament, is empty. Christ is the reality of the new testament; therefore, Christ is the new testament. It is impossible to separate Christ from the new testament. Now we can understand the logic by which God considers Christ to be a covenant given to us. Hence, Christ has become the new covenant as the new testament according to God's righteousness to be the base of God's full salvation, through His death and in His resurrection.

B. Christ as the Light to Be the Salvation of God

Christ is also the light to be the salvation of God (Isa. 42:6b; 49:6b). Isaiah 49:6b says, "I will also set You as a light of the nations / That You may be My salvation unto the ends of the earth." Thus, God gave Christ as a light to the nations that He might be God's salvation to all the world. This light issues in Christ as the divine life to us (John 9:5; 1:4, 9; 8:12). John 1:4 says, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." In reading such a verse, we might ask whether light came first, or life. It is difficult to answer such a question. Verses such as John 1:4 and 1 John 1:1-7 indicate that life issues in light. But, based on Genesis 1, it is also possible to say that light issues in life. First, God said, "Let there be light" (v. 3). Then, there was light, and after that, the different kinds of life—the vegetable life, the animal life, and the human life—came out of the light (vv. 4-28). In the experience of a sinner, the first thing that comes in is not life but light. When we heard the preaching of the gospel, light came to us and shined over us (2 Cor. 4:4-6). Then, when we received this light, it issued in life, and we were

regenerated. After our regeneration, light comes out of life. Therefore, first we receive light, and then we receive life. Then we live by this life, and this life issues in light.

The life of this light becomes God's salvation to us in His righteousness (Isa. 49:6b). We have seen that life is the consummation of God's salvation. But God's salvation still needs a foundation. The foundation, the base, of God's salvation is righteousness. Thus, the life of this light becomes God's salvation to us in His righteousness.

The life of this light also ensures us, guarantees us, the heirs of God in His life, the right to inherit God with all His riches as our eternal inheritance (Acts 26:18). If we do not have such a life, which is of the light, we do not have the assurance that we will be able to inherit God as our inheritance. Since we have such a life, this life is our assurance that ensures our right to inherit God as our inheritance in life.

The life of this light, as the indestructible life (Heb. 7:16b), the incorruptible life (2 Tim. 1:10b), and the real and eternal life that we should lay hold on (1 Tim. 6:19, 12), grows in us all the time, issuing in our church life today and consummating in the New Jerusalem in eternity (Rev. 21:2-3, 9b-11, 18-23; 22:1-5). Today we are living the church life by this life, and we will also enjoy the New Jerusalem by this life. This is the consummation of God's full salvation.

Speaking for God: CHAPTER SIX

FACING VARIOUS PROBLEMS IN OUR SPEAKING FOR GOD

We would like to fellowship concerning some of the things we should absolutely avoid when we speak for God. Those who know a little about farming know that when a farmer farms his field, there are certain things he must avoid so that the growth of the crop will not be hampered. First he must protect his crop against floods. Then he must protect against insects, that is, he must prevent the insects from eating up the tender sprouts in

the field. In farming, the hardest problem is how to deal with the various kinds of insects. Once you plant some trees, there will be insects; one kind of tree will have this kind of insect, while another kind of tree will have another kind of insect. While some of the insects are easy to deal with, others are very hard to deal with and cannot be killed regardless of how hard you try. Eventually you may have to burn the tree down, but that is really the worst strategy. Therefore, we have to avoid the harm caused by insects.

In Song of Songs the Lord says, "Catch the foxes for us, / The little foxes, / That ruin the vineyards / While our vineyards are in blossom" (2:15). Here we see that the little foxes come to damage especially when the vineyards are in blossom. We also may discover harmful pests called snails. They particularly eat the flower buds; they do not eat the leaves or the stem, but they specifically eat the best and most tender parts. Furthermore, after eating the buds, they hide themselves so that you are unable to find them.

The little foxes do not come when the vine is not in blossom; it is when the vine is in blossom that they come. Now at this time we are going forward, and the vineyards will soon be in blossom. Once they blossom, we have to be on guard against the coming of the little foxes. This is what we have to avoid. The little foxes, snails, and other germs and pests will bring in damage. This requires our prevention. There is another animal called the gopher. Gophers are terrible because they burrow under the trees and create underground passageways. They live underground and secretly ruin the growth of many flowers, plants, trees, and crops. In Matthew 13, the Lord Jesus also used the birds and thorns as illustrations. He said that the sower went out to sow, but although the seeds were sown, they encountered all kinds of difficulties, such as being devoured by the birds of the air or being choked by the thorns, so that the seeds could not bear fruit (vv. 4, 7). Today we are experiencing these things, and we need to be warned.

Not Teaching Things Different from God's Economy

The first warning is for the co-workers. An error which we who work for the Lord most easily make is that we like to give messages according to our preference. On the one hand, we prefer to give messages which fit our taste; on the other hand, we prefer not to speak others' messages. We would not "cook others' dishes," that is, we would not speak what others have already spoken. Almost every co-worker is like this. Therefore, in 1 Timothy 1 Paul told Timothy, "I exhorted you...to remain in Ephesus," and asked Timothy to especially pay attention to one thing: to "charge certain ones not to teach different things" (v. 3). In Paul's time, the "different things" referred first to the law, which was of and according to the Old Testament. Second, they referred to the genealogies, especially the research of the Old Testament genealogies. All these are according to the Old Testament, but they are things which are different from the New Testament economy.

Then in verse 4 Paul continued to say, “Which produce questionings rather than God’s economy, which is in faith.” In other words, the “different things” taught by those people were not according to God’s economy. God’s economy is firstly Christ as the mystery of God, and secondly the church as the mystery of Christ. From the fourteen Epistles written by Paul we can see that the focus of the messages he preached was Christ and the church. Today the things being taught in Christianity may be scriptural, yet there are too many different teachings. One example is the practice of foot-washing. Foot-washing is surely according to the Bible. In America there are Christians who insist that the believers must wash each other’s feet before they break the bread; however, there are some who do not practice this, thus giving rise to debates. Some Christians often debate concerning scriptural practices such as head covering, baptism, and the Lord’s table and are therefore divided from each other. (to be cont’d)

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for Boston Training Center that all the practical needs will be met.
- Pray for Russian speaking world testimony that churches will be shepherded by those raised them in the 90’s and 2000’s.
- For daily exercise in GOW training: prophesying on Lord’s day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth.
- Pray for migration to the 30 cities for shepherding and establishing churches.
- For gospel preaching on West Valley College campus, as well as for English-speaking testimony in Campbell.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: Crystallization-Study of Isaiah, Week 20.
- YP Bible Reading this week: Mark chapter 1-2.
- Prayer meeting on Tuesday (2/22) 7:30 pm at Tien’s home 19070 Dagmar Dr. Saratoga, CA95070
- GOW monthly training will be held on Saturday (4/9) in Santa Clara meeting hall.
- NorCal sisters blending conference will be held on 4/15-16, The registration fee is \$20 per person.
- Summer school of truth will be held on July 24-29.