

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Isa 57:15

Isa 57:15 - posted by Joyful_Heart, on: 2011/5/7 22:29

Isa 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says--He who lives forever, whose Name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

Abiding in Him,
J_H

Re: Isa 57:15 - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/5/8 0:01

with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit.

--

What a beautiful phrase of scripture that invites us to share in the glory of God. May we find ourselves in the dust before God as we approach Him. That he would call us "son" and "children" of God is the wonder of angels.

Re: Isa 57:16-21 - posted by savannah, on: 2011/5/8 1:01

Isaiah 57:16-21 For not for the age will I contend, nor will I be permanently wroth, in case the spirit from before Me shall droop, and all who have breath, that I made."
At his depravity, for a moment, I was wroth, and I am smiting him. And I conceal My face from him and am wroth when he is going, backsliding in the way of his heart."
His ways I have seen, but I will heal him, and will lead him and complete comforts to him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips: peace, peace, to the ones far off and near, says the LORD, and I will heal him. Yet the wicked are as the disgorging sea, for quiet it cannot be, and disgorging are its waters foulness and mud."
No peace,says Yahweh, my Elohim, "is there for the wicked."

VS 16 During that painful captivity they perceived that God was their enemy, and could scarcely obtain any taste of the grace of God, by which their hearts might be encouraged or relieved. The Prophet therefore meets this doubt, and shows that the punishments which they shall endure will be for a short time, and that God will not always be angry with them; that God has indeed very good reason to be angry, but yet that he will relinquish his right, and will make abatement of that which he might have demanded. Thus he connects the wrath of God with that moderation by which he soothes believers, that they may not be discouraged.

This sentence, therefore, ought always to be remembered by us amidst our sorest afflictions, lest we should think that God is our enemy, or that he will always contend with us. When he says that God is angry, he speaks as if he made an admission, and in accordance with the feelings of our flesh; for we cannot form any other conception of God during our afflictions, than that he is angry with us. It is even profitable to be moved by this feeling, that it may instruct us to repentance; and therefore this form of expression must be viewed as referring exclusively to our capacity, and not to God.

He shows that the Lord deals so gently and kindly with us, because he perceives how weak and feeble we are; as is also pointed out in other passages of Scripture, such as Psalms 103:13;. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our condition, remembering that we are dust. The age of man is like grass, and flourisheth as a flower in the field." The same thing is said in Psalms 78:38;. "Yet being inclined to mercy, he was gracious to their iniquity, and did not destroy them, and often recalled his anger, and did not stir up all his indignation, remembering that they were flesh, and a wind that passeth away and returneth not again." Here the Prophet appears to me to mean the same thing; as if the Lord had said, "I am unwilling to try my strength with breath or wind, which would be as if with grass or a leaf, that shall suddenly vanish away when they have felt the heat of the sun."

VS. 17 He means that his favor was, in some respects, withdrawn and "hidden" for a time. Now, he speaks according to the opinion of men, because, as we have already said, we imagine that God is an enemy, and is angry with us, when he punishes for our transgressions. And it is necessary that we should have those views and conceptions of him, that we may arrive at a true acknowledgment of our sins; for we should never acknowledge them sincerely, or be distressed on account of them, if we did not reflect with ourselves, and know that we had provoked God's wrath. But, while it is desirable that we should be led to repentance in this manner, we must beware, on the other hand, lest in consequence of imagining that God is hostile and unwilling to be reconciled to us, we should be swallowed up by sorrow. The Prophet therefore restrains these immoderate terrors, and forbids us to judge of God according to our natural disposition; for although he chastises us, he does not cease to cherish a father's love and affection towards those whom he has once embraced. JC

When this sinner here went on frowardly in the way of his heart, one would think it should have followed, "I have seen his ways and will destroy him, will abandon him, will never have any thing more to do with him." But such are the riches of divine mercy and grace, and so do they rejoice against judgment, that it follows, I have seen his ways and will heal him. See how God's goodness takes occasion from man's badness to appear so much the more illustrious; and where sin has abounded grace much more abounds. God's reasons of mercy are fetched from within himself, for in us there appears nothing but what is provoking: "I have seen his ways, and yet I will heal him for my own name's sake." God knew how bad the people were, and yet would not cast them off. But observe the method. God will first give him grace, and then, and not till then, give him peace: "I have seen his way, that he will never turn to me of himself, and therefore I will turn him." Those whom God has mercy in store for he has grace in readiness for, to prepare and qualify them for that mercy which they were running from as fast as they could. (1.) God will heal him of his corrupt and vicious disposition, will cure him of his covetousness, though it be ever so deeply rooted in him and his heart have been long exercised to covetous practices. There is no spiritual disease so inveterate, but almighty grace can conquer it. (2.) God will lead him also; not only amend what was amiss in him, that he may cease to do evil, but direct him into the way of duty, that he may learn to do well. He goes on frowardly, as Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter, but God will lead him into a better mind, a better path. And then, (3.) He will restore those comforts to him which he had forfeited and lost, and for the return of which he had thus prepared him. MH

VS 18 Now, our diseases are incurable, if the Lord do not anticipate us by his mercy. And will guide him. No chastisements, however severe, will drive us to repentance, if the Lord do not quicken us by his Spirit; for the consequence will be, to render us more rebellious and hard-hearted. And so we may behold, in the example of this people, an image of mankind; that we may clearly see what is our rebellion and obstinacy against God, and what remedies are necessary for curing our diseases; and that, when we are diseased and almost beyond hope, we are healed, are brought back to the right path, and afterwards continue in it. Hence follows consolation: for they whose diseases have been cured obtain, at the same time, that joy of heart and that consolation of which they had been deprived. JC

VS 19 Far off! What does that mean? It means that the soul passing through that experience is separated, in its feelings, and at an infinite distance from God. Now this inward sense of being "far off" is one of the most painful feelings that a quickened soul can experience. The ungodly, who are really afar off, know nothing experimentally of distance from God, for they have never been brought spiritually near. They have felt no "cords of love, no bands of a man" drawing them with sweet attraction to the throne of the most High; they have never sighed after the sweet manifestations of God's mercy and love; but they live gladly, and wallow wilfully in those things which separate the soul from its Maker.

But those who are "afar off" in their feelings, are such as have seen something of the beauty of the Lord, and felt the evil of sin, who spiritually know Jehovah's purity and the creature's impurity, and have experienced the inward curse, bondage, and condemnation of a holy law. A spiritual discovery of his purity and holiness, making manifest their own vileness, has thrust them down from their self-righteous or presumptuous standing, and made them far off from him; not daring to draw near, nor able to approach; not feeling any spiritual access, but sighing and mourning over their evil hearts in the wilderness, in desolate places; and unable to move a single step forward, because the Lord does not draw them by his smile.

A man must know something experimentally of this before he is brought near. How can we know a feeling of nearness if we have not known a feeling of distance? How can we know what it is to be brought "from the end of the earth" (Ps 61:2) by the manifestation of God's mercy and love, unless we have been driven there, in our feelings, by some manifestation of the wrath of God against sin? But to see the blessed Lord, and not be able to draw near to him; to view his atoning blood at an infinite distance from us, his glorious righteousness well-near out of sight, and his lovely Person out of the reach of our spiritual view, so as not to enjoy any access to these glorious realities—to know this experimentally and feeling

ly, is to be "far off" from God. And I believe that God's people know very much of this feeling. There is not much nearness in our day; not much dandling upon the knees, not much smiling upon the soul, not many love visits, nor love tokens communicated. There is, indeed, a great deal of talking about them; and there are abundance of people who profess to have them; but I fear they are, for the most part, cheats and counterfeits. The real people of God, the true-hearted family are, for the most part, "afar off upon the sea," for it is a dark and cloudy day in which we live. JCP

VS 20. But the wicked. Having formerly spoken of the "peace" which good men shall enjoy, he threatens that the wicked, on the contrary, shall have continual war and incessant uneasiness and distress of heart; in order that good men may value more highly the excellent blessing of "peace," and next, that the reprobate may know that their condition shall in no degree be improved in consequence of that peace which is promised to the children of God. But because the reprobate make false pretensions to the name of God, and vainly glory in it, the Prophet shows that there is no reason why they should flatter themselves, or advance any claim, on the ground of this promise, since they can have no share in this peace. Nor will it avail them anything, that God, having compassion upon his people, receives them into favor, and commands peace to be proclaimed to them. JC

VS 21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. They have no share in the peace made by the blood of Christ; they have no true, solid, inward peace of conscience; nor will they have any part in the happiness and prosperity of the church and people of God in the latter day, which will but add to their uneasiness; and will have no lot and portion in the eternal peace which saints enjoy in the world to come; and of this there is the strongest assurance, since God, the covenant God of his people, has said it. JG