

## Gathered One By One

Undoubtedly there are historical elements to these symbol-filled prophecies such as the return of Jewish captives from exile and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. However, for us, Isaiah is continuing to extol the blessings of the gospel day in which we live. He speaks both of the judgment of Christ's enemies and the blessing of the church which is pictured here as a fruitful, well-tended vineyard. Leviathan is sometimes likened to a whale or a monstrous sea-serpent and is a type of the Satanic evil that exists to deceive the nations.

### **Symbols of judgment and blessing**

Spiritualising these verses we may say that Satan's kingdom is diminished and the sea dragon humbled each time a sinner is converted and brought to faith. Yet, it is the cross that most fully reveals Christ's victory over sin, death and hell. At the cross God unsheathed His sword of judgment against our Substitute and at the cross our Redeemer, in love and mercy, confounded and defeated the strength of sin and death. For God's elect, justice was served and mercy was secured at the cross of Jesus Christ.

### **Red wine is the best wine**

Isaiah's vision foresaw the gospel day when the Messiah would go forth to spoil the strong man's house and destroy the works of the devil. He also saw Christ blessing His spiritual people, the church, here represented as 'a vineyard of red wine'. We are blessed with a free and constant supply of grace. Christ plants and nurtures His people by day and night with living water and gospel truth. Our Lord consumes the briars and thorns that would choke His vineyard while blessing His people with spiritual good.

### **Root, shoot and fruit**

This personal care reveals Christ's love for His church. We come to the Father because our Saviour has made peace for us. All who come by faith to Christ take root, then 'blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit'. Isaiah sees the expansion of Christ's kingdom through preaching the gospel of grace. The conversion of all for whom Christ died follows as they are brought to saving faith.

### **God with us**

Isaiah comforted the Lord's faithful remnant with views of God's care for His people. Our daily lives are not lived independent of God but under the immediate care of our loving Saviour and the kind provision of His goodness. Let us take note. The Lord's way with His people is all-wise. His dealings are gracious, gentle and loving. His timing is perfect. He is working all things together for our good. If you were as wise and powerful as God your life would be exactly as it is now.

### **Come, let us reason together**

Under the tender hand of the vinedresser, Isaiah discerns how pruning must take place for fruitfulness to be maximised. The Lord's people are not cosseted from trial and immune to affliction but there is a great distinction between the trials of the elect and the punishment of the wicked. In measure and through reason the Lord debates with those whom He loves, helpfully chastening to educate and correct the sins of His people by tearing down of idols.

### **Desolate and forsaken**

The non-elect, here called a people of no understanding, that is of no spiritual understanding, having no grace dispensed to them in the covenant of peace and no faith bestowed on them, shall be desolate and forsaken. 'He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour'. Or as Paul says, 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth' (Romans 9:18).

### **One by one**

Isaiah concludes this section by returning to the great purpose of the gospel day; the gathering in of the elect. He likens it to beating tree branches to dislodge fruit. One by one the Lord's elect shall be gathered. One by one Christ's people shall be sought for and found not only in one nation, signified by the boundaries of the land of Israel, but from the whole earth by the preaching of the gospel.

### **Zion's trumpet**

Gospel preaching is often typified in scripture as the blowing of a trumpet and here Isaiah confirms that when 'the great trumpet shall be blown, they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem'. This is the gospel trumpet. This is the promise of salvation by preaching Jesus Christ crucified. It is an assurance to all true gospel ministers that the certain sound of free grace preaching shall accomplish the end to which it is sent.

Amen

Website: [www.newfocus.church](http://www.newfocus.church)

Magazine: [www.go-newfocus.co.uk](http://www.go-newfocus.co.uk)

New Focus Church Online : [www.youtube.com/@NewFocusChurchOnline](http://www.youtube.com/@NewFocusChurchOnline)