



Reading: Isaiah 49: 13 – 23

Verses 22, 23

“Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms and thy daughters shall be carried upon thy shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.”

This is one of several prophecies of the flourishing condition of the future of the New Testament reign of Messiah. It is, as far as its full scope is concerned, yet unfulfilled and so it is to be part of our petition when we pray, thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

For a few short minutes, I want to draw your attention to three things in these verses:

1. What the Lord GOD will do.

2. What men will be.

3. What believers will know.

1. What the Lord GOD will do.

He will lift up his hand to the Gentiles and his standard to the people. This suggests his reaching out his power to gather, and his setting up a rallying point to which people are to gather. The rallying point or standard must be his own Word – the gospel of Christ – and nothing else. The divine authority of the Bible makes it a universal standard and rallying point for all people. That was the great cry of the Protestant Reformation 500 years ago. Here is a universal proposal of salvation and a universal claim on all nations for the obedience of faith. It is his standard and his hand. It is exclusive of all other standards. It expresses and asserts his sovereignty over the terms and conditions of the assembling of nations, and over the actual fact of their assembling – he will do it.

2. What men will be.

Firstly, sons and daughters will be carried in the arms and on the shoulders of the gathering and assembling nations. Those children belong to the Church and she thought they were lost to her, but they are going to be so numerous that there will not be enough room for them. They are going to be carried back from their wanderings and placed back in her care where they belong.

Secondly, kings and queens will be nursing fathers and mothers to the church and her children. This is a clear representation of the duty, privilege and dignity of civil rulers in a godly alliance and supportive partnership with the Church. It is such a tender picture of care and nurturing of children by rulers – by civil government – for their good and in harmony with the best interests of the church.

Thirdly, those who opposed and persecuted the church will be brought into subjection and instead will humbly submit to their error and turn to assist and serve her. They will be subdued and made to yield and to desist from troubling her. Indeed, “the nation and kingdom and will not serve her will perish.”

3. What believers will know.

“thou shalt know that I am the Lord.” Surely she already knew this? Why is it stated as if it is something new? Our unbelief in the power and grace of God towards his praying and pleading people is a real blindness. It is so shameful that we should limit him in the way we do. He is Jehovah – almighty, all-gracious, all-wise, all-knowing. He is the absolute sovereign. Nebuchadnezzar was, by a very painful and humbling process, made to know that the most high God ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will. (Daniel 4:32). His believing people

should know this too. They will also then know by experience with much refreshment and joy, when they see what God has done and how he has done it, that “they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.”

We should therefore gather again to the one standard of Biblical truth and morality in all we do. We should not limit the power, will or promise of God to turn civil government and make it serviceable to the nurturing of the sons and daughters of the church and nation. We should not be ashamed to wait for this. Waiting in scripture is not idle. It is an active, diligent use of appointed means, looking for promised outcomes, giving all glory to God who performs all things perfectly.