

The Book of 1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:54-58

Session 72: Death is Swallowed Up in Victory

1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. ⁵⁴ **So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.**

What is Paul referring to in verse 54? He is referring to something written back in the book of Isaiah. We already know a couple of things about Isaiah. The book of Isaiah is basically divided into two main sections: chapters 1-39, and chapters 40-66.

Chapters 1-39 are the warning to the southern kingdom of Judah of the impending captivity by the Babylonians in the fifth course of punishment.

In chapters 40-66, God details his salvation for His people, and He does it in three sections of nine chapters each. Chapters 40-48 detail Israel's deliverance from their captivity. Chapters 49-57 details God's provision to deliver Israel from their sin, and chapters 58-66 detail the salvation of the earth from its curses in the Kingdom, specifically the New Heaven and the New Earth.

I want to step aside here for just a moment to talk about an issue. It so happens that the book of Isaiah has 66 chapters, the same number of books in the Bible. Isaiah is divided into two parts: the first containing 39 chapters and the second containing 27 chapters, the same way your Bible is divided up into the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT). Don't make more out of this than it actually is. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are technically still OT books because the New Testament was not in force until the death of the Testator (Jesus). Our Bible makes the division based on the 400 years of silence represented by the

blank pages in your Bible. The chapters in Isaiah are not a match to each book in the Bible, although I have seen some attempts to do that.

This is not God's way of authenticating the Bible or the book of Isaiah. The chapter and verse markings were not part of the inspired Scriptures. The chapter divisions we use today were developed by Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury in the 13th century. The first Bible to use verse numbers for both the OT and the NT was the Geneva Bible in the 16th century and the verse numberings for both the OT and the NT were developed by Robert Estienne; the NT in 1551 and the OT in 1553. Estienne's was quickly adopted as the standard for chapter and verses across all languages and versions.

The quote we are after from 1 Corinthians 15:54, is found in Isaiah 25:8.

I want to take a minute and introduce us to Isaiah and then walk us up to chapter 25 in his book of prophecy. Let's talk about the timing of Isaiah's ministry. The second course of punishment (CoP), which involved the dividing of the nation into two kingdoms (northern and southern), happened almost 1,000 years before Christ. That divided kingdom took place almost 250 years before Isaiah began his ministry, which means that the nation was then in the fourth course of punishment. The northern kingdom of Israel had been governed by a series of evil kings who led the nation into idolatry and provoked God to their expulsion out of the land.

We know that Assyria was the conquering nation and that conquest happened in stages. Isaiah's ministry was not quite 20 years old when, in 736 BC, Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria killed Rezin, king of Damascus, the ally of Pekah, the king of Samaria. Tiglath-Pileser entered the land of Israel and took many cities captive; chiefly Gilead and Galilee, and he carried many of the inhabitants to Assyria. This was the first captivity of the kingdom of Israel. The conquest was finished in 722 BC; a project that lasted 14 years.

Now, let's take a quick look at how the book of Isaiah unfolds.

Isaiah 1-3: The Vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem

Isaiah 4-6: The Messiah/Isaiah's Vision of the Lord

Isaiah 7-9: The Book of Immanuel

Isaiah 10-12: Assyria & Judah; the future time of Jacob's trouble

Chapters 13-23 contain burdens or judgments on nine surrounding nations/cities (Babylon, Moab, Damascus, unnamed, Egypt, Ethiopia, Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre.)

Chapters 13-14: The Burden of Babylon

Chapters 15-16: The Burden of Moab

Chapter 17: The burden of Damascus; the capital city of Syria

Chapter 18: The burden of an unnamed power in Africa (Cush or Ethiopia)

Chapter 19: The burden of Egypt

Chapter 20: The burden of Egypt and Ethiopia

Chapter 21: The burden of Edom and Arabia

Chapter 22: The burden of Jerusalem

Chapter 23: The burden of Tyre

Chapter 24: The future great tribulation

Chapters 25-27: These chapters bring us into the Kingdom Age.

Chapter 25 is the chapter we are after. In this chapter, the great tribulation has passed and the "Sun of righteousness" has arisen. "Sun of righteousness" is one of the ways that Israel's Messiah is pictured in reference to the Kingdom set up on the earth.

Malachi 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

The sun gives light, among other things. Here, the word "Sun" is capitalized, which means the s-u-n is a picture of the S-o-n, the Second Person of the Godhead. Let me show you something.

Psalm 19:1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. ² Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. ³ *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, ⁵ Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. ⁶ His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

Getting back to Isaiah 25, this chapter is a song of deliverance. This is a chapter of pure joy as it speaks of the 1000-year kingdom of Christ upon the earth.

Isaiah 25:1 O LORD, thou *art* my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful *things*; *thy* counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth.

Isaiah 25:4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones *is* as a storm *against* the wall.

Isaiah 25:6 And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. ⁷ And **he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.**

Notice what is being said here; the Lord will, at the time of His kingdom on the earth, destroy two things: 1) the covering, and 2) the vail. What are these and when did they get established?

The Covering was established at the Tower of Babel to blind the nations to God. God raises up His nation to be a “light unto the Gentiles.” Satan blinded the nations to that light by means of his “vail,” which was established at the fifth course of punishment.

But, at the establishment of the Kingdom on earth, God will destroy the covering and the vail which blinded the nations.

Isaiah 25:8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.