

I.N.I.

19<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost  
October 7, 2012  
Isaiah 25:6-9

In Christ Jesus, who has provided a heavenly banquet for us, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

What is your favorite food? A juicy steak, barbecued chicken, spicy ribs, a hot apple pie? Our sermon text this morning draws for us a picture of a succulent meal but in reality it is prophesying the future. A couple weeks ago we heard Isaiah speak of God planting a vineyard. He did everything He could: He cleared the stones, tilled the ground, planted the best vines, built a tower and a winepress. Yet all He got was wild grapes, inedible sour grapes, not the sweet grapes. This was a prophetic picture of Israel and their rebellion and unfaithfulness.

Isaiah had the unenviable task of preaching judgment to his own people. The people had rejected their God and forced the judgment on themselves. However, one of the blessings Isaiah received in doing this task was to be able to see into the future. He foresaw that a remnant of Israel would remain faithful and would return from captivity. He also foresaw that from that remnant would come the Messiah, the Savior of mankind. What joy it must have been to Isaiah then to look ahead and see a portion of his people remaining dependent upon and faithful to the LORD Jehovah. He also saw that other nations and people would come and become followers of the LORD God.

Although Isaiah saw true future events, those events were mixed or overlaid one on the other. We have mentioned this before when looking at Old Testament prophesy. Isaiah's perspective was like viewing a mountain range from the distance. From a distance it appears to be one mountain, but when you get closer you can see the foothills separate from the many mountains far off miles away. Such was the case with Isaiah's prophecies.

In the midst of prophecies against Assyria, Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Israel, Ethiopia, Egypt, Shebna and Tyre which would be in the near future, the LORD gives Isaiah prophetic glimpses of the ushering in of the New Testament era many years later. He also was given a prophetic look at the judgment upon the whole world more years later at the end of time and the ushering of the believers into the heavenly banquet in eternity, events which still haven't come to pass yet.

We have entitled our theme:

**HERE IS THE BEST MEAL WE WILL EVER EAT**

We asked earlier, "What is your favorite food?" The Lord in the first verse of our text lists some scrumptious food. We read verse 6: **AND IN THIS MOUNTAIN THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL MAKE FOR ALL PEOPLE A FEAST OF CHOICE PIECES, A FEAST OF WINES ON THE LEES, OF FAT THINGS FULL OF MARROW, OF WELL-REFINED WINES ON THE LEES.** Another translation has these words: **"AND THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL MAKE FOR ALL PEOPLES A FEAST OF DELICACIES ON THIS MOUNTAIN, A FEAST OF WINE WELL AGED, OF DELICACIES RICH IN MARROW, OF WINE POURED OFF CLEAR FROM ITS SETTLEMENTS."**

In Old Testament times, fat was especially prized as a delicacy. The people looked upon the fat of meat and the marrow of the bone as especially good for their nutrition. In fact they would break open the bones left from the meal to get at the marrow and eat it. The wine for this feast is well aged and therefore at the peak of good flavor. It literally was **POURED OFF CLEAR FROM ITS SETTLEMENTS**, which means it was allowed to age long, but guarded in the pouring of it so as to not make it murky with the settlements. Only the choicest of meat and wine is served.

What does all of this mean? This verse praises God for the richness of His grace in the spiritual food that He has prepared for us in the Gospel and for the spiritual banquet we will receive someday in eternity. Full forgiveness in Christ, peace and joy are all described as choice meats and well aged wine for us to eat and to drink.

**I: THIS MEAL IS GUARANTEED BY THE LORD.**

He has prepared this meal for us. He has sent His Son. Jesus has earned our salvation through His perfect life and atoning death. His resurrection assures us of a resurrection to eternal life. He now rules over all things. This message of our salvation **IS** that spiritual meal which we are to inwardly

digest. It is the best meal we will ever eat.

The Lord didn't demand of us to do good, be good and thereby earn salvation by our own efforts, by providing our own food. This is impossible for us and for all of mankind. God's Law clearly shows us our many, many sins in thought, word and deed. God's Law condemns us, it does not give us the power to live perfectly.

But the Lord has already provided for us our salvation, a meal has already been made. The Gospel tells us of God's great love that chose to sacrifice His Son for us on the cross. The Gospel clearly declares "eat of this food and live forever." In The New Testament Jesus called it the Bread of Life and the Water of Life. Here it is described as meat and wine.

How sad that the majority of the world spend their time in making and eating their own meals. They think that they can spiritually provide for themselves by what they do, by their own works, but in reality their meals are no more nutritious spiritually than a meal of sawdust would be nutritious physically. It is foolishness and deadly. It is only dry in the mouth and leads to starvation. God has already provided and guaranteed the meal that gives life: The Good News of Jesus perfect life, suffering, death and resurrection.

We read in verses 7-8 **AND HE WILL DESTROY ON THIS MOUNTAIN THE SURFACE OF THE COVERING CAST OVER ALL PEOPLE, AND THE VEIL THAT IS SPREAD OVER ALL NATIONS. HE WILL SWALLOW UP DEATH FOREVER, AND THE LORD GOD WILL WIPE AWAY TEARS FROM ALL FACES; THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE HE WILL TAKE AWAY FROM ALL THE EARTH; FOR THE LORD HAS SPOKEN.**

Did you notice all of the pronouns?-- **HE WILL DESTROY; HE WILL SWALLOW UP; HE WILL WIPE AWAY; HE WILL TAKE AWAY.** It is all done by Him, by God.

## **II: THIS MEAL IS PAID FOR BY HIM.**

It is **HE FOR US.** The covering and the veil that is spread over all nations is spiritual ignorance brought about by our natural depravity. Because of our inborn sin we do not have the ability by nature to know the only true God and what He has done for us. It is like a heavy veil over our eyes or a sheet covering our faces.

Yes, man by nature, from conscience and creation, knows that God exists, but he has no way of knowing who that God is or what God has done for him without the powerful Word. In his spiritual ignorance man believes that he can somehow work or earn his way into God's presence. In his spiritual blindness unbelieving man trusts that salvation is within his grasp, if he works hard enough at it.

God has removed that veil and that covering from off our eyes and filled us with insight, spiritual insight to know Him as the Triune God and to trust in His work of salvation for us. He has taken away all of our sins by placing them on His Son. Jesus paid the awful price of damnation that we should have paid. Sin has been paid for, death has been destroyed and Satan has been conquered.

Isaiah uses the picture of death being swallowed up, so that it no longer exists. Paul uses that same term in I Cor. 15:54 where he writes; **SO WHEN THIS CORRUPTIBLE HAS PUT ON INCORRUPTION, AND THIS MORTAL HAS PUT ON IMMORTALITY, THEN SHALL BE BROUGHT TO PASS THE SAYING THAT IS WRITTEN: DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.** If death is swallowed up then all that is left is life. Paul goes on to say in I Cor. 15:55-57 **"O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING? O GRAVE, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY?" THE STING OF DEATH IS SIN, AND THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW. BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

Next follows one of the most tender passages in all of Scripture: **AND THE LORD GOD WILL WIPE AWAY TEARS FROM ALL FACES:** This phrase is repeated twice in the last book of the Bible, in Rev. 7:17 and 21:4 where we read: **FOR THE LAMB WHO IS IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE WILL SHEPHERD THEM AND LEAD THEM TO LIVING FOUNTAINS OF WATERS. AND GOD WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES.....(21:4)AND GOD WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES; THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH, NOR SORROW, NOR CRYING; AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE PAIN, FOR THE FORMER THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY.**

Jesus shed tears of sorrow when Lazarus died. He knows our grief and suffering. What an

amazing, tender picture of our Lord bending down and reaching out to us and wiping away all of our tears with His redeeming, comforting love. No more guilt, no more sadness, no more suffering, no more pain, no more sickness, no more need for repentance, no more death. Once the unchangeable Lord acts and Judgment Day arrives, there is no return to the old state of things. The Lord declares in Rev. 21:5 **BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.**

This is not the promise for those in other religions. Death for the Hindu and the millions who are caught up in the Eastern religions is just a chance to try again and again, strapped with another lifetime of burden and pain attempting to remove their own guilt and become better and better until perfection is reached through multitudes of reincarnations.

Not so with our God. When He has removed the rebuke of the Law, that is the disgrace of sin from us, the act is done, once for all. For **THE LORD HAS SPOKEN!**

That brings us to the last point.

### **III: EVEN THE THOUGHT OF THIS MEAL SATISFIES US.**

We read verse 9 **AND IT WILL BE SAID IN THAT DAY; “BEHOLD, THIS IS OUR GOD; WE HAVE WAITED FOR HIM, AND HE WILL SAVE US. THIS IS THE LORD; WE HAVE WAITED FOR HIM; WE WILL BE GLAD AND REJOICE IN HIS SALVATION.”** How do we react to this great salvation of ours? Isaiah tells us, simply **WAIT ON THE LORD;** that is trust in Him and **BE GLAD AND REJOICE.**

God’s people trusted in Him and were saved. Our joy is in His salvation. It is not that he saved us because we trusted in Him but, rather, because He saved us we trust in Him. Just thinking of the many things that God has accomplished for us in Christ and what great blessings He will give us in eternity calls for jubilant praise.

The main point of this section of scripture is that our salvation is certain. The people of Israel rejected God and in so doing typified all people. In spite of being rejected by His people, God had mercy on them and brought back a remnant to the promised land. The Lord’s mercy and grace for all of mankind led Him to send His Son, our Savior, Jesus into this world to secure for all of mankind salvation, redemption, being bought back from sin, death, Satan and hell.

Christ has removed our guilt, shame and sin and He took the punishment of death upon Himself. And it is He who will give us the undeserved blessings of eternal happiness, peace and joy. God has promised it and it is as good as done. He confirms the peace that now already exists between us and Him by a scrumptious feast in heaven.

Why would He treat us slaves so royally? Because He has taken away everything wrong between us and Him and has swallowed up death. How can we not but praise His name and eagerly wait for His coming?

Some of you may be going out to eat this afternoon at a nice restaurant. Others of you may have a tasty meal already cooking in your oven or will make one later today. But, you know that the best meal you will ever eat, you have already tasted and digested. The Good News of our salvation, prepared for us by Christ and fed to us in His Word.

What a blessing that the best is yet to come. The greatest meal of eternal life is ours to enjoy forever.

Amen.

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