

Introduction

- Judgement on the eve of Christmas?
 - completion of the series, completion of the work of Christ
 - at best a final introduction to the one who came!

Exposition

(1) Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendour, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save."

- Edom - long-term enemy of Israel:
 - nation whose identity is tied up with Esau, Jacob's older brother, the one rejected by God
 - Bozrah is its capital city
 - over time Edom and Bozrah become code words for anyone or anything displaying a deep-seated animosity towards the Lord and his people
- Picture we have then is of watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem, perhaps, looking out at one approaching:
 - but not understanding what they see: "who is this?"
 - they are looking out for king or servant, the established figures in Isaiah - and they see something else
- A vivid, striking figure, robed in crimson, robed in splendour, with the impression of majesty, of strength, of greatness
(remember that Esau, the first twin, is described as red, and Edom is another way of saying "red")
 - so there's a play on words going on here - almost as if to say, "where else but in the red land would you get robes as red as these?"
- And the question of the watchmen is answered:
 - it is I, speaking"
 - when the anointed one is introduced back in 59:21, he is one endued with the Spirit and word; he exercised a ministry of the word on the day of vengeance and salvation that we explored in 61:1 and he vowed not to be silent till Jerusalem's righteousness & salvation blazes for all to see
 - and so again he comes speaking
- He comes to report what his final action has been, he comes to report with integrity, as one whose righteousness is intact, but most of all as one who has acted in salvation, acted to save
 - indeed, mighty to save

(2) Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the wine-press?

- Question comes again: how do you explain the red stains? Have you been in the wine-press?
 - you say you are a speaker, but no amount of speaking would stain your garments red!
(incidentally, Bozrah means wine-press - where else would you tread grapes but in the wine-press city...)

(3) "I have trodden the wine-press alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing."

- Anointed One adopts this motif of the wine-press to explain:
 - note again that, even as there was a stress on the solitary-ness of the servant, that he alone saved, so there is a stress again that the whole work of judgement belongs to him, to Jesus (see also v.5)
 - note again the poetic emphasis through repetition: (a) trampled in anger, (b) trod in wrath; (a) blood on garments, (b) stain on clothing
 - he has been exposed to defilement, his clothing is stained - and yet he himself is undefiled (v.1, righteous!)

(4) For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come.

- Here is the core of the explanation:
 - there were offences and offenders who aroused **vengeance**
 - there is also the thought that something needed done for "my redeemed ones" (not "my redemption"); their year has come
 - they already possess their redeemed status, and the Lord acts in this way **because** they are his redeemed, **not to make them so**
 - In Isaiah telling of the story, redemption was accomplished in chp.53, the suffering servant; but from 56:1 onwards God's people are called upon to **wait** for the promised salvation; here its coming is announced, and subsequently spelled out through the remaining chapters of the book
- The work that Jesus began during his earthly ministry, that reached its culmination on the Cross, is not yet fulfilled:
 - careful with language here; Cross is final work of salvation, but this consequence is not yet accomplished in our experience
 - there are final consequences for those who reject Christ;
 - there is a dreadful reality to the seriousness of sin;
 - the Bible consistently uses language of wrath, of anger, images of vengeance and punishment that we may sometimes find disturbing or off-putting, and yet that language is there.
- This judgement also marks the time at which "the year of the redeemed" comes into fulfillment
 - our year, our time - our full experience of salvation will only come when sin is dealt with!

(5) I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm worked salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me.

- Reiteration for emphasis of the importance of fact that all this is achieved by Jesus alone

(6) I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."

- Drunk - on cup of God's wrath (see 51:17, 21-22)
 - standing behind the whole suffering servant passage in Isaiah 53 is the thought of God's wrath, his implacable anger towards and hatred of sin;
 - so when the servant suffers there as punishment for our sins, as he receives lashes (stripes) that heal us, he is drinking at the cup of God's wrath - though Isaiah doesn't use that particular image there
 - so thought here is: if you haven't allowed the servant to drink this cup for you, then you will have to drink it yourself... and it will make you "drunk", stagger, it will overcome you, its too strong for you!
- Blood poured on the ground implies that living entity can never be reconstituted, its really utterly destroyed.

Conclusion

- Come and complete your work Lord!
 - take away the captivity and suffering that still mars the in-between time in which we live
- **Arise and shine!!!! Isaiah 60...**