

"THE STABILITY OF YOUR TIMES"

Isaiah 33:5-6

INTRODUCTION:

- A. We face many disturbing things in life: many common in every age: Sickness; Death; Natural disasters Job 14:1 Some peculiar to our day: threat of terrorism; nuclear war; environmental pollution; Inflation; recession; unemployment; aids; cancer; heart disease; road rage; drive-by shootings; contagious diseases; etc., etc.
- B. Such things effect us in different ways: some, anxiety and fear; others with depression (our age has been called the "age of anxiety" and "age of the neurosis") Christians can be affected: may murmur; complain or simply exist in state of "joylessness"
- C. Yet some are not disturbed by such things, even though they experience the same things which devastate others
 - 1. Same financial crises, diseases, uncertainties, etc. yet still find cause for joy and stability in their lives!
 - 2. Why the different reaction? Is there some source of strength some have found others have not?
 - 3. The LORD provides stability for troubled times! Isa 33:6
- F. **(Title)** The unstable condition of our time are not that much different from Isaiah's day. The same help is available.

DISCUSSION:

I. IN THE DAYS OF ISAIAH

- A. Around 700 B.C. kingdom of Judah was facing perilous times; Assyria was advancing, conquering kingdom after kingdom; the kingdom of Israel was taken into captivity
- B. As Assyria drew near Jerusalem, the people were undecided where to turn; some said give up to Assyrians; others looked to an alliance with Egypt to save them 2Ki 18:21; Isa 31:3, 6
- C. Isaiah says do neither; the key to salvation is to trust the Lord to provide the stability needed, when all seems lost
- D. Isa 33:5-6 exhorts put trust in Lord: **NKJV** speaks of wisdom and knowledge as "the stability of your times"; of course, it is wisdom and knowledge of Lord spoken of here. **(NASB)**: "He shall be the stability of your times" **(NIV)**: "He shall be the sure foundation of your times"
- E. Years from Isaiah's days: counsel still true! In troubled times, Lord provides "The Stability Of Your Times"!

II. STABILITY PROVIDED BY THE LORD

- A. Comes through wisdom and knowledge: "Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times" **(NKJV)**
 - 1. Helps us face life: guiding & protecting from life's pitfalls Pro 2:6-22; gives comfort & confidence in times of turmoil Pro 3:21-26

- 2. God provides wisdom if we look to Him Jas 1:5-8 (wisdom = knowledge + experience and prayer)
- B. Through salvation: "the strength of salvation" **(NKJV)**
 - 1. Salvation of Lord helps us face death: by knowing Lord saves, we can face circumstances of life
 - 2. Paul had a strong hope 2Cor 5:1,5-8; his attitude as a result of that hope 2Cor 4:16-18; Rom 8:31-39
- C. Wisdom, knowledge, and salvation provide the stability needed! Wisdom and knowledge provide the stability to face life, salvation provides the stability to face death. a "wealth" **(NASB)**, a "rich store" **(NIV)**

III. THE KEY TO THIS STABILITY

- A. It is "the fear of the Lord" - **NIV**: "the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure" (reverence, respect, awe)
 - 1. Fear of the Lord is essential to wisdom & knowledge
 - a. It is "the beginning of knowledge" Pro 1:7
 - b. It is "the beginning of wisdom" Pro 9:10
 - 2. Fear of Lord essential to receiving salvation
 - a. Necessary to be accepted by God Acts 10:34-35
 - b. Message of salvation given to those who have it Acts 13:26
 - c. It is necessary for spiritual growth Phil 2:12
- B. Why the fear of the Lord is necessary
 - 1. By it one departs from evil Pro 16:6
 - a. Reverence for God and His righteous judgments is an effective motivation
 - b. By departing from evil, we turn to God!
 - 2. "In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence...a place of refuge" Pro 14:26
 - a. When we turn to God, the fear of the Lord becomes a source of great blessings!
 - b. Such as wisdom, knowledge, salvation, confidence, refuge; indeed "the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life"! Pro 14:27

CONCLUSION:

- A. The essence of our study is this: Those who lack stability in troubled times do so because they lack the wisdom, knowledge, and salvation of the Lord. They lack these things because they do not have the fear of the Lord!
- B. A proper fear of the Lord would prompt them to turn from evil and turn to God; where they would find His knowledge, wisdom, and salvation, which in turn would provide "The Stability Of Your Times" **(God's Promise #369 songs of the church not in our book) - Verse 1 - Verse 2 - Verse 3**
- C. With such stability, we can rightly say along with the writer to the Hebrews: Heb 13:6
- D. Won't you let the Lord provide you with the stability you need for these troubled times?

(Mark A. Copeland slightly revised by JLH)