

Isaiah's Gospel

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[0 : 00] I would like to call your attention this morning to the chapter that we have just read together in the prophecies of Isaiah and the first chapter.

The prophecies of Isaiah chapter 1 and we might read again from verse Mark 16. The 16th verse. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with a sword. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Now we can see from these words that Judah had sinned very greatly and very grievously.

And the nature of their sin is outlined here by the prophet. They have rebelled against God and they have turned their backs upon him.

[1 : 39] And the prophet is calling them in verse 16. Wash you, make you clean. Put away the evil of your doings.

And so the prophet is calling the people to repentance. And to faith and trust in God.

And to renewed obedience. And in these words we have the gospel according to Isaiah.

And he is just stating the good news of the gospel of the grace of God. And of course when God comes to us with good news.

He prefaces the good news with a demand for a return to himself. And God demands us. He demands of us that we wash ourselves and make ourselves clean.

[2 : 44] And we are to put away the evil of our doings from before the eye of God. And every gospel sermon requires that we put into practice and exercise that repentance that God requires of us.

And repentance is just simply turning away from our former ways of sin and ungodliness.

And returning to the ways of righteousness and goodness. And that's just simply what Isaiah is calling upon these people in ancient times to do.

They are to put away their sin. And they are to come to God with sorrow in their hearts. And with tears in their eyes.

And with vows and resolutions never to return to sinful ways and practices anymore. And this is just simply what the gospel requires.

[3 : 53] The gospel requires of us that we turn away from our sinful ways. We are to make our ways clean and pure.

We are to wash and make ourselves clean. And put away the evil of our doings. The figure is that of the person who is walking in the wrong direction.

And who is advised by a counselor to return and retrace his footsteps. Because he is going in the wrong direction.

And how often we find in the Old Testament the prophets calling upon the people. Return. Return.

And the gospel is the same today.

It's the same call today. Return. Return to the Lord. Now then there are two opposite things in the text. There is the sinfulness of the people.

[4 : 58] For example. And there is the holiness of God. The righteousness of God. And there is the sinfulness of the people.

And so we see the nature of our sin. It is a rebelling against God. As the prophet says in verse 2. I have nourished and brought up children.

And they have rebelled against me. The nature of our sin is explained here in our text. As being rebellion against God.

Rebellion against God. This is the sin of our nature. And it is the nature of our sin to rebel against God. And every one of us born in this world.

Our born rebels. We all want to do our own thing. We all want to go our own way. We all want to please ourselves. But the word of God.

[6 : 00] And God in his word. Calls us. To forsake our own way. Because our own way. Invariably. And inevitably. Is a way of sin.

And a way of death. And therefore the Lord in his great mercy. Is calling upon sinners everywhere. To return. To turn around.

Epistrepho. To turn around. And to retrace our footsteps. To turn around. We're walking away from God. We've turned our back upon God. And we're walking away from God.

And God is saying to us. Don't turn your back on me. Don't turn your back on me. Doesn't the Lord in the Song of Songs says.

Let me see thy face. Let me hear thy voice. For thy face is beautiful. And thy voice is sweet.

[6 : 55] The Lord wants us. To turn to him. With our whole hearts. He wants us to face him. He wants us to look upon him.

And in turning. And in looking to him. In that moment. The Lord makes us beautiful. In that moment of turning.

The Lord makes us beautiful. In conversion. In regeneration. And in conversion. And in turning. That's what turning means.

Means regeneration. It means conversion. And in that moment. Of conversion. The Lord places upon his people. His own beauty.

His own righteousness. His own holiness. And in that moment. Of conversion. The people who once were walking away from God. With their back to our God.

[7 : 52] In that moment of turning. That person is made beautiful. In the beauty of the Lord. As the psalmist prayed.

And let the beauty of the Lord. Our God be upon us. So we have here the nature of our sin. It is rebellion.

It is defiance of God. It is a turning the back. To God. And not the face. It is a walking away from God. And the Lord is pleading.

With us. And saying to us. Come now. Let us reason together. Says the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet. They shall be. As white as wool.

Though they be red like crimson. They shall be as wool. Though they be red like crimson. They shall be as wool. Understanding the depths.

[8 : 51] And the deepness. Of the dye. Of your sin. The Lord is calling you today. To turn back. And away from it. In verse 3.

The Lord highlights. The madness of our sin. Verse 3. The ox knoweth his owner. And he has his master's crib.

But Israel doth not know. My people doth not consider. You see. The Lord is saying. Even the brute beasts. Have some understanding. About their environment.

They have some understanding. About who holds them. And about where they live. And where they get their food. Even the brute beasts. Know these things.

By instinct. And yet. My people. Doth not consider. My people don't consider. Who they are. What they are.

[9 : 50] Where they are. Where they are. Where they are going. What they are doing. My people do not consider. They are just like the brute beasts. They are worse than the brute beasts.

Because the brute beasts. Know. Who is their master. And they know. Where they get their food. And shelter. But my people.

Don't realize. They don't consider this. That I am the one. That provides their food. And clothing. And their shelter. And housing. My people don't understand.

They are worse than the brute beasts. Now it is not me that is saying that. It is God that is saying that. As you can see from this third verse. It is God that is saying. The nature of our sin.

Is this awfulness. This awful ignorance. Ignorance of God. And then he goes on to describe their sin.

[10 : 45] Even further. In verse 6. From the sole of the foot. Even under the head. There is no soundness in it. But wounds and bruises. And putrefying sores. They have not been closed.

Neither bound up. Neither mollified. With ointment. Yes. Yes. This is the nature. Of our sin. Full of wounds and bruises.

And putrefying sores. They will revolt.

More and more. In verse 4. They have provoked. The Holy One of Israel. Into anger. And they have gone away. Backward.

Ah sinful nation. A people laden with iniquity. A seed of evildoers. Children and their corruptors. They have forsaken the Lord. They have provoked. The Holy One of Israel.

[11:41] Into anger. They have gone away. Backward. Gone away. Backward. From following. The Lord. And that is how it is. People who have been brought up.

In the church. People who have. Been born of godly parents. And who have forsaken. The way. Of godliness. And they have turned their back.

Upon God. They are saying. As the psalmist says. In the second psalm. Let us asunder. Break their bands. And cast their cords. From us. Oh there is no stopping.

The departing. The backsliding sinner. Who wants to break the bands. Of God's common love. And provision. And cast away the cords. Of promised grace.

And mercy. Why it is the backslider. It is the one who is a rebel. At heart. Oh what perverseness. We are guilty of. We revolt.

[12:36] More and more. As Jeremiah says. In vain have I smitten your children. They receive not correction. And you know how the writer to the Hebrews tells us.

Despise thou not the chastening of the Lord. Nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. This rebellion against God.

Then leads to total depravity. Leads to total depravity. Of her spiritual nature. From the soul of the foot. Even to the head.

There is no sickness. Full of wounds and bruises. And putrefying souls. The head. The head.

The intellect. The seat of. Of the knowledge. The head. The mind. Were full of errors.

[13:32] Concerning God. Full of lies. Concerning themselves. And that's how the ungodly are. They are full of ignorance of God. And full of ignorance.

And concerning themselves. Their heads are corrupt. The minds. Full of error and lies. Calling that which is good.

Evil. Calling the law of God. Evil. And calling the gospel. Evil. Calling the commandments. Evil. Calling that which is good.

Evil. And calling that which is evil. Good. That's the nature of. Our perversion. Our ignorance.

And defiance. And rebellion. Calling good. Evil. And calling. Evil. Good. Good. Good. Good. And Peter tells us. That in the last times.

[14:28] Desperate times. The last times will be desperate times. When there shall be introduced into the Christian church. To honorable heresies.

Lies. Lies. Lies. That is. When the preachers of the word of God. And the custodians of the gospel. Will introduce lies. And errors. Into their teaching. The whole heart is faint.

From the sole of the foot. Even to the head. There is no soundness. No sound understanding. Of the law of God. No sound understanding. Of the gospel of God.

No sound understanding. Of the person of God. No sound understanding. Of the nature of man. His sinfulness. As a rebel. Against God.

[15:26] No soundness. But wounds. And bruises. And putrefying sores. They have not been closed. Neither burned up. Neither mollified. With mind. The whole heart.

And the head. Is sick. Verse 5. The whole head. Is sick. And the whole heart. Is faint. What an awful.

An awfully black picture. Isaiah's painting here. Of us. As we are by nature. Full of putrefying sores. Spiritual diseases. And spiritual sicknesses. You know how the psalmist complains of his spiritual diseases.

He says in the 38th Psalm. That my wounds do stink and are corrupt. My folly makes it so. Yes. And these are wounds and bruises that we have received.

[16:24] Because of our rebellion against God. And because of the corruption that follows upon all such rebellion. And these wounds and bruises cannot be healed by the art of man.

There is nothing can heal. These wounds and bruises. But the blood of Jesus Christ. God's son. When the spirit leaves our body.

We die. And the body putrefies. And decomposes. And when sinners forsake God. The fountain of life. The powers of death go to work. And to forsake God.

Is to love death. But then we have the prescription of remedy. In verse 18.

Come now and let us reason together. Says the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet. No matter how deeply dive your sin may be. Come and let us reason together.

[17 : 23] So we have here a merciful offer. Secondly. And these words show the merciful nature of God. Whom we despised and rejected.

For while we were yet sinners. In due time Christ died for the ungodly. Yes. While we were yet sinners. Christ died for the ungodly.

A demonstration of God's good will. Come now. And let us reason together. Don't be so brutish. As not to come and discuss this with me. I know you have rebelled against me. And sinned grievously and heinously.

Nevertheless. Come and discuss it with me. Come and talk to me about it. All the long suffering. The infinite goodness and grace and mercy.

[18 : 23] Of the Lord our God. In the midst of our sin and rebellion. In the midst of our corruption and defilement. The Lord is bending and say. Bending down to us and saying to us.

I know you are in a dreadful state. But come and talk to me about it. Come and talk to me about it. What he is saying is.

Don't be unreasonable. Don't be unreasonable. Even the brute beasts know their masters. And they know where to get food and shelter. Don't be like them. I have made you rational creatures.

Moral creatures. Responsible. Accountable creatures. Therefore. Come and talk to me about it. Come and talk to me about it. Don't be unreasonable.

You can't reason with beasts. Beasts don't reason things out. But you are rational creatures. Come and talk to me about it. As he says by this prophet elsewhere.

[19 : 26] Now is the accepted time. Behold today is the day of salvation. Yes. I have sent you the word of my grace. I have sent you my son. The eternal logos.

I have sent you the personal word. I have sent you the written word. And I have sent you the spoken word.

There are these three aspects of the word of God. There is the personal word which is Jesus. The eternal rationality of God. And there is the word that stands written.

The logos. And there is the word that is preached. The chrema. The word that is preached. The spoken word. What more could I do than I have done?

Complains the Lord. Come now. The Lord says. And let us reason together. I have given you general revelation of myself in creation.

[20 : 32] And I have given you a special revelation of myself in the word as it stands written. And in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I have given you a revelation of myself in the preaching of the word.

The prodigal father has the best robe for his prodigal son. And God has the robe of Jesus' perfect righteousness to offer and to give every returning prodigal.

Come now. Let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet. They shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson. They shall be as wool.

But in this gospel of Isaiah. As in the gospel of Christ.

There is not only a word of invitation. And a word of provision. And a word of pardon. But there is also a word of threatening. And we have that in verse 20.

[21 : 42] But if ye refuse and rebel. Ye shall be devoured with the sword. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. And verse 28.

And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together. And they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed. Now there is also this terrible judgment of God that we have to reckon with.

In the offer of grace and salvation. It is an offer of grace and salvation against the background of awful judgment.

And the terrible consequences of refusing the offers of mercy and grace. God is saying to you. Be reasonable. Come and talk to me about it.

The fact is. You are a rebel. The fact is. You are a stranger to grace and to God. The fact is. You are corrupt. You are defiled. You are loathsome.

[22 : 43] You are disgusting. That's the fact of the matter. The whole head is sick. From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. There is nothing in it but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.

That's the fact of the matter concerning you. And if you don't turn. If you don't turn from your evil ways.

Verse 16. Wash you. Make you clean. Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. Seek judgment.

Relieve the oppressed. Judge the fatherless. Plead for the... See all these verbs. See all these verbs. You've got to realize that you're a sinner.

That you are in need of salvation. That you must turn from your sin with grief and hatred towards God in Christ. And you must listen to the overtures of God's grace in his word.

[23 : 50] Come now. Let us reason together. And you must realize that if you don't turn. Then God is going to visit you with terrible judgment. And nobody will escape.

Nobody will escape. And if people persist in their sin and rebellion. And on the great day of judgment. God will say to all these people.

I pled with you. I besought you. I encouraged you. I said to you. Let's be reasonable. Come and talk to me about it.

Because I sent my son into the world to die for sinners such as you. And I have made provision for sinners such as you. And you refuse to receive my son.

You refuse to receive my salvation. That is in my son. And therefore because you have refused me and rejected me.

[24 : 52] I am now going to refuse you. And I am going to reject you. Because you cast me away. I am going to cast you away out of my sight forever.

Into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And you are going to suffer that weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

In the face of verse 18 of Isaiah chapter 1. And you will remember that the Lord said to you. Come now and let us reason together.

Sayeth the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet. They shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson. They shall be as wool. And you will remember that the Spirit of God. From the Word of God.

In the midst of the people of God. On the holy day of God. By the ministry of the Word of God. You refused. You refused to turn from your evil ways.

[25 : 55] You refused to wash you and to make you clean. And you refused to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. For salvation. So we have the Gospel of Isaiah in this first chapter.

We have the Gospel of Christ according to Isaiah in this first chapter of his prophecies. We have a description. A character description of all the children of men by nature.

And we have the command of God. Addressed to all men everywhere. In these words of verse 16. Wash you. Make you clean.

Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. Seek judgment. Relieve the oppressed. Judge the fatherless. Plead for the widow.

And then. Come now. And let us reason together. You are to put away your sins. You are to do it. You are to cease from your evil ways.

[26 : 57] And you are to learn to do well. And you are to come to the Lord for pardon and for cleansing. And for life and for salvation.

The Lord places the onus. The responsibility fairly and squarely upon you. And he will demand of you. On the great day of judgment.

Why was it. That you never obeyed. My voice. Why did you not hearken and regard. Why did you not render obedience. God is indeed.

Infinite in all his perfections. Including his love and mercy and grace. But he is also infinite. In his holiness and righteousness and justice.

And though hand be joined in hand. The wicked will not go unpunished. Ah we say that there is safety.

[28 : 03] In a multitude. We say there is safety. In a multitude. In a multitude. But ah though. We are part of a multitude of sinners and transgressors.

Who have not turned from sin. And though we be hand. No hand be joined in hand. Yet the wicked will not go unpunished. No. We are born as individuals.

We live as individuals. We die as individuals. We appear before the throne of judgment. As individuals. And we will give an account to him. Of all our thoughts and words.

Didn't Jesus say. Man shall give an account on that day. Of every idle word. Man will give an account of every idle word.

Not just simply every sinful word. But every unprofitable word. Every foolish. Every idle word. Ah let me remind you from God's word this morning.

[29 : 12] If you reject God and his mercy. God will reject you and his judgment. God will reject you and his judgment. Ah these are solemn things.

These are solemn things. Amen. Men are the same today. As there were in Isaiah's time. Sin is the same today.

As it was in Isaiah's time. Rebellion is the same today. As it was in Isaiah's time. God is the same today. As he was in Isaiah's time. The word of God is the same today.

As it was in Isaiah's time. The promises of God are the same today. As there were in Isaiah's time.

The law of God is the same today. As it was in Isaiah's time. people live as though there were no God people live as though there were no heaven to gain and no hell to shun people are the same today as they were in Isaiah's time come now let us reason together saith the Lord though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool mercy and judgment those two great things that always they always go together in the word of God they always go together as Jesus places them together in the bed of scripture he says he that believeth shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be done so we have salvation and damnation in the bed of scripture in the same text in the same word we have promise promise of life and salvation and we have threatening of death and damnation and any gospel service sermon that doesn't include those two things is not a gospel service not a gospel sermon our consciences testify to the validity of that truth our consciences corroborate the validity of this truth that that mercy and judgment go together and this is what the psalmist says

I will sing of mercy and of judgment take this text home with you then come now and let us reason together says the Lord though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as wool though they be red like crimson as white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool Amen and may the Lord bless our meditation let us pray we pray that thou would have mercy upon us that thou would show us our ignorance and show us our foolishness and show us thy glory and show us thy son the Lord Jesus Christ and give us grace that we might be reasonable and come and talk to thee about our sin because thou hast dealt with our sins in the Lord

[33 : 01] Jesus Christ thou hast put away our sin we pray that therefore thou will help us to come to thee to receive thy forgiveness and pardon give us that repentance never to be repented of that godly sorrow that is necessary in order for putting away our sin and for returning to the Lord our God who will have mercy upon us for Jesus sake Amen I'll sing together in conclusion Psalm 145 the second version to be