

The Anger of God Has Not Turned Away His Hand is Still Outstretched (Slide1)

Reading: Isaiah 59:1-8

1 Peter 4:12-19 (Slide 2)

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. (Slide 3) 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. (Slide 4) 17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner? 19 Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

We live in a time where most people either don't believe there is an Almighty God or they clearly have no understanding regarding who God is and the nature of His wrath and His expectation for His people so that they avoid His wrath. Therefore, many misunderstand God by claiming that He is only Loving and Merciful. In fact, they bank on that, so to speak, for the sake of their eternity.

Most deny or simply don't believe in God's wrath. They undermine His "just nature" by claiming He is a God of Love who would not destroy His creation in eternal destruction. That idea would make sense if we never take in account His Grace, (unmerited favor, giving us what we don't deserve) and the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Simply put, without wrath there wouldn't need to be grace or sacrifice!

What would we need to be saved from? The standpoint in which many view God makes no logical sense. Even, and obviously so, from His nature in regards to spiritual relations with His creation and the creation itself.

Many have departed, even those in the Lord's brotherhood, from those who anticipate His return and His saving grace. This is a devastating position of which many now walk.

Philippians 3:17-21 (Slide 5)

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, (Slide 6) who set their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

This is happening now in our present time as it happened in Paul's time and as it did in the days of Isaiah. It is a misguided conclusion that many have derived in human terms, namely, that God will not execute destruction on Humanity.

Isaiah 9:8-12 (Slide 7)

8 The Lord sends a message against Jacob, And it falls on Israel. 9 And all the people know it, That is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, Asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart: 10 "The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with smooth stones; The sycamores have been cut down, But we will replace them with cedars."

(Slide 8) 11 Therefore the Lord raises against them adversaries from Rezin And spurs their enemies on, 12 The Arameans on the east and the Philistines on the west; And they devour Israel with gaping jaws. In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away And His hand is still stretched out.

In our last lesson we learned that despite the calamity all around them, a remnant held dear to God and God held them dear to Himself. He Holds them up in spite of the many who rebel against Him.

Isaiah 10:20-22 (Slide 9)

20 Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. 21 A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. (Slide 10) 22 For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, Only a remnant within them will return; A destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.

The remnant will return to God and rely on Him and Him only. But what of the others?

Last week we also learned that Judah had sinned, Jerusalem had sinned, the nations about them had sinned. In Chapter 9 of Isaiah he points out their sin.

(Slide 11) Asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart!

They think so highly of themselves that His word has no effect on them. His judgements do not phase them nor do they cause them to change. This is the handiwork of arrogance and pride.

(Slide 12) *"The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with smooth stones; The sycamores have been cut down, But we will replace them with cedars."*

In their feeble minds they think they can do better than God. That they know more than God. Their arrogance will be their downfall.

(Slide 13) His anger does not turn away And His hand is still stretched out!

They trust in themselves so much that they feel they can rebuild anything and make it better than it was in the beginning. This applies to the commandments that God has given men to follow. They are led away from God because of their arrogance and narcissism. Much like many with weak

faith, allow themselves to be led astray by some of our leadership today who are in outright rebellion against God.

They suggest that we don't need to surrender any of our religious values to embrace policies that support abortion or equity that relates to transgenderism. Sometimes just hearing such rhetoric causes some to compromise their beliefs.

And don't think that it is impossible for some of these depraved ideological concepts to leak into the brotherhood as it has in the denominational world. Many falsehoods have already risen and caused many to become disqualified in the sight of God.

John writes in 2 John about the antichrist, which many believe is some type of monster, when in truth the antichrist is anyone who denies Christ Jesus. That denier is eerily similar to someone who practices deception, who doesn't outright deny Christ, using words that sound appealing and truthful but are in reality misleading.

2 John 1:7-11 (Slide 14)

*7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 **Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.** 9 **Anyone** who goes too far and does not abide in the*

*(Slide 15) teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 10 **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting;** 11 **for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.***

Psalm 119:9 (Slide 16)

*How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your word.*

How can anyone keep himself pure? Follow God and Him only. Don't hearken to the arrogance of someone else.

Confidence and self-reliance was always a problem with the Jewish people in Bible times. When they tried to save themselves they failed, time and time again. Today we understand:

Ephesians 2:8-9 (Slide 17)

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

He says rely on me. Trust in me. Have confidence in me. When we accomplish something, anything, we need to remember it was by the grace of God that we had the opportunity.

(Slide 18) Arrogance will cause the death of many!

Today's definition of arrogance applies to these people as much as it does now. The term arrogance can be defined as having an exaggerated sense of one's importance or abilities that make him feel that he is better than everyone else.

I want you to see arrogance in action in the sense that one would have an overinflated opinion of themselves and feel superior.

In Acts Chapter 12, King Herod arrested several believers from the church for the express purpose of mistreating them. He slew James, the brother of John by the sword. Incredibly, this pleased the Jews and relishing in the notoriety they bestowed on him, he had Peter arrested also. He was a leader that sought the praise of men. He had a large band of soldiers to keep guard over him. From what I understand, four quaternions of soldiers equals 16 soldiers in all. Because of the Passover, Peter's fate was delayed until the feast had ended.

Intent on bringing Peter before the people, Herod didn't understand the great power he was dealing with. Fervent prayer was offered to God on behalf of Peter and that prayer got God's attention.

Acts 12:6 (Slide 19)

6 On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison. 7 And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands. (Slide 20) 8 And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." 9 And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. (Slide 21) 10 When they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. 11 When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

Peter had escaped, which even surprised the ones who were gathered in Mary's house, the mother of John Mark, who were praying for him.

When Herod investigated and found that Peter was gone, he had the soldiers who were guarding him executed. Here is a power driven, arrogant man who took great pleasure in his position and authority and exercised every chance he got. But he will experience the wrath of God because "The Anger of God Has Not Turned Away, His Hand is Still Outstretched!"

Acts 12:20-23 (Slide 22)

20 Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country. 21 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on

the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. (Slide 23) 22 The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

Certainly, Herod was a man that defines the terms arrogance and pride and leaves no doubt. He certainly knew that it was God that sprung Peter from his captivity. But stuck on himself and his power, he could not acknowledge God and give Him the glory.

We have leaders today so full of pride and arrogance, so puffed up that they can barely walk!

We are confident because of God. Our confidence is based on our faith in Jesus and His resurrection and we walk humbly before him.

Micah 6:8 (Slide 24)

*He has told you, O man, what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you
But to do justice, to love kindness,
And to walk humbly with your God?*

We can do nothing on our own or for ourselves for salvation. Our confidence is based on what God can do.

Psalms 62:1 (Slide 25)

*My soul waits in silence for God only;
From Him is my salvation.*

The pride and arrogance displayed by the people Isaiah prophesies about, would not allow them to turn back to God. Much of what we read from the prophets of God are warnings to God's people to walk in His ways and not their own.

The book of Micah is no exception. About a third of the book is a warning to his countrymen, particularly to the “Heads of Jacob” and “princes of the house of Israel.” They were using their political position and power to sin against one another and take advantage of the poor. Micah pronounces God’s judgment on them. Because of their arrogance and extreme wickedness, God turns away from them.

Micah 3:4 (Slide 26)

Then they will cry out to the Lord,

But He will not answer them.

Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time

Because they have practiced evil deeds.

The Anger of God Has Not Turned Away, His Hand is Still Outstretched!

Next week, Lord willing, we will look at the incredible spread of sin as recorded in Isaiah 9.

To this day, God’s Hand is still outstretched for Judgment! Yet, at the same time, His arms are outstretched to pull those that are His home. The prophets also record a time in which God will secure a remnant for His own. “A People for God’s own possession,” Peter states.

Have we accepted His invitation? If not, why not?

Perhaps today you need to be restored back to God. May we pray for you and with you?

Invitation