

SOVERIGN GOODNESS

Isaiah 48

INTRODUCTION:

The Goodness of God is remarkable against the dark background of obstinate attachment to idols. Is it too hard for men to trust in the Lord for all things?

At a youth rally in Oklahoma a teenager read Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths".

Having finished the reading he said: "This is a hard thing to do. It's hard to love your enemies, I know. But it's harder to trust in the Lord with all your heart". Then he added, "We all think our own way is o.k. and God's way of trusting doesn't look so good at first."

This could be your experience. You are self-sufficient until you get into the quick-sand. Hard to trust the Lord with all the heart.

Check your degree of trust by Proverbs 3:9-10 - "Honor the Lord with Thy substance...so shall Thy barns be filled with plenty".

Prophet opens this chapter with a call to Israel, to check all hinderances and pressed for complete love and trust in God. He closes with the warning "No peace for the wicked". Same thing is repeated in 57:21 and 66:24.

Outline:

- I. Sincerity Stained - 1-3.
- II. Stiff-Neck Boasting - 4-8.
- III. Supreme Motive - 9-18.
- IV. Solomn Warning - 19-22.

I. Sincerity Stained - 1-3.

V. 1. - Turns from Babylon (47) to call Israel. River never severed from its source - Waters of Judah. Address to Jews for conviction - House of Jacob - Hypocritical Profession of Religion.

They were of the covenant - few - not all - as Paul Rom. 9:6. "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel".

Soverignty of God in electing Isaac instead of Ishmael and Jacob in the place of Esau. So the line was not accident but electing grace. So natural birth did not make the Jew. Ishmael was a son of Abraham though not in line with promise. Esau was a son of Isaac but he was not in that line of life.

Rev. 3:9. "Who say that they are Jews, and are not". Still those that put themselves in the professing church - saying we are Jews.

Sincerity Stained - Swear by the Name - as evidence of the true religion, to a certain extent.

Not in truth - righteousness - Delitzsch, "Without their state of mind or mode of action corresponding to their confession, so as to prove that it was sincerely and seriously meant".

Condition of the Exiles - Matt. 15:8. "This people honoureth me with their lips, but in their hearts are far from me".

V. 2 - Call yourselves citizens of the Holy City. Neh. 11:1. Stress on outward and formal - we belong to the Holy City! Babylon - we belong to Israel - God is going to protect Israel.

Jesus - John 8:33 "We be Abraham's Seed". We belong to such and such church! Get the idea!

Verse 3 - Former things - ancient things - show power over idols. Superiority over idols.

Includes the dealing of God with Israel down to the time of Cyrus. Events has taken place as he has said.

Suddenly - came to pass unexpectedly - no result of human work.

II. Stiff Neck Boasting - 4-8.

V. 4 - Obstinate - Hard - Stiff Necked - Thy neck is as iron. Forcible expression.
Hardest metal.

Forehead - hardened like brass. Determined to resist God. Defiance -
self-willed. Jer. 6:28. Shameless as a harlot. Ezek. 3:7.

Willful and bent upon evil.

Acts 7:51.

V. 5 - No Room for boasting - Prophets told them before hand of their deliverance
-- I spoke it! No idol, or man foretold. Revealed events that concerned them.

Glory goes to God - Not ascribed to idol.

God's communication with man.

V. 6 - Look Back at things already occurred! Hidden things - now fulfilled. You
cannot fail to see.

I show Thee - New Things - Cyrus is to deliver! Then tell of Messiah.

V. 7 - Lest - I Knew Them - Vain man. This boasting is excluded.

Revelation to man is a sort of creation -- when they take place are like
creative acts.

Mystery of the servant of the Lord.

V. 8 - Heardest Not - Knewest Not. Complaint against them - blind to spiritual
truth.

Ear hath not been open - From time of old - beginning. From the First
Thy ear did not open.

Not sincere in that which was good - deceitful - not profited by that which
was taught.

Transgressors - 1st formed people - prove to idolatry - murmurers as soon
as brought out of Egypt. Where original sin is actual sin will result.

Treacherously - If I had not told the destruction of Babylon so plainly, you would have ascribed it to idols. Treacherous is our vows and promises.

Note - 3 times - Yea - in the text! God's awe at man's sin. Painful.

God's knowledge of man's sin: I Knew. No secret, transgressors from the womb. You have lived as if you were your own.

Paul - took his doctrine perhaps from this on sinful man.

Romans - All have sinned.

III. Supreme Motive - V.9-18

Soverign goodness to the erring - blind - obstinant.

V. 9 - God will defer cutting Israel off!

Why? For His name sake. Peculiar people, bound by his promise. Mercy - bring back to own country so sit under own fig tree. Unworthy, not for their sake - his love.

V. 10 - God will refine.

Not as silver - extreme severity. Psa. 12:6. But in furnace of affliction - captivity in Babylon. Object to test, prove - fit to bear his name. They were corrupt but not cut them off but do them good.

Many have come out of the furnace of A. as a good work of grace.

Temporal things. Bodily afflections. Bereavements.

God will regulate the heat - circumstances. Mal. 3:3; I Cor. 10:13.

Not as silver but "great tribulation" does this service. Manifested the faithful - purged - remnant.

For some He has chosen some furnace of A. Sometimes this brings conversion. Rom. 5:3-5.

Smelting ore - illustration - art separating pure metal from dross. Heat unbearable.

Plim'soll

Samuel Plimsoll - British reformer. Due to his efforts, the merchant shipping act of 1876 was passed.

Requiring all ships to bear a mark known as the Plimsoll mark and indicating the maximum load line.

By this act the Board of Trades of England was empowered to detain any vessel deemed unsafe and the amount of cargo was restricted thus making the long and perilous ocean voyage of those days much safer.

He became known as the sailor's friend. The Plimsoll mark, with its gradations and figures maybe seen on the bow of ships near the water line as they lie at anchor in a harbor.

In God's sight, each of us has a similar mark, though we may not be able to see it. The burdens and responsibilities may seem unbearable but He knows our limit. His grace not let us sink. I Cor. 10:13.

Furnance may refine or ruin!

Never tries us beyond our strength.

✓ Prayer appeal this past week for Hong Kong from Missionary Marjorie & Clark Dean. Asking prayer for Mrs. Lounette Templeton - has been flown to Houston, Texas for major surgery.

Note the tragedies during the past year.

1st Her husband's father passed away. They came home to be with him during last days.

2nd Month before they returned to Hong Kong her mother passed away.

3rd Her father had to have one leg amputated.

4th They returned in June and the first week word arrived her brother had been killed in auto accident.

5th Few weeks later received word her father had died.

6th September (68) tragic news Mrs. Templeton has cancer and must go to Houston for an operation.

Furnace gets hot at times.

✓ Sir Malcolm Sargent outstanding musician. His famous record of Handel's "The Messiah" has received wide acclaim.

Light step and ready smile - think life had treated well.

Just when his career seemed off to a successful start, he collapsed with tuberculosis, and battle for his life while facing financial ruin.

Finally when returning to the world of music his 13 year old daughter (Pamela) was stricken with polio. Desperately he searched for medical help, but there was little doctors could do.

One night Just as he was about to begin a performance of "The Messiah" he was handed a note which struck inconsolable grief to his heart. It read; "Your daughter Pamela is dying!"

With tears in his eyes he walked to the platform and directed the orchestra and choir through such tender passages as "comfort ye, comfort ye my people". He found a deep sympathy; strength to live and endure the furnace of affliction in God's word. And so will you!

Every child of God is instructed by the Spirit. Take me - break me - make me. Sometimes he cannot make until he breaks.

Like old coins put in a melting pot to be made into new ones. God takes sinful man and remakes.

Peter speaks of the trials of faith more precious than gold.

Goldsmith makes a vessel for Kings table. Refines the metal, takes dross out, stamps it approved. Moulds it, graving tool, polishing, flashes with gems. So the Lord puts you in crucible, refines away dross, marks you, approved - later finishes you in likeness of his glory.

Patience.

V. 11 Why God will use furnace of affliction.

For His sake - no man could merit. His glory not be given to another idol.

Thought their gods to hard for him. Dan. 5:2-4. Belshazzar profanes the holy vessels of God's Temple.

God could do for them what no one else could - bring out of Egypt. He would bring out of Babylon.

V. 12 - Soverign God who founded Earth will deliver. Eternal, unchangeable one, Alpha and Omega.

No room left - He is the only one that delivers.

V. 13 - Creator Speaks. Earth is firm he made it. Look up, He measured the Heavens.

Not all - Be then commanded the stars and sun into service. Then stand up.

V. 14 - You had no foresight of these.

Challenge to their dieties.

Lord love him - Cyrus!

He loves those who do his pleasure. Remember Cyrus was called his anointed
- His Shepherd! Type.

V. 15 - Cyrus is the man who must do this work - commissioned - called - give success.
Ravenous bird. 46:11.

V. 16 - No Secret - God's plan is clear. From the beginning - used Prophets, spoke
from Sinai his law. Publicly - Messiah was sent - The Holy Spirit was sent.

Cyrus, his mission helped by the Spirit. Messiah and his Spirit sent.

V. 17 - Message - Sovereign Goodness be experienced:

1. Redeemer will teach - instruct with profit. By teaching us if we
receive will profit.

2. Will guide - keep on right path.

Lot - eye for world. Sodom his residence. Pitched his tent toward Sodom.
No time for Spiritual profit. Years roll by - leading to spiritual bank-
ruptcy.

Idle drowe in a bee hive - No honey brought home - man careless - real
profit from the Bible and worship in church. Visit God's house, no matter how poor
we preachers are - God gives a blessing on His Day.

Our want of prosperity is, not let him lead and teach.

V. 18 - Lesson - Look back - see what missed - if you had been obedient, no captivity.

Had peace like river flowing from God's Throne. Continued prosperity. No interruption.

Waves of the sea - righteousness. Could have stood all opposition as the strength of the sea - overpowered.

Practical - Think of the person with talent, and an opportunity. Not used! Lament, what he might have become. Spoiled everything. Many lament wasted lives. Misconduct.

"O that Thou hadst harkened to my commandment". Simple - Government of God - serious loss of profitable instruction, loss of infallible guidance, loss of peace, loss of character. Could have been irresistible wave full of power.

IV. Solomn Warning - 19-22.

V. 19 - Consider opportunities.

Seed as sand.

Bowels - countless living.

Some were absorbed by the heathen among whom they were scattered.

Less than 2,000 males with Ezra returned. Ez. 8:2-20. Less than 50,000 with Zerubbabel. E. 2:64. Would have been cut-off.

V. 20 - Sudden Transition - Go ye forth of Babylon. Exhortation.

Appears unreasonable - prison doors close and now they are open! Rush to escape.

Not so when the time came - only those who availed themselves of the edict of Cyrus "Whose spirit God had raised to go up and build his house". Ezra 1:5.

Josephus tells us that the wealthier classes remained. Some think the very poor could not leave. Probably the larger number elected to remain in the country than to return to Palestine.

Leave with speed and terror as from Egypt. Go with singing - Shouting. All nations must hear of the great event - preparation for world redemption.

Joyful deliverance - as dark night out of Egypt. Let all men know. Pharaoh must release God's people.

V. 21 - God will bring his own home.

Take care of. Through desert. Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:11. Rock followed them, water flowed. The Rock was Jesus. His people returning to Palestine. Christian

Church - tried not as silver. *Dr. Geo. Truitt tells story, After funeral of Pastor Truitt's wife, Husband that night in bed - Hyp. erud out in dark fear - "Father are you there. Fortunately bed close, Reached hand & said for son in here." "Quit - Sleep. - - Dark, midnight, Father there."*

V. 22 - No Peace to the Wicked.

Denies the (possibility) of their peace. To make a tumult - Go on in their trespasses. No true peace apparent from Christ.

Blessings mentioned in V. 21 belong to the godly not to the wicked.

Whosoever claims the name of the God of Israel must see to it that in truth he is of God. He must not be obstinate.

Who are the wicked?

Enemies of God. Rom. 1:30 James 4:4.

Enemies of the cross. Phil. 3:18.

Evil-doers. I Pet. 2:14.

Lovers of the world. Psa. 17:14.

No true or real peace!

MAN in Hell - No Rest - Touch Tongue Drop Water -