

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 101

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Christ's Charge to Peter by Raphael Cir 1515

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah

Message One-Hundred-One

GOD ACCUSES ISRAEL OF NOT DEPENDING UPON HIM

February 7, 2021

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Isaiah 43:22–28

²²Yet thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.

²³Thou hast not brought me of thy sheep for burnt-offerings; neither hast thou honored me with thy sacrifices. I have not burdened thee with offerings, nor wearied thee with frankincense. ²⁴Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast burdened me with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

²⁵I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins. ²⁶Put me in remembrance; let us plead together: set thou forth thy cause, that thou mayest be justified. ²⁷Thy first father sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me. ²⁸Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary; and I will make Jacob a curse, and Israel a reviling (ASV, 1901).

ISRAEL DID NOT STAY CLOSE TO GOD

Isaiah 43:22

²²Yet thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel (ASV, 1901).

The Lord sadly informed the Jewish leaders referring to them as their patriarch Jacob, that they had not called upon Him in prayer and self-humiliation. Jacob was a man known for prayer (Hosea 12:4); his offspring bore his name, Israel, but did not follow in his footsteps. This then justifies God for correcting them. Rather, they had become weary of Him (Micah 6:3; Malachi 1:13; 3:14). He had not become weary or bored with them. The Jewish leaders, in Christ's time too, did not call upon His name, nor believe in Him, nor receive His Gospel, nor submit to Him and His ordinances; they rejected Him and His offer of salvation as well as the kingdom, therefore the Lord rejected them. So, He turned to the Gentiles, as before prophesied. God said that *thou hast been weary of me, O Israel; of the word, worship, and ordinances of God* (Amos 8:5). They were proud of the name of Jacob, and yet they lived without obeisance toward God. They were essentially deceiving themselves. As we have seen in this book of Isaiah rather, they turned to idols and sin. Those who neglect to call upon God do in effect tell him they are weary of Him and have decided to look elsewhere for a different lord and master. This is where Satan fills the need with idols, sin, drugs, violence and the like. Such is the sin condition of unsaved mankind. The apostle Paul expressed these motivations in the book to the Galatians.

Galatians 5:16–21

¹⁶But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. ¹⁸But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, ²¹envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (ASV, 1901).

Even when they suffered at the hands of their enemies they did not call out to God. They had quickly grown weary from serving the Lord, just as Aaron did while Moses was on the mount receiving the Law. Realizing that God was giving the Law to Moses they never the less made a golden calf and worshipped it.

Israel did not call God, but rather the reverse, God called Israel. This removes the ability of bragging in which the nation might trust. Her very existence is due to God's sovereign choice, His grace, and not to her own will. The same thought is later expressed by Christ, "*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, etc.*" (John 15:16a). The apostle expresses the same thing in his book written the to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:8–9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ not of works, lest any man should boast (KJV).

GOD'S REQUESTS WERE LIGHT

Isaiah 43:23

²³Thou hast not brought me of thy sheep for burnt-offerings; neither hast thou honored me with thy sacrifices. I have not burdened thee with offerings, nor wearied thee with frankincense (ASV, 1901).

God said, *Thou hast not brought me of thy sheep for burnt-offerings* rather, they brought them to their idols. This was the case in the days of Ahaz, father of Hezekiah, who sealed the gates to the Temple and led the nation to idolatry by erecting altars throughout Israel. God is saying essentially that since I do not require you to bring any offerings to Me, you cannot say I burdened you.

Even during the Exile, Israel offered no sacrifices, nor did the Lord require them. He reminded them of that fact. They had not brought Him the sheep, a lamb, or kid required as a daily whole burnt offering to the Lord (Exodus 29:38; 28:3), or honored Him with their sacrifices in general (Zechariah 7:5-6; Malachi :6-8). He had not forced them to serve Him with sacrifices during many periods of their existence. He said this in the sense of burdening them with an oblation nor wearied them with incense (Exodus 30:34; Leviticus 24:7). God is saying to them that His positive

requirements have been light, and they should have complied with them. Meat offerings were to accompany every sacrifice, but were a small burden. Incense was not required from any private person.

ISRAEL WEARIED GOD WITH THEIR SINS

Isaiah 43:24–28

²⁴Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast burdened me with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities ²⁵I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins. ²⁶Put me in remembrance; let us plead together: set thou forth thy cause, that thou mayest be justified. ²⁷Thy first father sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me. ²⁸Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary; and I will make Jacob a curse, and Israel a reviling (ASV, 1901).

Even though they saw the Shechinah Glory so many times in their nation's existence they could not find it in their hearts to part with a lamb in honor to Him. Honor. *Sweet cane*, or *calamus*, was used for the holy oil, incense, and perfume. God says that they were not willing to give Him that either. It was appropriate to bring free-will incense as well as other free-will offerings; but they were not so generous, nor did they fill the altar of God, as they should have done, *with the fat of their sacrifice*. The sacrifices they did bring were of the lean and refuse of their cattle, that had no fat in them to honor God. So, these meagre sacrifices were, in effect, as no sacrifices. *Neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices*. Some of them offered their sacrifices to false gods; others, who offered them to the true God, were either careless in the manner in which they offered them or hypocritical in their intentions. They were not honoring God with them, but rather dishonoring Him. They simply were going through the motions of honoring God. Their heart was not in it and He is calling them on it through the prophet. As God had stated it, it was no burdensome thing; it was not a service that they had any reason at all to complain. He continues, *"I have not caused thee to serve with an offering;* meaning I have not made it a task and drudgery to you, whatever you, through the corruption of your motives, have made it yourselves. God did not require them to sacrifice their children, as Moloch did. They ended up doing it anyway as they left God and served the idols and pagan Gods. He does now say what has burdened Him, their sins.

This is the conclusion, that God's goodness to his people is according to His nature or His Grace. If they, instead of choosing God and His service, they rejected both. And instead of pleasing Him by their attentions, they had grieved Him by their sins. The bad nature of their behavior could not have been more strongly or sarcastically stated.

Now He says to them, *let us plead together;* or come together in judgment, as God and the sinner come together in the court of justice: *set thou forth thy cause, that thou mayest be justified;* declare the promise before made; declare the grace that is expressed in it. God says for them to come into open court and plead their own righteousness, and see whether they could carry their cause upon its own merits; and declare publicly what these merits and good works were. Perhaps they think that they might be justified by them. For God knows that these abominable practices would not

stand vindicated at the bar of strict justice, and would be far from justifying them in the sight of God.

Adam, in whom all have sinned, and from whom all obtain a sinful and corrupt nature continue to follow his example. God continues with *and thy teachers have transgressed against me*, the Priests and Levites, Scribes and Pharisees; such who should have taught the people, and instructed them in the knowledge of divine things, and interceded with God for them; these were transgressors of the law themselves, as well as despisers of the future Gospel. It was these that rejected the counsel of God against themselves, disbelieved the Messiah, and persuaded the people from receiving Him when He came.

God then concludes this section by saying, *I will profane the princes of the sanctuary*. Or will do it; the past tense for the future, as the Hebrew language says in prophetic perfect tense. This is not Moses and Aaron, or the kings, but the priests of the temple, who had the care and government of things there, and therefore called *princes*. This was a reality when Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple burnt in AD 70, and the daily sacrifice made to cease, by the Romans *I will make Jacob a curse, and Israel a reviling*. The reviling, contempt, and scorn which they met with in their captivity, and in a land of strangers, is expressed here as to what is coming up to and continuing through the Great Tribulation.

God now presents their real motives, their sins. God has not burdened Israel with demands for sacrifice but, Israel has burdened the Lord with their iniquity. Their iniquities have wearied Him. So, the situation is actually reversed. It is not Israel who has been burdened, but the Lord. Israel has been a burden to Him (cf. 1:14). He will eventually blot out their sins and transgressions and remember them no more. But not before correcting them and especially their leaders.

The nation Israel had taken on the abominable practices of the Gentile nations surrounding them, and acted them out so that they were worse than the Gentiles. Jerusalem is a very special place on this earth. It is an earthly city that has a parallel in heaven. It is the place that God called home on earth as His shekinah glory resided in His tabernacle and temple when He dwelt among the children of Israel. However, at the time of Ezekiel (Cir 590 B.C.) it had succumbed to the lowest depths of depravity.

THE BLOODY AND IDOLATROUS CITY

Ezekiel 22:1–2

¹ Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, ² And thou, son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? then cause her to know all her abominations. (ASV, 1901)

This chapter begins with the Lord God asking Ezekiel in a very direct manner if he is prepared to judge the city of Jerusalem while referring to it as “*the bloody city*.” He repeats the request to add urgency to what He is asking him to do. He is asking him to bring charges up against the people of Jerusalem. By calling it a “*bloody city*” He is referring to the huge volume of children that were offered up to Molech that were burned alive, or murdered first, then followed with their bodies

being burned in the furnace (II Kings 17:17-18). God harshly tells Ezekiel to “*cause her to know all her abominations.*” As stated in Nahum 3:1, Jerusalem had sunk below the level of even the Assyrians in Nineveh, the northern kingdom capital in seventh century B.C., and also called “*the bloody city*”:

Nahum 3:1

¹ *Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and rapine; the prey departeth not. (ASV, 1901)*

GUILTY IS THE VERDICT

Ezekiel 22: 3–5

³*And thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: A city that sheddeth blood in the midst of her, that her time may come, and that maketh idols against herself to defile her! ⁴Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed, and art defiled in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the nations, and a mocking to all the countries. ⁵Those that are near, and those that are far from thee, shall mock thee, thou infamous one and full of tumult: (ASV, 1901)*

Gods called Jerusalem “*the bloody city*” because of their disregard for the Law of God, and that always leads to an increase in crimes of violence. Blood was so openly shed within the city of Jerusalem that the people did not even bother to hide their crimes, and led to the pollution of it just like the days of good king Hezekiah’s son Manasseh, who died just fifty-three years earlier, as described in II Kings 21:16:

II Kings 21:16

¹⁶ *Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; besides his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah. (ASV, 1901)*

The idolatry they engaged in, called in the text “*maketh idols against herself to defile her*” is representative of the level of degradation into which Jerusalem had sunk. When people have degraded themselves with overindulgence in mind-altering experiences, occultic practices, and sexual immorality, idol worship always occurs too. Self-worth of the individual through these practices becomes eroded to the point of rendering them incapable of seeing the image of God in the spirit of man. This leads to murder, which is not too difficult to commit if one does not recognize the divine in the human. Christ said a time is coming again on this earth when, because of increased wickedness, people’s love for one another will grow cold (Matthew 24:12). The evolutionary model of human origin that is prevalent today promotes the belief that the human

body and spirit are not at all related to divine origin. This lets us see God's view that the sin of idolatry defiles the divine in us, our souls, which God wants us to keep for Him:

Proverbs 4:23

²³Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life. (ASV, 1901)

“*Keep thy heart with all diligence*” means it is important for a believer to keep a strict guard upon our souls, to keep our hearts from doing harm to others, and to keep ourselves from getting hurt. God commands this for a good reason, out of our heart comes the source, or “issues” of life. As additional preparation to guard ourselves, we should continually seek the Lord Jesus, our living water, our sanctifying Spirit, and the only One who will issue us forth into everlasting life.

Not guarding our hearts is exactly what the Devil and his fallen angels continually look for so they can devour the uncareful person. The pollution of our souls that causes us to turn from God, and seek after inordinate pleasure that will lead to bloodshed is their desired goal. The Jews were about to receive the divine punishment for their sins because of the total erosion of their view of God and an elimination of Him from their lives. This is in direct contrasts with God's plan for Israel to be the ambassadors of the earth for Him. One can say the same this about the USA, with the great experiment God gave us in liberty and freedom.

Deuteronomy 28:10

¹⁰And all the peoples of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah; and they shall be afraid of thee. (ASV, 1901)

So, instead of the Gentile nations seeing the God-fearing and God-blessed Israelites and respecting them, God says in verse 25, “*Those that are near, and those that are far from thee, shall mock thee.*” The nation Israel had lost all respect on the world scene. This is true of any nation that knows the Lord, departs from His laws, and who chooses to not recognize Him in all that they say and do. The USA has sunk to that level wherein the nations of the world despise us.

THE CRIMES ARE ENUMERATED

Ezekiel 22:6–8

⁶Behold, the princes of Israel, every one according to his power, have been in thee to shed blood. ⁷In thee have they set light by father and mother; in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the sojourner; in thee have they wronged the fatherless and the widow. ⁸Thou hast despised my holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths. (ASV, 1901).

The leaders, again referred to as “*princes of Israel*” have wronged the people of Israel in their pursuit of personal power, prestige, and wealth. The root of the problem is that they have forgotten and purposely ignored God (Ezekiel 23:15). The Hebrew word for “*princes*” is *nasee*, and it means, “to be exalted high above the earth” (Jeremiah 10:13, 51:16; Psalms 135:7; Proverbs 25:14). A

true prince, *nasee*, should be exalted above his people, *but* only when he uses the power of his position to bestow justice and wealth upon them. In return, he gets wealth and power from the people because he is giving them the Godly care and justice they need.

The “*princes of Israel*” rejected the light of God, which is to be imparted to children by godly parents. Parents are elevated to being like the Creator because they bring children into the world as new souls. God’s light is transmitted through the parents to the children if they “bring their children up in the way they should go” (Proverbs 22:6). The “*princes*” rejected their parents and treated them badly. They dealt harshly with the orphans, widows, and the visitors in Israel as well. By blaspheming the sabbaths in direct violation of Leviticus 19:30 in the Old Testament, they were essentially saying that they had forgotten God to the point of even recognizing the weekly and annual, formal acknowledgment ceremonies dedicated to Him. He calls this a “*profaning of His sabbaths.*” All this was taking place in God’s holy city Jerusalem.

MORE CRIMES AND SINS ENUMERATED

Ezekiel 22:9–12

⁹Slanderous men have been in thee to shed blood; and in thee they have eaten upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they have committed lewdness. ¹⁰In thee have they uncovered their fathers’ nakedness; in thee have they humbled her that was unclean in her impurity. ¹¹And one hath committed abomination with his neighbor’s wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father’s daughter. ¹²In thee have they taken bribes to shed blood; thou hast taken interest and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbors by oppression, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord Jehovah. (ASV, 1901)

The text moves to condemn the activities of “*slanderous men.*” The Hebrew translation of “*slanderous men*” is *racheel*, and means “an informer or talebearer.” In Leviticus 19:16, God says *racheel* is prohibited, and this precipitated Israel’s downfall. Israel should have acted in unison by desiring God as they did when they first left Egypt at the time God led them in the wilderness (Exodus 19:2). Furthermore, they “*have eaten upon the mountains*”, which is actively pursuing food because it was sacrificed to idols on the “high places” where the idols were worshipped, and was strictly forbidden in the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 19:4). They pursued adultery with their father’s wives, just as Reuben did (Genesis 35:22). They engaged in sexual immorality with other women who were menstruating, which was also forbidden in the Mosaic Law as well in Leviticus 20:18.

In summary, verses 6–12 enumerate the following sins against the Lord God:

- Misuse of power of office by shedding blood (Ezekiel 22:6).
- Contempt for father and mother (Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:3).
- Extortion from the resident alien (Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:33–34).
- Wronging the orphan and the widow (Exodus 22:22).
- Despising holy things, and profaning sabbaths (Exodus 20:8–11).
- Slander for the purpose of destroying people (Leviticus 19:16).

- Eating upon the mountains (idolatrous worship, Leviticus 19:4).
- Committing lewdness by uncovering father's nakedness (sex with father's wife; Leviticus 20:11). having sex during wife's menstrual periods (Leviticus 20:18). having sex with a neighbor's wife (Leviticus 20:10), a daughter-in-law (Leviticus 20:12), or a sister, or father's daughter (half-sister, Leviticus 20:17).
- Accepting bribes to shed blood (Deuteronomy 27:25).
- Taking interest and monetary gain by extortion (Leviticus 25:36).

These violations of the Mosaic Law were particularly heinous to God. The “princes” did them all, and encouraged others in these sins too. God’s condemnation of the “princes” leading people in this sinning is emphasized because the words “in thee” and “thou hast” directly points to them 9 times in verses 6–12.

Since they had abandoned God and His Laws, they thought they were free to do anything outside of His will. By far the sexual sins were those committed in the highest volumes, but it did not end there. The “princes” did not order a just and fair society, as required by God’s Laws. The capstone of all these sins was taking bribes to ensure injustice and implement unfair charges against others that would trap them in poverty. The city or country where bribery, and its distortion of justice, prevail cannot be far from God’s judgment. These are characteristics of leaders desiring control over people in a lust for power. The *nasee* of Israel stole from the population to pay neighboring countries, such as Assyria and Egypt, to be their military allies. In doing so, they denied the best protection that they ever had in the Lord God of Israel.

Next message GOD WILL POUR OUT HIS SPIRIT UPON ISRAEL
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