

## Sermon #87 — *Isaiah Series*

Title:        **READINESS**

Text:        Isaiah 27:13

Subject:    *Being Ready*

Date:        Sunday Evening — June 2, 2019

Readings: *Merle Hart and Mark Henson*

Introduction:

The title of my message tonight is — **READINESS**. But I do not have a single subject in mind which I want to pursue. Instead, I am going to have you look with me at several texts of Scripture. Each one has a different subject and different message. But they all have one recurring word, one connecting theme. The one recurring word in these texts is “*ready*.” The theme that connects them all is “*readiness*.” If you will follow me through the Scriptures, I am confident that one of these texts has a message specifically for you.

### **ISAIAH 27:13**

1<sup>st</sup> — Let’s begin at Isaiah 27:13. — **Here the prophet of God speaks of sinners “ready to perish.”** — Here, Isaiah is talking about God’s

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method of grace. He tells us how that God gathers his elect one by one (v. 12). And when the gospel trumpet is blown, we are told, — “*They shall come which were ready to perish.*”

(Isaiah 27:12-13) And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and **ye shall be gathered one by one**, O ye children of Israel. (13) And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the great trumpet shall be blown, and **they shall come which were ready to perish** in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

I am looking for some sinners who are “*ready to perish.*” I know that all men and women by nature are ready to perish forever under the wrath of God. But very few know it. **Isaiah is talking about men and women who are in danger and know it!** I wonder if there is someone here who is “*ready to perish.*” If so, this part of my message is specifically

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to you. Let me tell you what these words, “*ready to perish,*” mean.

**A person is ready to perish when he is convinced that he deserves to perish.** — “*I have sinned.*”

You are ready to perish when you **feel that you must surely perish.** — “*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*” — “*The wages of sin is death.*”

**You are ready to perish when you sense that you are perishing.** — Not only do you deserve the wrath of God, not only are you convinced that the holy Lord God must and will punish your sin, but you are condemned already. The wrath of God is upon you!

You who have been there know exactly what I am saying. — **A sinner is ready to perish when he feels the wrath of God in his soul, when the sword of justice has pricked his heart** (Acts 2:37-38).

**We are not saved by a feeling.** And we do not look for a feeling. Holy Spirit conviction is more than a

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feeling of guilt and remorse. — **But when the wrath of God seizes a man's heart and he is "ready to perish," he feels it in his soul!**

- God will never lift you up until he throws you down.
- He will not bring you to heaven until he sends you to hell.
- You will not be saved until you know you are damned!

**This is the way God begins with those he has purposed to save.** He first destroys our confidence in ourselves. Then he gives us confidence in Christ. He wounds before he heals, strips before he robes, abases before he lifts, slays before he makes alive. **No one is ready for grace who is not ready to perish.**

## NEHEMIAH 9:17

2<sup>nd</sup> — Next, let's look at Nehemiah 9:17. — **When the Levites offered prayer to God for Israel in the**

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**days of Nehemiah, after confessing their sins, they said, “But thou art a God ready to pardon.”**

(Nehemiah 9:1-17) Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. (2) And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. (3) And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God *one* fourth part of the day; and *another* fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God. (4) Then stood up upon the stairs, of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their God. (5) Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, Stand up *and* bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

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(6) Thou, *even* thou, *art* LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. (7) Thou *art* the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; (8) And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give *it*, *I say*, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou *art* righteous: (9) And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red sea; (10) And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name, as *it is* this day. (11) And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on

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the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters. (12) Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. (13) Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: (14) And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: (15) And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them. (16) But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments, (17) And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion

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appointed a captain to return to their bondage: —  
—— **but thou art a God ready to pardon**,  
gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of  
great kindness, and forsookest them not.

Are you ready to perish? Here is “*a God ready to pardon.*” That is good news to my soul! The God whom I have offended, against whom I have sinned, whose wrath I deserve, is a God ready to pardon. **David said**, “*Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul; for thou, LORD, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee*” (Psalm 86:4-5). What can this mean? — “*Thou art a God ready to pardon!*”

**To be ready to pardon is to be prepared to pardon.** A man is not ready to go on a trip until his bag is packed. A highway is not ready for traffic until the surface is paved and the barriers are removed. Nothing is ready until it is prepared.

Now hear this. — God is ready to pardon! **That means everything is prepared by which God can**



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**forgive sin.** The road used to be blocked up. But Jesus Christ has, by the blood of his cross, tunneled every mountain, filled every valley, bridged every gulf, so that now all things are ready. — God is ready to pardon.

Behold Christ's blood upon the throne,  
And know that all your sins are gone;  
God's wrath on His dear Son was laid,  
And justice owns the ransom paid!

**There is nothing for us to do to make preparation for pardon.** The Lord our God is a God prepared to pardon. — “*All things are ready!*” The fatted calf is killed. The feast is spread. The servants are sent out to gather in guests. — All is done!

**The word “ready” is used to indicate that a thing can be easily done.** We ask, “Can you pick up my mail while you are at the post office?” And the person responds, “readily.” We might ask if a person is prepared to carry out his promise; and he responds “readily.” That means, “It can easily be done.”

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When we read that God is ready to pardon, that means, “Since Christ has died, he is a God who can easily pardon.” It takes nothing but his word, — “*Thy sins are forgiven thee!*”

**And the word “ready” means promptly or quickly.** In this sense also, he is a God ready to pardon. There is no need for any sinner to wait, even a moment, for pardon. The pardon of sin is an instantaneous work. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, God gives pardon to the believing sinner.

“The moment a sinner believes  
And trusts in his crucified God,  
His pardon at once he receives,  
Redemption in full through His blood.”

My fallen brother, my fallen sister, this is true for you too (1 John 1:9).

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(1 John 1:9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**Once more, “ready” means cheerfully.** Can you grasp this? — “*He delighteth in mercy!*” As God loves a cheerful giver, he is a God who cheerfully pardons. “*The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing*” (Zephaniah 3:17). Can you imagine that? — The Triune God singing! What a thought. — As God pardons our sin, he bursts into a song!

## **ROMANS 1:15**

3<sup>rd</sup> — **Third, read the 15<sup>th</sup> verse of Romans one and see a man ready to preach the gospel.**

(Romans 1:15-17) So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. (16) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto

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salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (17) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Because Paul had once been ready to perish, because he had met and knew a God ready to pardon, he counted himself a debtor to all men, and was ready to preach the gospel. He was not ashamed to tell all men everywhere what God had done for him.

- He knew the power of the gospel (v. 16).
- He knew the message of the gospel (v. 17).
- He knew the universal need of the gospel (v. 18).
- He was ready, willing, and anxious to preach the gospel!

## **ECCLESIASTES 5:1**

4<sup>th</sup> — In Ecclesiastes 5:1 **Solomon tells us that when we come into the house of God we should come as worshippers ready to hear from God.**

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(Ecclesiastes 5:1) Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

How I delight to preach to men and women who are ready to hear! Who come to the house of God...

- Seeking a message from God.
- Ready to believe what God says. — “*Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth thee.*”
- Ready to obey God’s Word.

**Cornelius said to Peter** — (Acts 10:33)  
“Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”

## **LUKE 22:33**

5<sup>th</sup> — **Here is Simon Peter, a disciple ready to go with his Lord.**

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(Luke 22:31-33) And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: (32) But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. (33) And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

I know that Peter was overly confident. And the Lord knew how to break his pride. But Peter's words expressed his heart. And in the end he proved it. He went with his Lord both to prison and to death. Are you ready to go with your Master? — **A disciple is ready to go...**

- Into whatever place of service is needed.
- Into whatever trial his Master leads. — Nathan to David (1 Samuel 12) — Ezekiel to Pharaoh (Ezekiel 32)
- Into whatever sorrow obedience brings.
- Home with a moment's notice, without notice, or with long and painful notice.

## **1 TIMOTHY 6:18**

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6<sup>th</sup> — **In 1 Timothy 6:18, the Apostle Paul told Timothy to teach us to be saints ready to give, ready to distribute our goods to others, willing to communicate what God has given us to his people as they need it.**

(1 Timothy 6:13-19) I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; (14) That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: (15) Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; (16) Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen. (17) Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

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(18) That they do good, that they be rich in good works, **ready to distribute, willing to communicate**; (19) Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Men and women who have experienced such rich, free, bountiful grace from God as we have ought to be the most open hearted, open handed people in the world. “*God loves a cheerful giver.*” God teach me to give...

- With a Willing Heart.
- As You Have Prospered Me.
- With Forethought and Purpose.
- Hoping For Nothing in Return.
- Trusting You to Supply My Needs.

(2 Corinthians 8:9) For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.



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(2 Corinthians 9:15) Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

### **TITUS 3:1**

7<sup>th</sup> — **In Titus 3:1 Paul tells Titus to teach you and me to walk before God as servants “ready to every good work.”**

(Titus 3:1) Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.

Good works have nothing to do with salvation. We are saved by grace alone. But good works are always the produce of grace, the result of salvation. Three times in this chapter we are urged to maintain good works. — Why?

- They are contrary to the flesh.
- They are honoring to God.
- They are helpful to men. — Good works always have reference to something we do for our brethren. — A Good Work is to avoid strife —

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promote peace — be kind — supply needs —  
forgive offenses, etc.

### **JOB 17:1**

8<sup>th</sup> — **In Job 7:1 God's servant Job declares "the graves are ready for me."** The Lord Jesus has taken away the fear of death, the sting of death, and the dread of the grave. He has changed the nature of the tomb. "*The graves are ready for me.*"

- Ready to receive my body at God's appointed time.
- Ready to hold my body until the resurrection.
- Ready to yield up my body when Christ comes.

*"The graves are ready for me."* And I am ready for the grave.

### **2<sup>ND</sup> TIMOTHY 4:6**

9<sup>th</sup> — **In 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:6 we see Paul the aged, a prisoner at Rome, awaiting the time of his execution as a believer ready for the grave.**

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(2 Timothy 4:6-8) For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: (8) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

- He looked downward to the grave (v. 6).
- He looked backward upon his life (v. 7; 2 Timothy 1:12).
- He looked upward to heaven (v. 8).
- He looked outward to eternity (v. 8).
- And he said, “*I am now ready to be offered.*”

**Illustrations:** *Harold Martin*

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Are you ready for the grave? Do you hope to die such a death as I have described? Then, I want you to look at one more text.

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**1 PETER 3:15**

10<sup>th</sup> — **God the Holy Ghost tells us by his servant Peter to be ready to give reason for the hope that is in us.**

(1 Peter 3:15) But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

What is the reason for your hope? — “*The Lord is my portion saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him*” (Lamentations 3:24).

- His Work of Redemption
- His Word of Grace
- His Covenant Faithfulness
- His Immutability

Amen.