

Title: **WHEN THE GOSPEL COMES**
 IN POWER

Text: Isaiah 29:17-24

Subject: *The Day of Grace*

Introduction:

The Apostle Paul speaks of the gospel coming to men and women. But then he speaks of the gospel coming unto men and women “*not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance*” (1 Thessalonians 1:5). And there is a difference, a great difference.

- When the gospel comes in power, **God speaks.**
- When the gospel comes in power, **conviction is wrought in the heart.**
- When the gospel comes in power, **Christ is revealed.**
- When the gospel comes in power, **life is given to dead sinners, faith is given to those who had no faith, and God is glorified in the hearts of men.**
- When the gospel comes in power, **the saints of God are comforted, reproved, encouraged, rebuked, humbled, and edified.**

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Oh, how I pray that, as I preach to you this hour, the gospel will come to you in the life-giving power of God the Holy Ghost and in much assurance!

This the title of my message to you is — **WHEN THE GOSPEL COMES IN POWER**. My text is Isaiah 29:17-24. — **WHEN THE GOSPEL COMES IN POWER** (Isaiah 29:17-24).

Proposition: When God sends his servant with his message and speaks by his Spirit the word of his grace through the mouth of his servant to eternity bound immortal souls, the gospel comes in power to chosen, redeemed sinners to whom he gives ears to hear.

In Isaiah 29:17-24, the prophet of God is speaking of this Gospel Age.

(Isaiah 29:17-24) *Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? (18) And in that day shall the deaf hear*

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the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. (19) The meek also shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. (20) For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: (21) That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. (22) Therefore thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. (23) But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. (24) They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

FIVE FACTS REVEALED

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Isaiah is here, by the Spirit of God, describing the Day of Grace, when the gospel comes in power to God's elect. — *"In that day!"*

Here are five blessed, glorious facts, most plainly revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. Be sure you understand them.

1. **There are some men and women in this world whom God has chosen to salvation from eternity, who must and shall be saved** (Romans 11:5; Ephesians 1:3-7; 1 Thessalonians 2:13-14).
2. **The Lord Jesus Christ has made atonement for the sins of God's elect and redeemed them from the curse of the law by this own precious blood** (Galatians 3:13-14).
 - Particular Redemption (Isaiah 53:8; John 10:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21) — Substitution!
 - Effectual Redemption (Hebrews 9:12; Ephesians 1:6) — Satisfaction!

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3. **All of God's elect, having been redeemed by the blood of Christ, shall be called from death to life by irresistible grace and omnipotent mercy of God the Holy Spirit** (Galatians 3:13-14; Psalm 65:4).
 - Eternal life is the gift of God.
 - Faith in Christ is the gift of God.
 - Repentance is the gift of God.

4. **The means by which God's elect are born again, called, and given faith in Christ is the preaching of the gospel** (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23-25).

5. **And there is a specific day appointed by God before time began in which he will call each of his elect to life and faith in Christ by the gospel** (Ezekiel 16:6-8; Psalm 110:3).

God will see to it that the sinner whom he has chosen, whom his Son has redeemed, will be in the place he has ordained, with his heart prepared to receive the gospel at the appointed time of love. And

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he will send his Word to that sinner by a preacher in the irresistible power and grace of his Spirit.

Illustrations: *The Samaritan Woman*
Onesimus
Lydia
The Philippian Jailer

You can mark this down. — **If you are God's, he is going to get you.** There is a time, beyond which you cannot escape, a place beyond which you cannot go, when God will cross your path, meet you in mercy, and arrest your soul! There is a day appointed when the gospel will come to you in power! Perhaps this is that day! Let me describe it for you in the words of the prophet Isaiah.

Look at verse 17. — “*Is it not a very little while?*” — **Time means nothing to the eternal God.** Though the coming of Christ was yet hundreds of years away, God says, “*It is a very little while.*” With him a thousand years are as one day and one day is as a thousand years. **The day of grace will come to**

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God's elect in a very little while. If you are converted when you are 16, or if you are converted when you are 86, it is a very little while to God!

Illustration: *Mrs. Jones at Rocky Mount, VA*

“And Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field.”

— Lebanon here represents the Gentile world, which was like a great forest, uncultivated, full of unfruitful trees. But God had ordained from eternity that the gospel should go out to the Gentiles for the saving of his elect among them. Through the preaching of the gospel he dug around and manured these unfruitful, Gentile trees. The Gentiles became God's husbandry, his fruitful field, abounding with fruit to his praise.

“And the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest.”

— For more than 2,000 years Israel had been God's fruitful field. They alone had the Word and ordinances of God. And God multiplied them from being the least of all to being the greatest of all people. But through their rejection of Christ and his

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gospel, they became a barren, unfruitful, dark forest (Matthew 21:42-43; Romans 9:30-33).

(Matthew 21:42-43) Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? (43) Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

(Romans 9:30-33) What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. (31) But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. (32) Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; (33) As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence:

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and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Divisions: Now, in the verses 18-24, Isaiah tells us seven things that will happen when the gospel comes in power.

HEARING EARS

1st — “*In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book*” (v. 18). — All men by nature, being dead in trespasses and in sins, are deaf to the Word of God. They cannot hear, with understanding, the gospel of the grace of God (vv. 9-12).

(Isaiah 29:9-12) Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. (10) For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. (11) And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed,

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which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed: (12) And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

But when the gospel comes with power, God gives the deaf hearing ear. — “*Blessed are your ears, because they hear!*” The preaching lip, the hearing ear, and the believing heart are gifts of God.

When God calls sinners, he gives them hearing ears, seeing eyes, believing hearts, and understanding minds. — “*We have the mind of Christ!*” — God the Holy Ghost causes sinners to hear and understand the gospel. — It is he who gives us faith in Christ.

There is a general call (Matthew 11:28-30; 22:2-14).

(Matthew 11:28-30) Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of

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me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

(Matthew 22:2-14) The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, (3) And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. (4) Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage. (5) But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: (6) And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*. (7) But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. (8) Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. (9) Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye

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shall find, bid to the marriage. (10) So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. (11) And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: (12) And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. (13) Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (14) For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

There is a general call. — And there is an effectual call.

- Peter and Andrew (Matthew 4:19).
- James and John (Mark 1:20).
- Zachaeus (Luke 19:5)
- Lydia (Acts 16:14)

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SEEING EYES

2nd — **“The eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness”** (v. 18).

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
Once I was lost, but now am found!
Once I was blind, but now I see!

All of us by nature are lost, blind in darkness and obscurity. The light that is in us by nature is darkness. And how great that darkness is (1 Corinthians 2:14). But in that day, when God calls, he causes the light to shine in your heart. He makes you see (2 Corinthians 4:6).

- Your Sin and Misery
- Your Lost and Dangerous Condition
- The Way of Life and Salvation by Christ
- The Great and Glorious Truths and Promises of the Gospel
- The Glory of God in the Face of Christ — Redemption Accomplished!

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(2 Corinthians 4:1-7) Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; (2) But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (3) But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: (4) In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (5) For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. (6) For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (7) But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

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When God teaches, you get the lesson (John 6:44-45). But until you are born of God, you cannot see (John 3:3, 5).

MEEK REJOICE

3rd — “**The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD**” (v. 19). — Our Lord Jesus said, “*Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.*” Meekness is the fruit of the Spirit. And here we see that when God comes to a sinner in saving power, he humbles him, he makes him meek.

The meek are those men and women who see themselves as they really are before God as he really is, and tremble (Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 66:2).

(Psalm 51:17) The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

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(Isaiah 66:2) To this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor* and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Only God can make a proud sinners meek (Isaiah 6:1-7; Job 42:5-6). **And God will never drive away a meek one.**

(Isaiah 6:1-7) In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. (2) Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. (3) And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. (4) And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. (5) Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. (6) Then flew one

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of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: (7) And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

(Job 42:5-6) I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. (6) Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.

- The meek are made sensible of their sin and humbled by it.
- The meek see the filth of their own righteousness and submit to the righteousness of Christ.
- The meek attribute all they have and are to the free grace of God.
- The meek quietly submit to every dispensation of providence.
- The meek do not envy those who are above them.
- The meek do not despise those who are below them.

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- The meek think the worst of themselves and the best of others.

“Blessed are the meek!” — The meek are sinners saved by the grace of God. They know who they are. And they know whose they are. — **“Blessed are the meek!”**

In the day of God’s grace, when he calls, “They shall increase their joy in the LORD.” That is to say, **“They shall obtain their joy in the LORD.”** Whereas they once got their joy in the world and in their own goodness, righteousness, and superiority, they now find their joy in Christ, ***“THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”***

- In the Greatness of His Person.
- In the Greatness of His Grace.
- In the Greatness of His Salvation.
- In the Greatness of His Promises.
- In the Greatness of His Providence.

This statement in verse 19 might be read, **“They shall add to their joy in the LORD.”** Our spiritual

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joy is sometimes interrupted by our own corruption and sin, and by the temptations and assaults of Satan, but it will be added again and increased (Psalm 51:12; Song of Solomon 2:4; 3:5).

(Psalm 51:12) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

(Song of Solomon 2:4) He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love.

(Song of Solomon 3:5) I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

Our joy in Christ is an increasing joy. — The more we know him, the more we find joy in him — It is increased by...

- Discoveries of His Love.
- Fresh Views of His Person.
- Experience of His Grace.

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- Meditation upon Him.
- Hearing of Him.
- Walking with Him.

HAPPY POVERTY

4th — “**And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel**” (v. 19). — “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.*”

- Not the Physically Poor.
- Not the Spiritually Poor — All are spiritually bankrupt!
- But the Sensibly Poor (1 Corinthians 1:26-27).

Illustration: *Mephibosheth*

The Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15:21-28).

Those who know themselves to be spiritually impoverished, bankrupt sinners “*shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.*” **Christ is the Holy One of Israel.**

- He is Holy.

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- He makes us Holy. — Imputed Righteousness — Imparted Righteousness — Resurrection Glory

And we rejoice in him. This is what Paul calls “*the joy of faith*” (Philippians 1:25). It comes through faith, goes along with faith, and increases with faith. This joy is peculiar to God’s saints. It is unknown to the world. It is joy unspeakable and full of glory (Philippians 4:4-5).

(Philippians 4:4-5) Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand.

- The Joy of Forgiveness
- The Joy of Reconciliation
- The Joy of Peace
- The Joy of Faith in Christ

SANCTIFIED AND SANCTIFYING

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5th— “**They shall sanctify my name**” (v. 23). — The Lord God here asserts that he will cut off the proud, self-righteous Pharisee who watches for iniquity in others. — Be warned!

(Isaiah 29:20-21) For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: (21) That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

But his elect, the seed of Abraham, his redeemed, his covenant people, being sanctified by him sanctify him as God (vv. 22-23).

(Isaiah 29:22-23) Therefore thus saith the LORD, **who redeemed Abraham**, concerning the house of Jacob, **Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.** (23) But **when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall**

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sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

GOD-GIVEN UNDERSTANDING

6th — Now look at verse 24. — “*They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding.*” — We all erred in judgment, concerning Christ and his gospel. But when God gives grace, he gives understanding also. — “*We have the mind of Christ*” (1 Corinthians 2:16). — “*Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things!*” (1 John 2:20). Saved sinners, heaven born souls, all true believers are spiritually discerning people. They know the Shepherd’s voice and follow him. A stranger they will not follow. — All of God’s people have a God-given understanding...

- Of the Necessity of Christ’s Coming.
- Of the Sufficiency and Efficacy of Christ’s Work.
- Of the Blessedness of His Gospel.
- Of the Vanity of this World.
- Of the Glory that Awaits Us.

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- Of the Value of Time.
- Of the Significance and Value of Gospel Ordinances.

DOCTRINE LEARNED

7th — “**And they that murmured shall learn doctrine**” (v. 24). — When God comes in saving power, you who now murmur against Christ and his gospel shall learn the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9).

- Who He Is.
- Why He Came.
- What He Did.
- Where He is Now.
- What He is Doing There.

APPLICATION

Implore God for mercy! Seek him now. He will give efficacy to his Word and make this day to you the Day of Grace. Call upon him! He will make the gospel to be to you the power of God unto salvation. You need Christ. You must have Christ! You cannot

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go on without him! Trust him now! Come to him now! — Come and welcome!

Illustration: *“Welcome home, sister!”*

Amen.

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- ¹ Danville — Tuesday Evening — July 23, 2019
Rescue Baptist Church, Rescue, CA — (Sunday – 07/07/19)