

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE
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SERIES: Isaiah, Part 1 (Judgment – But Hope)

TITLE: Program 3 – Come Now, And Let Us Reason Together

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

You're going through the motions of your religion. You're practicing. You're ending up at church, or you're going to mass, or you're saying your confession; and yet for some reason, it seems like God is so remote. And not only that, but you know that you're not doing what the Word of God tells you to do. What's the answer? What's the solution? Or is there none? There is an answer, and we'll talk about it today as we look at God's precepts for life.

PART ONE

There was a verse that was so popular years ago. It was a call that they would give to people that did not know Jesus Christ. And it was this from Isaiah, “**Come now and let us reason together...though your sins be as scarlet, [yet shall they] be as white as snow....’**” (Isaiah 1:18, KJV) And they went on with this invitation. The problem was that we took it out of context. You say, “Wait a minute, my sins cannot be washed away? I cannot

become as white as snow? I can't wear, so to speak, a white bridal gown down the aisle after all because I've been living in this immorality?" Let's look at this verse in its context because you know what? It's a verse for those of you who have gone to church, who are going through the ritual, and yet whose prayers are not being answered. It is an invitation to you to be right with God. Let's look at Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 1. Now, when you look at the book of Isaiah, basically the first five, first six chapters are like an introduction to the whole message of Isaiah. So this is like a bookend. Whereas the end, the final chapters of Isaiah are like another bookend. And what God is doing in chapter 1, and then chapter 2, 3, 4, and 5, and we're going to see it and even in 6 is, He showing them the state of their affairs, the state of their soul. And He's showing them, "Look, you're not looking to the future. You're not looking to Me. You've revolted. You've rebelled against Me. You are walking away from Me. I reared you up. I gave you these special privileges, and you aren't living accordingly." And so they're in trouble. And you and I need to know, and we've talked about it, that our actions have consequences. Well, the consequence that happens to the land is in verse 7. He says, **"Your land is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, your fields—strangers are devouring them in your presence; it is desolation, as overthrown by strangers."** (Isaiah 1:7) Stop and think of what's going on in our nation. Stop and think of what's going on in your nation. Are there calamities? Are there threats of war? Are there panics because of terrorism and things like this? Who's in charge? Who allows these things to happen? You're going to see as you study the book of Isaiah. That it all points back to the Sovereign Ruler of all the universe, Whose throne is in heaven. And so, God has called, and He has said, **"Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; for the LORD [has spoken]...."** (Isaiah 1:2) He is taking His people to court because they have transgressed against Him, because they, as it says in chapter 1 in verse 2, **"...they have revolted against [the Lord.]"** (Isaiah 1:2) And that term "revolted" not only means "walking in your own willful way and being your own authority," but it also

speaks of two nations that are in a covenant agreement together. And the superior nation has laid down the agreement, the terms of that agreement, and the weaker nation has said, “I will submit,” and then they’ve turned around and they’ve rebelled. And this is what gets Israel in trouble, because they rebel against Babylon that is ruling over them. Until finally Babylon comes down, and we’re gonna see this in Isaiah, and just levels their city, and they’re scattered all over the world. So, he is saying in this passage, that not only is your body affected, not only are there wounds and there are welts, but, **“Your land is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, your fields—strangers are devouring them in your presence....” (Isaiah 1:7)** They’re standing right there, and they’re eating up your product, your fields. They’re taking your harvest for themselves. **“...It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers. The daughter of Zion...,”** and the daughter of Zion according to Psalms 9 verse 14 is Jerusalem. It is this city. It is the people of the city. **“The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in [the] vineyard...,”** it says, **“...like a watchman’s hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.” (Isaiah 1:8)** It’s there. It’s worthless. It’s damaged. It’s not protected. It’s not cared for. He says, **“Unless the Lord of hosts...,” (Isaiah 1:9)** and you’re gonna see this name for God throughout Isaiah. The Lord of hosts is “Jehovah Sabaoth.” And it means that “He is the one that is the captain. He is the one that is in charge of all the angelic hosts and all the earthly hosts. He’s the supreme commander. And it says, **“Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a few survivors...,”** he said, **“...we would be like Sodom, we would be like Gomorrah.” (Isaiah 1:9)** In other words, we would be totally annihilated, totally destroyed if God, in His mercy, had not left us a few survivors. And in— Isaiah is speaking not only for the current time, but he is speaking prophetically. He is talking about the troubles that they are having with the other nations and what they are going through. He says, **“Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah.” (Isaiah 1:10)** Wake up! Pay attention! Listen to me! You are a ruler of Sodom. You are a people

of Gomorrah. Those were cities that had turned their back on God, that were living an absolute moral lasciviousness, licentiousness. (See Genesis 18:20, 19:4) And he says, “Listen to me, pay attention to me.” You know, when you read through Isaiah, what you hear is, “the Lord has spoken” is said seven times in this book, but it says, “says the Lord” 55 times. It says, “declares the Lord” 22 times. It says “the word of the Lord” 8 times. You add it all up, and in these 66 chapters, there are 72 incidents of God saying “I have spoken. Listen. I have declared. Listen.” And you find the word “hear” 33 times. You find the word “listen” 26 times. God is speaking and when you add those up, you see that every time He speaks, you and I are to listen and to pay attention. Well, they had not. He says, **“What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?” says the LORD. ‘I have had enough of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle...,’**” He says, **“and I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, [and the blood of] lambs or goats [your sacrifices]. When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this trampling of My courts? Bring your worthless offerings [to Me] no longer, incense is an abomination to Me....”** I don’t want to smell it. **“...New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies....”** (Isaiah 1:11-13) That’s what they did. They had their daily sacrifices, their morning and evening sacrifices. And at the end of the week or the beginning of the week, Shabbat, what they had was they had the solemn assembly, and they gathered before the Lord. And He says **“...I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly.”** (Isaiah 1:13) What is He saying? Listen to me very carefully. It applies to you and me if we are children of God. Yes, sons He reared up, but you and I saw. We saw that we are children of God; that we become heirs with God, joint heirs of Jesus Christ. (See Romans 8:17) We’re adopted into the family of God as sons of God. (See Galatians 4:7) God has reared us up. God has given us special privileges. And He says, “I don’t want this. I don’t want you walking in this sin and turning around and coming for solemn assemblies, halo over the head. I don’t want these sacrifices. I don’t want you burning this incense. I don’t want to smell it.”

He says, **“I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts....”** I hate them. **“...They have become a burden to Me. I am weary of bearing them. So when you spread out your hands in prayer...,”** now listen to me carefully, **“...I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers...,”** even though you stand there and go on and on and on, even though you do it twice a day or three times a day, **“...I will not listen....”** (Isaiah 1:14-15) Why? [Because you’ve got your hands up there to Me in prayer, you’ve spread them out in prayer, and they’re filled with blood.] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 1:15) They’re filled with blood. “You, who call yourself My child, are sleeping around. You are giving birth to children. Or you are causing a woman to conceive. Or you were conceiving from a man, and then you go and you have an abortion. And you’re praying to Me? Uh- uh, I’m God. I’m the holy One of Israel. I am the Lord of hosts. I’m the Sovereign Ruler of all the universe. My name is “Yahweh,” the terrible and awesome God, and I expect you to live righteously. I expect you to live according to My Book.” You say, “I haven’t; what do I do?” He says, **“Wash yourselves, [wash yourselves] make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight.”** (Isaiah 1:16) [“Know this, there’s no hiding from Me, you can turn out all the lights. You can say the night will cover me, but it will be light about you. You can say I will descend into the bowels of the earth, but even there, I’m there.”] (PARAPHRASE, Psalms 139:7-12) He says, **“...Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight....”** (Isaiah 1:16) You say, “And what if I do, will I be accepted then?” Come now, come now, we’ll reason together in just a minute.

PART TWO

God’s far away. Life is a mess. You’ve blown it. You’ve done things that you shouldn’t have done. You’re paying the consequences. What do you do? [Come now, come now. Come and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, though they be double dyed, they can be, you can be as white

as snow.] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 1:18) God's business is redemption. God's business is forgiveness. God's business is to redeem you out of sin. God's business is restoration. What do you need to do? Oh, let's listen. He says, **“Come now....” (Isaiah 1:18)** Here's a call to action, an action that will lead to God moving on your behalf. **“Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.’” (Isaiah 1:18)** We'd stop there, but we can't because there's something that you have to do. He says, **“If you consent and obey....” (Isaiah 1:19)** In other words, “If you will agree with Me,” God says, “If you will consent, if you will acknowledge that you've revolted. If you will acknowledge that you've become the authority in your life and not Me, if you'll return to Me, and you will obey Me, then I will cleanse you.” Watch what He says. It's so beautiful. He says, **“If you consent and obey...,”** listen this is so good; **“...you will eat the best of the land.” (Isaiah 1:19)** “There's no end to what I will do for you, but it requires consenting. It requires agreeing with Me. It requires obeying Me.” You know, in 1 John 1:9, you see the same principle, **“If we confess our sins....” (1 John 1:9)** The word “confess” in the Greek is “homologeō.” It means “to say the same thing.” If you will acknowledge that sin is sin, if you will acknowledge that God is God, and that He has authority over you, and He is to be obeyed, then He says, **“...You will eat the best of the land; But...,”** and here's the contrast, **“...if you refuse and [you] rebel, you will be devoured by the sword....”** And then listen to what He says, **“...Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (Isaiah 1:19-20)** He's saying, “You have a choice. You have a choice, a choice of blessing or a choice of judgment. You determine, you consent, you obey, you'll eat the best of the land. Otherwise, you'll be devoured from this land. You'll be devoured by the sword!” **“How the faithful city has become a harlot, she who was full of justice...!” (Isaiah 1:21)** Isn't that interesting? He calls the faithful city, faithful to Him, a harlot. She became a harlot. You know, we don't even have the word in

our vocabulary anymore. Prostitution is just fine. It's a way to earn a living. It's fine for you men to go and hire a prostitute. Well, you can listen to that, but I want to tell you something. God says that, **“Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but [fornicators] and adulterers God will judge.” (Hebrews 13:4, KJV)** Precious One, listen to me, listen to me. I'm your friend, not your enemy. God has raised me up to be a teacher to help you study the Word of God, to help you know His precepts for life, to help you discover truth for yourself, so that you might be liberated from your sins, and so that you might have the blessing of God. I'm not your enemy. But I am your enemy if I do not tell you the truth, if I do not point you to the Word of God. If you are having sex outside of marriage, you are living like a harlot, and God judges. He says, **“...she who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her....” (Isaiah 1:21)** There was a day when you did what was right. There was a day— righteousness is doing what God says is right, righteousness is acknowledging that there are absolutes. He says, **“...but now [there are] murderers. Your silver has become dross...,”** your money's worthless, and you see that happening to our money more and more and more. **“...Your drink [is] diluted with water.”** You can't have the pure stuff anymore. **“Your rulers are rebels and companions of thieves; everyone loves a bribe and chases after rewards....”** And this is what's happening in our nation. Look at all the scandals among the leaders of the nation. **“...They do not defend the orphan, nor does the widow's plea come before them.” (Isaiah 1:21-23)** They fleece them. They're out to get them. When you look, and you listen to the news, and you see what is going on in our nation and in the nations of the world, and you see all the corruption, you've got to know that we are in a terrible, terrible state. It says, **“Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts...,”** and here it is Yahweh Adonai, Adonai, Yahweh of hosts, Sabaoth, **“...the Mighty One of Israel, declares....”** He's speaking again, we'd better pay attention. **“...I will be relieved of My adversaries and [will] avenge Myself on My foes. I will also turn My hand against you...[I] will smelt**

away your dross as with lye and [I] will remove...your alloy. Then I will restore your judges...at...first, and your counselors...at the beginning; after that you will be called the city of righteousness, a faithful city.”

(Isaiah 1:24-26) Do you realize, Precious One, how far we have degenerated morally as a nation? Do you realize how pompous we have become? We are more pompous than the ass that rebels, that stops. He says, [“the ass knows its manger, he knows his master, the donkey knows.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 1:3) I have watched in Romania as the cows came down the street without being led. And they went off into the place where they would be fed, and they knew which house it was. And we don’t know anymore because we’ve gotten so far away from God. And that’s why this program is here for you. And I pray that you will help us support it. I pray that you will help us get the Word of God across this nation, so that they might know that these are the precepts for life. What is He doing? He’s saying, “I’m gonna come in, and I’m going to sort. I’m going to get rid of this, and I’m going to get rid of that. And I’m going to get rid of it because it’s corrupting My people.” There is a day coming when God, and He’s speaking collectively ’cause He’s speaking to the city, when I’m gonna come in, “**“And [I’m going to remove the] dross [I’m going to] remove [the] alloy. [and] then I [am going to] restore your judges as at the first...your counselors...at the beginning [and] after that you will be called the city of righteousness, a faithful city.”**” He says, “**Zion will be redeemed with justice and...,”** listen, “**...her repentant ones with righteousness.”** (Isaiah 1:25-27) Repentant are those that see that they are wrong and turn around and come to God. And He then removes their sin, those double-dyed sins, and makes them as white as snow. That’s His word for you today, Beloved. No matter how dirty you’ve been, no matter how stained, you can be clean, God’s way.