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

TITLE: Program 30 – Who Can Turn Back His Hand?

FRIDAY

OPEN

Don't you love to hear about the love of God? Don't you love to sing about His mercy, His grace, His compassion? But what about the other side of God? What about His holiness? What about His righteousness? What about His righteous indignation and anger? What about His judgment of sin? Do you like to hear about that? O Beloved, if you want the truth about God you have to get the whole picture. We'll do that today.

PART ONE

We've come to that oracle regarding Babylon. We have seen the demise of Babylon. We have seen how eventually Babylon will be a haunt for jackals. Their houses will not be filled with people, it'll be filled with owls. It will be totally devastated and ruined. We've seen that. We have seen that God in His mercy and in His grace has brought Israel to a time of rest where now Israel is the one that is having the world wait on them rather than being slaves and captives and the off scouring of the earth. We have come to this

time, and now in Isaiah, a taunt is taken up. Now that the earth is at rest, now that things are at peace, a taunt is taken up about the king of Babylon. And as we look at that so to speak, funeral dirge, that song that is sung about him, those words that are proclaimed, we get a glimpse into the holiness of God, into the righteousness of God, into the ultimate triumph of God. Let's look at it, Isaiah chapter 14. Now remember he's talking about the king of Babylon. And there are people that have taught that this is a prophecy about Satan. And they have taught that it is a prophecy about Satan, and I've got to tell you something, I did too, until I really looked at it in the context of all of Isaiah. So many times we go to a chapter and we read something and it sounds like another passage and we put them together, but we've ripped it out of its context. Here is a taunt about the king of Babylon. And when it comes down to verse 12 and it's talking about him and you're marking the text it says, **"How you..., the king of Babylon, "...have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, [O] son of the dawn! You have been cut down to...earth, you who...weakened the nations!" (Isaiah 14:12)** We think of it as Satan. And yet, when we keep reading and we take it in its context it says, **"...Is this the man..., verse 16, the middle of the verse, "...Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms?" (Isaiah 14:16)** No, here is a man that is being judged by God. This is not Satan. This is not the fallen angel, but this is a man, now listen, that has exalted himself against God. It goes on to say, **"But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God...I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" (Isaiah 14:13-14)** In other words, "I'll be my own God. I'll be like God. I don't need a god." Now when you look at Isaiah chapter 13 and 14 you want to read it in conjunction with Jeremiah chapter 50 and 51. In Jeremiah chapter 50 verse 1, **"...the Lord spoke concerning Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through Jeremiah the prophet."** And it says,

“Declare and proclaim among the nations. Proclaim it and lift up a standard...,” (Jeremiah 50:1-2) just like Isaiah 13, verse 1 and 2 begins, **“Lift up [the] standard....” (Isaiah 13:2)** It says, **“...Do not conceal it but say, ‘Babylon has been captured, Bel has been put to shame, Marduk has been shattered...;’”** those are their gods. **“...Her images have been put to shame, her idols have been shattered. For a nation has come up against her out of the north; it will make her land an object of horror, and there will be no more inhabitant in it. Both man and beast have wandered off, they have gone away!”** **(Jeremiah 50:2-3)** Now that just so resonates with you if you have studied and observed Isaiah chapter 13 and 14. But now next to Isaiah 14, verse 13 where it says, **“...You have said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven...,”** write Jeremiah 51 and verse 53 and let’s look at Jeremiah 51:53 because both these chapters, like Isaiah 13 and 14 have to do with Babylon. And so in verse 53 it says this, **“Though Babylon should ascend to the heavens, and though she should fortify her lofty stronghold[s] [he says] from Me destroyers will come to her....” (Jeremiah 51:53)** In other words, they’re ascending to the heavens. They’re exalting themselves above God. You can’t do that and get away with it. Babylon can’t do it and get away with it. No nation can do it and get away with it. And listen to me, no individual, no matter how low you may see yourself on the rung of humanity, that you haven’t attained very much and no one would notice you, God notices you. And so we come in Isaiah chapter 14, let’s go back. And this is what he says in verse 16, **“Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you, saying, ‘Is this the man [that] made the earth tremble....”** Is this the one that shook up everything? **“...Who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a wilderness...?” (Isaiah 14:16-17)** Is this the man? I love history and I didn’t love history until I became a Christian. And then I saw, hey, history is His story. It’s God’s story. It’s God moving through the nations and moving through time, taking us to this

ultimate Day of the Lord when eventually He will set up His kingdom. But as I look at it and as I study it, I look at Hitler. What was that man? He was a nobody. He was a loser, and yet this man, who in a sense, belonged to the devil, this man took control of brilliant Germany and overpowered them. Look at the history of Russia, look at Lenin, look at Marx, look at these people. Look at Idi Amin. Look at at these horrible horrible people that, in a sense, made their lands tremble. **“Who made the world...a wilderness [who] overthrew its cities, who did not allow [its] prisoners to go home.” (Isaiah 14:17)** Read some of the stories of some of those Russians that were sent to Siberia, that were not allowed to go home. Look at the cruelty. Look at the cruelty of Hitler when he knows the war is lost and yet he wants to kill all those Jews. It says, **“All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb.” (Isaiah 14:18)** I mean you can go to the Vatican and you can see these glorious, glorious tombs of the popes. You can go to countries and you can see where the bones, so to speak, or the tombs of these mighty kings. And he says, **“But you have been cast out of your tomb....”** You don’t even have a tomb on the earth. **“...Like a rejected branch, clothed with the slain who are pierced with a sword, who go down to the stones of the pit like a trampled corpse. You will not be united with them in burial, because you have ruined your country, you have slain your people. May the offspring of evildoers not be mentioned forever. Prepare for his sons [the king of Babylon’s sons] a place of slaughter because of the iniquity of their fathers. They must not arise and take possession of the earth and fill the face of the world with cities.” (Isaiah 14:19-21)** You see this is what they did in the first day of Babel when God came down and confused their language. God had told them to scatter and they said, “Oh no, we will build for ourselves a city. We will build for ourselves a tower whose top reaches into the heavens. We will be like the Most High.” (See Genesis 11:1-9) And he says, “You will be brought down to the earth.” And he says, **“Prepare for his sons a place of slaughter**

because of the iniquity of their fathers. They must not arise and take possession of the earth and fill the face of the world with cities.” And this is what He says, **“I will rise up against them,” declares the Lord of hosts, “and will cut off from Babylon name and survivors, offspring and posterity....” (Isaiah 14:21-22)** In other words, Babylon is going to be totally, absolutely obliterated, obliterated. There’s not going to be one survivor because God does not want that iniquity to continue. What is He saying here? Go back to verse 7 as they take up the taunt against the king of Babylon who has died and who has gone to Sheol, **“The whole earth is at rest and... quiet; they break forth into shouts of joy.” (Isaiah 14:7)** This is what it’s going to be like when the Lord deals with the wicked of this earth, and when God sets up His kingdom. He says in verse 23, **“I will...make [Babylon] a possession for the hedgehog and swamps of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,’ says the Lord of hosts.” (Isaiah 14:23)** He’s just gonna take that broom of destruction and He is gonna sweep through Babylon. He’s going to get rid of them all. And yet, you know what? He gets rid of them all, but they continue to live. They continue to live. They continue to live either in Hades or in heaven. These are people that did not even believe in Him. Remember the question at the beginning of the week: what if I don’t believe, then does that mean I escape what this Bible has to say, because I simply don’t believe in God? O no, there is no escape from God. **“If [you] take the winds of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,” He’s there. (Psalms 139:9 KJV) “If [you] say...‘darkness shall cover me; even the night will be light about [you].’” (Psalms 139:11 KJV)** There is no hiding from God. He searches it out. We’ll talk about it more in just a minute.

PART TWO

Well the taunt against the king of Babylon has come to an end. But I don’t want us to leave it right away because I want us to see that there is a place

called Sheol. I want us to see and be convinced in our mind that the Sheol is a place that is referred to in the New Testament as Hades, a place of the dead, a permanent place, until we come to the end of the thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on Earth. And then this present heavens and this present earth will be renovated by fire, so to speak, and there will be a new heaven and there will be a new earth. And in between that there will be a great white throne judgment. And at that time death and Hades will be delivered over to be judged. (See Revelation 20:7-14) You really need to understand this, and this is a wonderful time and opportunity for us to see this. So I want you to go to Luke chapter 16, Luke chapter 16. Now as we turn there I want you to know that Luke 16 is not a parable. It is not a story that Jesus made up that has one central point, that He wants to get across. Luke 16 does not carry the characteristics of a parable. Rather Luke 16 is a true account. It is an insight that Jesus gives to you and to me and to all who will read His Word of what happens when we die. So follow me very carefully. Now in Luke 16, verse 19 it says, **“Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus [to] dip the tip of his finger in water and cool...my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your life you received...good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things....’”** Are you going through bad things right now? If you know Jesus, Precious One, hang on, the good is going to come. It says, **“...But now he’s being comforted**

here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from over there to us.’ [Then] he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father’s house—for I have five brothers—in order that [you] may warn them,’” listen carefully, “so that they will not...come to this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear [him] (*them*)’. [And] he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’” “Repent” means to have a change of mind. “But he said to [them] (*him*), ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’” (Luke 16:19-31) In other words, if they won’t take God at His word, if they won’t listen to Moses and the Prophets; you and I are studying one of the Prophets. We’re studying Isaiah and I keep thinking, Lord, will they stay in there with me? Now what is he telling us? Well, what I want to do is, I want to come on our timeline, and I want to put a cross. That cross representing the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What Jesus is describing in Luke is a place that existed before Jesus died on that cross. It had two parts. It had Abraham’s bosom and it had a part where they were in flames and torment. You could not cross over. You just read it, because there was a great gulf fixed. In other words, once you died you went to this place. And it says, and it calls it the place of Hades; and so it is referred to as Hades, a synonymous term with Sheol, which is what we have read in Isaiah. And this is where the good go and the evil go. And they go to this place according to the way that we have lived. It’s our lifestyle that shows our faith or lack of faith. After Jesus Christ dies on the cross and pays for the sins of mankind, is buried, and then is raised from the dead, then He is called the firstborn from the dead. (See Colossians 1:18) He is called the first fruits of the resurrection. (See 1 Corinthians 15:20) Remember He turns to the man on the cross that says, “[Lord], **remember**

me...in Your kingdom!” And He says, “...[In this day] **you will be with Me in Paradise.**” (Luke 23:42-43) Why? He has believed. And so what we see is, that after Jesus Christ dies then Jesus leads captivity captive. He takes those people out of the side of Abraham’s bosom and takes them to heaven. So that now Paul writes in Philippians and in Corinthians that “...to be **absent from the body, [is] to be present with the Lord.**” (2 Corinthians 5:8, KJV) He says that is far better. So what happens is you have one side of Sheol, one side of Hades vacated. But where do the lost go now who have not believed in Jesus Christ, who die without receiving Him? They go to the hot side, and there they stay until Revelation chapter 20, Revelation chapter 20. And this is what it says in Revelation chapter 20 in verse 13, “**And the sea gave up the dead which were in [them], and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged...according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.**” (Revelation 20:13-14) You’re going to learn more about it in the book of Isaiah. But I want to close with one word of promise, one word of assurance. And that is what the Lord of hosts says in Isaiah 14, verse 24. “**The Lord of hosts has sworn saying, ‘Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand, to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden...from their shoulder[s]. This is the plan devised against the whole earth....’**” (Isaiah 14:24-26) So he says, “I have taken care of Assyria. I just told you how I’m taking care of Babylon.” “**This is the plan devised against the whole earth...this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations. For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And...His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?**” (Isaiah 14:26-27) He is God. You better bow the knee and believe in Him.