

When God's Patience Runs Out, Part 1

Scripture: John 12:35–43

Code: 43-65

Turn to John chapter 12 now in our study of the Word of God. As you know, we are going through this history of our Lord written by the apostle John, and we find ourselves in chapter 12. Of course, in chapter 12, we are in Passion Week. We are in the week our Lord is crucified. In fact, as we come to the text before us today, we are going to hear our Lord's final invitation to the Jews, to Israel, final opportunity to believe in Him before the light goes out. Let's begin reading at verse 35 and I'll read down to verse 43.

"So Jesus said to them, 'For a little while longer, the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.' These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them. But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believe in Him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?' For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 'He has blinded their eyes and he hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and be converted and I heal them.' These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him. Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God."

We live in a very twisted world as you know, a world where everything is reversed. Dark has substituted for light. Evil has substituted for good. Bitterness has substituted for sweetness, to borrow the words of the prophet Isaiah. It's a twisted world where sins have become rights, iniquities have become virtues. Evil is considered personal freedom. We could talk a lot about the twisting of our morals in this culture. We could talk about the various aspects of morality that have been perverted and inverted, twisted. We can also talk about the outcomes, but that's for another time. There is, however, one inversion, one perversion, one twisting that might serve us well as we consider the passage before us.

In our culture and in our time, there is an exaltation of anger. Anger has become something noble. Anger has become a right. Anger has somehow become a virtue. Anger has become justified, and I mean anger of a severe nature, anger that leads to vengeance and may well lead to violence. It all seems to be justified because somebody was offended, and if any behavior is offensive, then anger has been legitimized. Hatred, a vicious kind of hostility and retaliation are being expressed all the time. And they are expressions of the wretched condition of the human heart, make no mistake. This society may see it as virtuous and see it as some kind of freedom of personal rights, but the truth of the matter is anger is a fallen reaction, a corrupt reaction of the pride of our sinful natures.

And it demonstrates how unlike God we are, how unlike God we are. People in our culture, in our time lack compassion on those who have offended them. Forgiveness comes hard if it ever comes

at all. When people have been offended, they demonstrate little grace, mercy, longsuffering. They're anything but slow to anger, and they are not patient. That is exactly the opposite of God. God is compassionate, forgiving, gracious, merciful, longsuffering, slow to anger, and astonishingly patient. God is the one who is offended by every sin. God is offended by everyone all the time. God is offended in an incalculable way, an inconceivable way. God, who is absolutely holy, is offended by every violation of His Word, law, nature, name.

That's what makes His patience so amazing. He said to man in the garden, "In the day that you eat of the fruit, you'll die." Adam and Eve ate, and Adam lived 930 years. Amazing patience with sinners. God said, "I'm going to destroy the world in a flood." But before the destruction came, God established a preacher by the name of Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, and he preached judgment, and called for repentance for 120 years. Peter in 1 Peter 3:20 describes this as the patience of God, waiting in the days of Noah, the patience of God. Even the psalmist at his highest moments of reflective worship questions why God doesn't act against those who violate Him.

We know the imprecatory psalms, the psalms that call on God to judge the wicked, to punish the wicked, even to slay the wicked. The psalmist always wants to uphold God's glory and God's honor and God's name, and he wonders as he cries out in his worship, "How, God, can you allow the wicked to prosper? How can you allow your name to be dishonored?" So he prays for God's vengeance on his enemies.

The Psalmist looking at the dire situation among his own people and the enemies encroaching from the outside says, "How long, O Lord? How long? How long? How can you be so patient?" You come to the book of Revelation in a future time called the Great Tribulation when judgment begins to be wrought by God in the world, and you have some martyrs who are crying out to God saying, "How long? How long? How long?" It always seems that judgment is delayed with God. Of course, Paul says in Romans 2 that the forbearance and patience of God is meant to lead you to repentance. Psalm 78:38 says this, "He – " that is God, " – being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them." That was true for the world for millennia before the flood, and it was true for Israel for centuries before the Babylonian captivity. Isaiah 48:9 says, "For the sake of my name, I delay my wrath and for my praise, I restrain it for you in order not to kill you." What does He mean by that? I want to put my grace on display, my mercy, my longsuffering, my patience.

But that doesn't last forever. That doesn't last forever. Eventually God runs out of patience, and that is where we are in John 12, and that is where Israel was at the brink of the Babylonian captivity. Apostasy, disobedience, idolatry, disrespect to God, dishonoring His name, blaspheming Him was a way of life, and it finally came to an end. In 2 Chronicles 36:16 we read this, "They continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, scoffed at His prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people until there was no remedy." God has an end to His patience. The end came in the Babylonian hoards that came and massacred tens of thousands of Jews. The ones that didn't die were carried off into captivity. Those who died, obviously sent to an eternal destruction.

The text before us in John 12 is like that text in Chronicles. It's the final warning. God has run out of time. He's run out of patience. This is the day the light went out. It's Passion Week. It's toward the end of the week. Friday, He will be crucified. At some point in the end of the week, Jesus speaks in verse 35, "For a little while longer, the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light."

That is the first point in this text: the final call, the final call. This is a call to unbelievers. It is the last one. This is it. They've had generations and generations – hundreds and hundreds of years since they were recovered from their captivity and brought back to their land to rebuild it – to demonstrate their love for God, their obedience to God. They have not been obedient. Though they have not been idolatrous, they have continued to kill the prophets. They have continued all the way up until their only hours from killing the Messiah, the Son of God. There is one final appeal, one final appeal, and this is it.

The people have given their verdict. Back to verse 34. You remember what was going on in verse 34? Jesus had announced that He was going to die back in verse 24 in the metaphor of a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying so that it could produce fruit. He would not be able to bear spiritual fruit if He didn't die. He had to die. He had come to die. His death would be by crucifixion. There was a metaphor for crucifixion; being lifted up. In verse 32, He said, "I, if I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to Myself."

There He declares His coming crucifixion in terms that they all understood His crucifixion because, He says in verse 33 that this is the kind of death which He was to die. The crowd understood it. Verse 34, they rendered their verdict. "We have heard out of the law – " the Old Testament, " - that the Messiah is to remain forever." He is to set up an eternal, everlasting kingdom. "How can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" they say cynically.

So, on Monday they were saying He was the Son of David, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." They were hailing Him as the Messiah because, of course, He had done miracles for three years. They all knew about it and capped it off with the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. There was a euphoria. This is Him. This is the Messiah. As He came into the city, hundreds of thousands of people acclaimed Him "Messiah." Tuesday, He attacks the temple. He attacks their religious system, not the Romans, and creates doubt in their mind. Then He says He's going to die, and that's the final straw. They shift from seeing Him as the Messiah to seeing Him as an imposter. "Who is this Son of Man who is going to be crucified?" Within hours, they will scream, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

The day of grace had come to its end. This is the final call. But again it shows the mercy, the grace, the compassion, the longsuffering, the patience and the kindness of the Savior. He had preached among them for three years. Everything He did was public. Only a few hours remain now. In fact He says this, look at verse 35, "For a little while." He'd said that before. He said it would be a little while back in chapter 7, verse 33, but then it was months. Not it's a little while, and it's hours. He says it again when He meets with His disciples on Thursday night. He says it in chapter 13. He says it in chapter 14, chapter 16; all of which take place in that Upper Room with the disciples. He says, "A little while, a little while, a little while." And it really is a little while now. It's just hours. But for the crowd, it's very brief.

"For a little while longer, the Light is among you." Just a little while, and then the day of salvation for that generation of Jews came to an end. It's reminiscent of where the prophet also warns the nation Israel on the brink of captivity. "Give glory to the Lord your God before He brings darkness and before your feet stumble on the dusky mountains, and while you are hoping for light, He makes it into deep darkness, and turns it into gloom."

The prophet Isaiah called for repentance. The prophet Jeremiah called for repentance and faith on the brink of judgment before the darkness fell. That's the same picture here. For a little while longer, the light is among you. It's just hours now. Walk while you have the light so that darkness will not overtake you." He who walks in the darkness doesn't know where to go. It's a metaphor. Without electric lights, all you had was a candle, and when darkness came, it was darkness. It was unmitigated black darkness. If you were taking a journey somewhere, you didn't want to be walking when the sun went down. You couldn't find your way. Well, that metaphor pictures the coming judgment when the sun sets, the Son of righteousness sets, and all is spiritual blackness and darkness.

Walk is the word in verse 35. Verse 36, "While you have the Light, believe." Walk equals believe. "Believe in the Light so that you may become sons of Light." This is His final invitation, final invitation. Make the journey of faith, believe, and once the light of the world is no longer present, the unbelieving world will be dark, and you will be like a traveler completely lost in a moonless night who wanders to his own danger and destruction. Back in chapter 8 and verse 21, Jesus said, "I go away and you will seek Me and will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come." In verse 24, therefore, I said to you, you will die in your sins for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins. You will seek Me. You will die in your sins if you do not believe."

He said in that same chapter earlier, verse 12, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness." Come to Christ, you come to light. Come to Christ, you become a child of light, a son of light. Magnificent pictures, but you don't have much time. Receive Him while you are able. He is the Light. We know that metaphor through the gospel of John. He is the Light of God's life. He is the Light of God's wisdom, and the Light of God's truth, the Light of God's holiness, the Light of God's righteousness. He is the Light that shines in the darkness, and the darkness can't put it out. He has come to be the Light of the world. But the opportunity is coming to its end. The Light is here. Now is the time to believe.

How does that translate to us? I don't know when the darkness falls for you as an individual. I don't know when the darkness falls for us as a culture, as a nation. I don't know when the final darkness falls in judgment, divine judgment on the world, but I know that God's mercy doesn't last forever. That's the warning. Receive Him while you are able. It was Nehemiah 9:30 that expressed a very similar statement. Nehemiah, as you remember, had come back to help the people rebuild. Listen to what Nehemiah 9:30 says as he speaks to God, "You bore with them for many years, and You admonished them with your Spirit through Your prophets, yet they would not give ear. Therefore, You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake them, for You are a gracious and compassionate God."

He is a gracious and compassionate God, but He has limits. Genesis 6 just before the flood, God said this, "My Spirit will not always strive with man. I won't keep this up forever." And then He drowned the entire world except eight people. Jesus was warning Israel, and through this God is still warning you, warning anyone who hears not to go beyond the limits of God's patience. If your heart is still at all sensitive to the gospel, if you are feeling the pull of God to believe in Jesus Christ, confess Him as Lord, turn from your sin, repent of your sin, and follow Him; if you are feeling that, then now is the day of salvation, 2 Corinthians 6:2. Now is the time to believe because I can't guarantee how long that will last.

While Christ is in your midst, while the gospel is still attractive to you, while you can still hear, believe and become, as He says in verse 36, "Sons of Light," little lights. It's a magnificent idea. God is Light. God revealed Himself in the Old Testament as Light, Shekinah Glory. God is shining His light in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 4. Jesus Christ is God incarnate. The glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Anyone who comes to Christ then has the very light of God through Christ shining in them so that we are lights in the world, the apostle Paul says. Jesus said, "You are the Light of the world," Matthew 5.

We become sons of Light. That's what it says here and also in 1 Thessalonians 5. We become saints in Light, Colossians 1. We become children of Light, Ephesians 5. This is simply to say that we possess the life of God. God is life. Christ is God's life. Our salvation brings us that same divine life, and we also shine as lights in the world. So the invitation is a final call to walk while you still have the Light and you can see the truth, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ while you may. It's only a little while.

How short was the time? Go back to verse 36. These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them. Didn't make another public appearance that week. It was over. It was over. Luke 21:38 tells us that in the morning the people gathered to the temple expecting Him, but He wasn't there. He had come unto His own, and His own received Him not. It wasn't just a cloud veiling the sun. The sun had set, and the darkness was complete. His words were fulfilled. "You will seek Me and will not find Me, and where I go, you can never come." That's a judgment. That is a judgment.

His physical hiding was acting out the judgment. It was a dramatic act portraying the judgment. So the verdict is in on Israel. They saw all the evidence. They heard all the teaching. They saw the miracles. They were all done openly. They were all done publicly, but it was over. It was completely over. In John 15:24, our Lord said, and He said this Thursday night with His disciples in the Upper Room, "If I hadn't done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sinned, but now they have both seen and hated Me and my Father as well." They hated Me. They hated my Father, and they saw everything I did. That's His final call, and He disappears. What a sad day, the day the Light went out, the day the sun went down. Three years, and He was there every day, and then He was gone.

His public ministry is over. The rest of the chapter John summarizes his insights inspired by the Holy Spirit, and he helps us to make some sense out of this incredibly dark day. So we have in verses 35 and 36, the final call to unbelief. But that poses a serious question: Does this mean that somehow God's plan went bad? Is this a collapse of God's entire redemptive purpose? Did the best intentions of God and Christ and the followers of Jesus all end up in ashes?

That takes us to the second point, the fatal components of unbelief. We saw the final call to unbelief, and here are the fatal components. This is very, very important to understand. There are some, in particularly Jewish commentators through the years, who feel that the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews, by the nation Israel throws suspicion on His life. The idea is this; they knew the Word of God. They were the people of God. They had the Scriptures in their hands. If Jesus had been the Messiah, they would have recognized it. They would have recognized it. So, perhaps, the evidence wasn't really as great as Christianity claims it was if the proofs of His divine origin and mission were

so obvious, then Israel would have believed. Israel would not have been so prejudiced, let alone so angry and see Him as a blasphemer if He really had laid out the evidence.

So John wants to make sure that nobody gets away with that argument. So in verse 37 he says this, "But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him." You say, "Well, that's just John's word. That's just John's word." No, it's not. Go back to chapter 11, verse 47. Let's go to the supreme court of Israel, the highest court in the land, the Sanhedrin. The chief priests and the Pharisees convene in this council called the Sanhedrin, and what do they say when they come together in the council? They were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs." No one ever denied the miracles of Jesus. His enemies never denied one of His miracles, never tried to deny it. In fact, at the end of the gospel of John, the final verse in chapter 21 says, "There were many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written."

Massive evidence, massive testimony confessed to not only by John, but by the Sanhedrin, the supreme court of Israel. They didn't even attempt to disprove what He did. He healed the sick, expelled demons, controlled the winds and the sea, walked on water, turned water into wine, revealed to men their secret thoughts, raised the dead, and nobody ever denied any of it. They were open miracles. They were public miracles for everybody to see. Many of them done in the most public place of all, in and around the temple, and still they refused to believe. That's what I read you in John 15:24. They wouldn't have the level of sin they have if they had not seen what they saw and heard what they heard. "They have hated Me without cause." They refused to believe.

Here's the danger. When they would not believe, the judgment came, and they could not believe. You don't want to pass into that category. When they would not believe, the judgment came, and they could not believe. Follow the text. They were not believing in Him, verse 37 says. They were not believing in Him, "To fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which He spoke: 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?' For this reason, they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 'He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and be converted and I heal them.'"

Verse 37 and 38 says they would not believe. Verse 38 and verse 39 says they, therefore, could not believe. Now, there are two components, two fatal components to unbelief. Number one, the sovereignty of God. This is where John starts, with the sovereignty of God. Did this whole thing surprise God? Was God shocked at the unbelief of Israel? Did God have different expectations for Israel? Is God, as some theologians would tell us, unaware of the future? Is He figuring it out as He goes? Is He not really in charge? It's too bad about God's plan. We have to feel sorry for Him? He sent His Son; it didn't work out. God must be frustrated, His plans all fouled up. No, no. They were not believing in Him, and oh by the way, that is exactly what Isaiah the prophet said would happen. "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" is taken from Isaiah 53:1.

Let's go back to Isaiah 53, that beloved Messianic prophesy. Isaiah 53:1. As we pointed out when we did a series on this, it's in the past tense, which is strange for a prophesy because it's obviously looking forward to Christ because it describes Him bearing our griefs, carrying our sorrows in verse 4. Stricken, smitten by God, afflicted, pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, chastened for our well-being, scourged for our healing. Verse 7, being oppressed, afflicted, didn't

open His mouth, which He didn't at His trial. He was led like a lamb to slaughter, like a sheep is silent before its shearers. He didn't open His mouth. He was taken by oppression, taken through judgment, taken away. He was cut off. He was killed. He was killed for the transgression of my people. His gave was with wicked men, yet He was with the rich man in the fact that He was buried in a tomb owned by a rich man.

All of this is the life of Christ in a prophetic chapter. It talks about His coming into the world. It talks about His life. It talks about His death. It talks about His resurrection. It talks about His exaltation, but the interesting thing is it's all past tense verbs. You'd think if it's a prophecy, it'd be future tense. "They *will* not believe our message. We *will not* see the arm of the Lord revealed." Why is it in the past? It's in the past because this is the confession of Israel when in the future they believe. At some time in the future, Israel will believe. All Israel will be saved. I'll show you that later. And when they come to look on the One they've pierced, as Zechariah 12:10 describes it, and mourn for Him, when that hour comes, they will look back and that is what they will say. "We didn't believe. We didn't believe. We didn't understand He was bruised for our iniquities. He's killed essentially, crucified for our sins and transgressions."

So this becomes the great penitent cry of a future generation of Jews who will look back at Jesus with a different view. The first thing they will say is in verse 1. "Who has believed the message given to us? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" What does that mean? Well, that's what's quoted. Now go back to John 12. Well, what they're saying is we didn't believe when He came and gave us the gospel message. We didn't believe. What is the arm of the Lord? Power, divine power. He came with divine power, miracle power, all His miracles. We didn't believe. We didn't see the revelation. This is their heartfelt, wrenching confession some time in the future when Israel looks back and they see that He was their Messiah, He was bruised for their iniquities. He was crushed for their transgressions. They will see that, but the first thing they'll acknowledge is we didn't believe. We didn't believe. We didn't see it as the arm of the Lord, the power of God. They didn't believe.

No, this doesn't catch God by surprise. Isaiah said this would be the way it was. They wouldn't believe. They wouldn't see the arm of the Lord being revealed through Christ. They would not believe, and then because they would not believe, verse 39, "For this reason, they could not believe." And this also parallels a text in Isaiah, Isaiah 6. Isaiah 6, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so that they wouldn't see with their eyes and perceive with their heart and be converted, and I heal them." Isaiah is prophesying the Babylonian captivity and the devastating death and desolation and destruction of Israel in the past. He says it's too late. He says to Isaiah, "It's too late, Isaiah. It's too late."

Isaiah has been cleansed. You remember he sees a vision of God. He's cleansed, and then God says, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" meaning the trinity. Who is going to go to this nation Israel? Who is going to go and preach judgment, preach judgment? Fifth chapters, all the judgment, preach judgment. Fifth chapter even describes the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, how they're going to come. Who is going to tell the people? Who is going to warn? Isaiah says, "Here am I. Send me." And God says, "Okay, you go, but know this, it's too late." He's blinded their eyes. He's hardened their heart. That's what He told Isaiah, "So that they wouldn't see with their eyes, perceive with their heart, be converted, and I heal them."

That is a terrifying reality. Because they would not believe for so long, for centuries and centuries

the time came when they could not believe. Oh, there was a small stump, a small holy seed. In verse 13 of Isaiah 6 He says, "There's a remnant." There's a small remnant, and that would have been true at the time of John 12, right? There was a small remnant. There were 500 believers in Galilee, 120 in Jerusalem. They were the disciples. There was a small stump, a holy seed. God always has a remnant. But for the nation, too late. God's patience had gone on for hundreds of years, and He was patient through the three years of Christ's ministry. Time's up. Time's up. They would not believe; therefore, they could not believe because God has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart.

Parallel to this is in Exodus 7, isn't it? The story of Pharaoh. If you read that story and just kind of chronicle a little bit, you'll find out that ten times it says, "Pharaoh hardened his heart. Pharaoh hardened his heart." Ten times. It also says ten times, "God hardened Pharaoh's heart." Pharaoh hardened his heart. God hardened his heart.

Listen, what they did to Jesus did not thwart God's plan. He planned their unbelief into the plan. He willed to make their unbelief the means by which He would provide salvation for the world. Two things came out of the Jews rejection of Jesus. Number one, the crucifixion. Was that important? Yes. Was that by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God planned before the foundation of the world? Was He not the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world? Now their unbelief didn't thwart the plan of God; it accomplished the plan of God. No one would be in heaven. Heaven would be void of any humans if Christ had not died on the cross. The reaction of the Jews to Jesus in rejecting Him led to the cross that produced salvation. Without the cross, there would be no salvation.

Not only that, the rejection of the Jews led to the establishment of the church, and that was always God's plan to take salvation to the ends of the earth, was it not? The ends of the earth. This is not contrary to God's plan. It is God's plan. God works through all the expressions of human sinfulness to accomplish His perfect plan perfectly. There's no plan B with God. God knew they would reject. They were fully capable of receiving the truth. They had that opportunity. They were so hard hearted, that they didn't. They would not believe, therefore, they could not believe. Their rejection, however, accomplished the plan of God because it led to the cross by which we are saved, and it led to the salvation of gentiles, which is the church made up of people from every tongue and tribe and nation on the planet. That had to happen.

Look at Romans chapter 11. This is a good place to kind of wrap up our thoughts. If you look at verse 11, for example, Romans 11:11, Paul says, "By their transgression, salvation has come to the gentiles." Verse 12, "By their transgression, comes riches for the world." Their failure, riches for the gentiles. This is all part of the plan, all part of the plan. Originally, God had called them to be a missionary nation, a witness nation. Take the message of the true God to the world. They wouldn't do it through obedience and faith, so they had to do it through judgment. God did it. God brought about salvation to the world through the transgression of Israel.

The olive branches and the tree in verse 17, "Were broken off – " the originals, the Jews, and you gentiles, " - wild olives, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree." But, "Do not be arrogant." Don't be arrogant. Verse 19, "You are going to say, 'Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.'" We replaced the Jews. "Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear, for if God did not spare the natural braches, He will not spare you, either," if you're a false believer.

And then He sums up a wonderful reality. Back in verse 11, “By their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make – ” the Jews what? “Jealous.” That jealousy will reach an apex. Verse 25, “A partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.” When the church is complete, “And then all Israel will be saved.” All Israel will be saved. Why? Because, verse 29, “The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable,” irrevocable. Through the rejection of Christ, God brought about the crucifixion of His Son, saved all who will ever be saved. Brought about the extension of the gospel and the gathering of the church across the world, and will one day bring back Israel.

The death of Christ does not alter God’s plan at all. In fact, John connects Christ to those Isaiah prophecies. Then in verse 41 he says something very interesting. To justify that connection, he says, “These things Isaiah said – ” he’s referring to chapter 6, “ – because he saw His glory and he spoke of Him.” We learn here for the first time that the vision of God in Isaiah 6 was none other than Christ Himself, Christ Himself. So in Isaiah 6, it was Christ saying, “They would not, they would not, and now they cannot.” It was Christ actually pronouncing the judgment of the impossibility of believing on the generation of Jews who were taken into Babylon or killed. It was Jesus pronouncing judgment then. It was Jesus giving a final invitation to a few who would believe then, and it is Jesus now back in John 12.

So it’s all foretold in Scripture. The truth is, though, God is patient, but He has His end. His Spirit will not always strive with you either, and because you will not believe, the day may come when you cannot believe. That’s a terrifying thought. This is a message from Christ, our Savior. It was a message from Him even in Isaiah 6, as it is in John as well.

Father, we come to this understanding with so much soberness because we understand the urgency of responding to the gospel. It’s so easy to postpone that for the sake of personal indulgence and because we love the darkness rather than the light. But Lord, your Holy Spirit can use the Word to terrify sinners, and that’s an important thing. They need to be terrified, terrified of the fact that they could go beyond the call of grace. They could go beyond mercy. They could go beyond compassion. They could go beyond forgiveness, and be locked in unbelief forever.

Father, I pray that you would open the eyes of many. Make hearts sensitive to respond while it is day and while they may. May they walk in the Light while they have the Light before the darkness falls. Father, I pray that you’ll do that work in hearts even now. To your eternal glory we pray, Amen.

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