“They Have Rebelled Against Me”

(Isaiah 1:2-20)
9-20-2023



Introduction:

1Samuel 15:23 – “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”

- **Today, we *(like Judah of old)* need to examine our hearts for stubborn rebellion against God**

I. *When we rebel,* we return evil for God’s goodness (v.2-4)

A. Rebellion is a failure to acknowledge God as the source of our blessings (v.2-3)

B. Rebellion is to forsake God for the sake of sin (v. 4)

II. *When we rebel,* we reap spiritual sickness & physical ruin (v.5-9)

III. *When we rebel,* none of our sacrifices & prayers are acceptable to God (v.10-15)

IV. *When we rebel,* nothing but full repentance can bring about full cleansing by God (v.16-18)

Conclusion: (v.19-20)

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Introduction:

Background to Isaiah

***<u>The Prophet</u> Isaiah**

1) Born into upper-class family; he preached to kings and leaders (7:3).

2) His name, YeshaYah means Yahweh Saves or Salvation is of the LORD (similar to the name Yahoshua (Joshua/Jesus)

3) He lived most of his life in Jerusalem and preached to the people of Judah (the southern Kingdom) of impending judgment due to wickedness, idolatry, and unequal yokes with pagan kings, cultures and customs

4) Northern Israel (10 tribes) would be taken captive in 722 BC to <u>Assyria</u>, and Judah (southern 2 tribes of Israel) would be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon finally in 586 B.C.

5) The book of Isaiah was written during the reigns of four kings of Judah (1:1).
   - Uzziah (790-739 B.C. Note Uzziah was also called Azariah in 2 Kings);
   - Jotham (750-731 B.C.);
   - Ahaz (735-715 B.C. Note: Samaria-Israel was taken captive by Assyria in 722 B.C.); and Hezekiah (715 – 686 B.C.).

   This would date the ministry of Isaiah during the years of 739-686 B.C. (He was called into the ministry the same year as when King Uzziah died (6:1);

   Therefore the book of Isaiah was written between the years of 740 – 681 B.C.

6) Isaiah would die in 681 or 680 B.C. when (according to Tradition he was in a hollow log and cut in two – cf. Hebrews 11:37). There is a tradition reported in the Martyrdom of Isaiah (a Christian text from around AD100 which expands on 2 Kings 21) that Isaiah was condemned to death by King Manasseh. Although he hid in a tree, he was found and the tree with Isaiah inside was sawn in half.

***<u>Predictive</u> Prophecy**

1) Liberals dispute the authorship of chapters 40-66 due to Isaiah's accurate predictions of:

   a) The Persian king Cyrus (chap. 45)
   b) The future suffering Messiah (chap. 52-53)
      --the Virgin birth
      --substitutionary death

2) Proofs that the 66 chapters were written by Isaiah include:

   a) The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls
   b) N.T. quotes of Isaiah attribute it to him
   c) Jesus Christ's quotes of Isaiah attribute it to him

***<u>Key Themes</u>:**

- The lethal effects of sin
- The sovereignty of God
- The coming Messiah
- The deity of Christ
- The Day of the Lord
- The Tribulation & Millennial Kingdom
- The holiness of God
- Restoration of Israel

"Authority" is a word Rebels hate

Society has programmed the generation we live in to distrust and disrespect authority.

- Due to Misuse (abuse of power)
- Due to Misunderstanding (of God's ways)

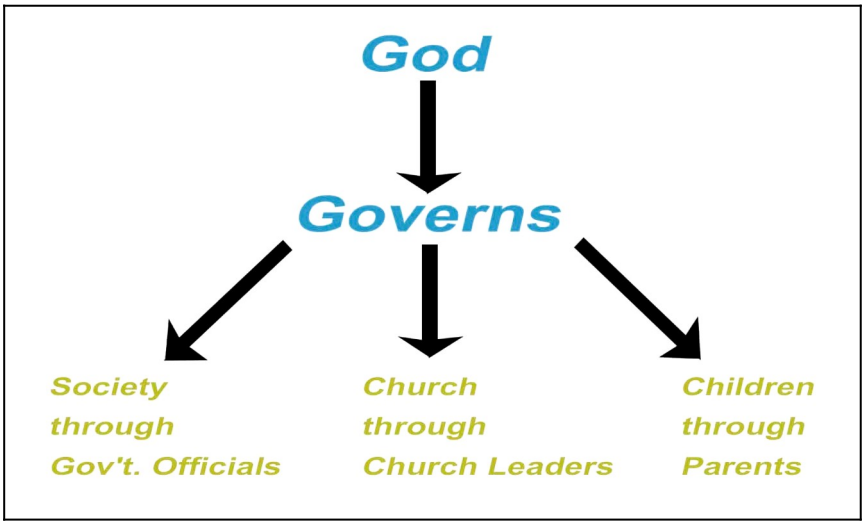
An "AUTHORITY" is someone with a position of <u>oversight</u>.

Three basic divinely established institutions to provide structure (order) and safety (protection) to society:

1) The <u>Home</u> (I Cor. 7:2ff; Eph. 5:22-6:4; I Cor.11:3)

2) The <u>Government</u> (Rom. 13:1-f)

3) The <u>Church</u> (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; I Peter 5:1-5)



Every authority is ultimately under God's authority

Psalm 47:2

For the LORD most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth.

Psalm 83:18

That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* the most high over all the earth.

Psalm 115:3

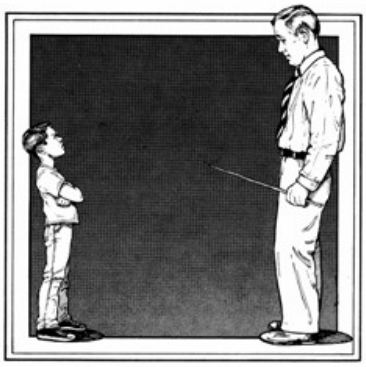
But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

Respect for parents is so serious that God told Moses:

*"He who **strikes** **(physical disrespect)** his father or his mother shall surely be put to death"; and "He who **curses** **(verbal disrespect)** his father or his mother shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 21:15, 17; cp. Lev. 20:9; Deut.21:18-21; 27:16; Proverbs 30:11-17).*

Proverbs 20:20 - "Whoso curseth his father or his mother,

his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness"
(ie. his life will be snuffed out)





One mark of the last days will be a disregard for authority

2 Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

- Colossians 3:20 says:
  "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

Rebellion is a theme in Isaiah:

Isa 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

Isa 1:20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Isa 1:23 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

Isa 30:1 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

Isa 30:9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD:

Isa 36:5 I say, sayest thou, (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

Isa 50:5 The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

Isa 63:10 But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

Isa 65:2 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts;

Isaiah was a prophet who would go and preach to the nation of Judah, yet they would not listen to him (Chapt. 6:9-11); Tradition says that Isaiah would eventually die by being cut in half by a saw (cp. Heb. 11:37).

1Samuel 15:23 – "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,

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- **Today, we *(like Judah of old)* need to examine our hearts for stubborn rebellion against God**

I. ***When we rebel,*** **we <u>return evil for God's goodness</u>** (v.2-4)

v. 2

Verse two introduces a courtroom scene in which God calls upon the heavens and earth to give witness to the indictment that God brings against the people of Judah and Jerusalem.

Here we have a court scene where God is the Judge, Israel is the guilty party, and the heavens and earth are the witnesses.

A. Rebellion is a <u>failure to acknowledge God</u> as the source of our blessings (v.2-3)

The Heavenly Father nourished (fed, took care of, reared) and brought up (saw safely to maturity) children; but after all that love and effort, they revolted against Him.

It is the ultimate heartbreak to pour your life into your children and then to have them "stab you in the back" for it. To pour your life's sweat, blood and tears into rearing your children and to have them rebel after all that is the height of inequity. But this is what God's people did to Him.

Consider all that God has done for you:

1) He gave you life
2) He sustained you by provision and protection
3) Along the way, He gave you whatever health you had
4) He put people into your life who took care of you and tried to teach you
5) He tugged at your heart and drew you to Himself
6) He opened your eyes to the Gospel and then saved your soul when you called upon Him
7) He has patiently put up with our immaturities and has forgiven us over and over again when we asked Him to

How could we <u>ignore</u> such a One?

A spiritual rebel is one who simply takes good things for granted. He assumes that he is deserving of all such blessings.

Rebellion is simply a failure to consistently acknowledge God for His abundant benefits.

Do you ignore God on a daily basis?

v. 3

The ox recognized its owner and the donkey was aware of where it's food came from (its master's manger or feeding trough), but Israel did not know where its blessings came from. In this case, the dumb ox and donkey were smarter than people.

Rebellion is to intentionally and inexcusably ignore where your blessings come from. Rebellion is like the dog which bites the hand that feeds it.

B. Rebellion is to <u>forsake God for the sake of sin</u> (v. 4)

v. 4

A rebel:

1) Intentionally <u>misses</u> God's goal for his life (sinful = to miss the mark)

2) Piles on sin after sin until totally weighed down by it ("laden with iniquity")

3) Spreads his wickedness to others (plants wicked "seed" in other's lives and is a "corruptor" of others)

4) Leaves communion and fellowship with God and backslides away from Him ("forsaken . . . gone away backward") (like the prodigal son)

II. ***When we rebel,*** **we reap spiritual sickness & physical ruin** (v.5-9)

v. 5

A rebel (revolter) does not respond to correction (chastisement). The picture of verse five is that of a man who has been flogged (shipped) for his evil, yet instead of mending his ways, he revolts more and more.

(God does chastise His children – Hebrews 12:5-11). Don't despise it, but respond to it.

A rebel (due to his sin) may bear the grievous effects of that sin, yet still refuse to submit to the truth. He doesn't learn.

How many people suffer with AIDS, yet persist in their homosexuality?
How many people deteriorate with hepatitis C yet continue to inject their bodies with heroin?
How many people suffer with scerosis of the liver, yet continue their alcoholic lifestyle?
How many cough and gasp for each breath yet persist in smoking those cancer sticks?

What will it take before you come back to God? Do you have to lose it all before you wake up to the ruin you are ruining to your life and family by your persistence in sin?

v. 5-6

The rebel is mule-headed, stubborn, wreckless abandonment of righteous and a relentless puruit of that which will destroy you.

The spiritual and physical effects of sin are evident in King David's life after his adulterous affair with Bathsheba (Psalm 32 & 51).

v. 7-8

How many rebels not only lose their health (v. 5-6) due to the consequences of their sin, but also will inevitably lose their material and physical resources (such as their job, their house, their finances).

God speaks prophetically of the future destruction that was coming to Judah and Jerusalem by the Babylonian empire (just as Israel would face from the Assyrian empire).

v. 8

God warned that He would leave the rebels defenseless and vulnerable because of their sin.

v. 9

God always has a small remnant who remain faithful to Him (cp. Rom. 9:29).

III. ***When we rebel,*** **none of our sacrifices & prayers are acceptable to God** (v.10-15)

V, 10

God calls rebellious Israel the equivalent of Sodom & Gomorrah.

As a matter of fact, any of us who rebel against God are worse than Sodom & Gomorrah, because we have more "light" than they had. They did not have a completed Bible or a Judeo-Christian foundation to build upon.

v. 11

As Samuel said to rebellious King Saul, "To obey is better than sacrifice."

God wants obedience (1 Sam. 15:22), a broken heart over sin (Ps. 51:17) and a Godly walk (Micah 6:6-8).

God is sick and tired of sacrifices without righteousness.

No amount of offerings can bail out the rebel.

v. 11-15

<u>Religion</u> does not atone for <u>rebellion</u>.

v. 12-14

The strict keeping of Jewish holy days and Sabbath days cannot atone for the sins of the rebel (they are but "filthy rags" – Is. 64:6).

v. 15

God hides His face from the prayers of the rebel. Ps. 66:18 – "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

There are prerequisites to answered prayer: --Obedience (1 Jn. 3:22) and righteousness (Ja. 5:16) are two requirements for answered prayer. "God heareth not sinners."

IV. *When we rebel,* nothing but full repentance can bring about full cleansing by God (v.16-18)

v. 16

"Wash you" – like a murderer washing his blood-stained hands, the people needed to cleanse themselves of their sins of commission and sins of omission.

Although God does the washing of sinners, He expects us to take part in the cleansing. We have a responsibility to cleanse oru lives.

This truth is repeated in the New Testament – "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded" (Ja. 4:8)

2 Cor. 7:1 – "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

"Before mine eyes" – it's not enough to put away the evil from the eyes of others and to secretly indulge in sin. We must repent of the sins that God alone sees (the secret sins).

v. 17

Repentance has a positive side to it. It's not just the negative side of stopping the sin; it is the positive side of doing right. Righteousness is the reason for the repentance. We turn from sin in order to turn to the right. We turn from idols to God, and from lies to truth.

You can't get more practical and sincere in your acts of righteousness than to seek truth, rebuke wrong, defend the orphan and widow (who can't repa you).

v. 18

"Come" – God's invitation is always "come."

"Now" – God's invitation is <u>urgent</u> (don't wait).

"Come now and let us reason together" – God is not saying, "Let's sit down and talk it over." He is saying, "Listen to My reason." My offer is a good one.

The most reasonable thing in life is to submit to God and receive His cleansing.

Isaiah 1:18 is the 1 John 1:9 of the Old Testament.

No matter how bloody your sin is, not matter how stained you are because of it, you can be cleansed so that you are (in God's eyes) as white as snow and wool.

Graciously the Judge is offering pardon to people who deserve punishment.

"There is a fountain filled with blood

Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flow,:
Lose all their guilty stains."

Conclusion: (v.19-20)

"Eat" (v. 19). . . or "be devoured" (v. 20) [same word as "eat"].

God is saying this: "Eat or be eaten." The choise is yours. God places before us blessing and cursing, life or death. Choose life!

There is still a chance for all to experience the blessed life. Such is God's desire.

God knew Israel would continue their rebellion, yet He makes a conditional promise of blessing.

The final chapter has not been written on your life. You can be forgiven today. You can start over today. You can be free today, if you repent of your rebellion.