



ISAIAH: THE MESSAGE OF HOPE

Lesson 4 - A Prophetic Word Requesting Obedience

John L. Kachelman, Jr

Dalraida Church of Christ, Montgomery, AL

INTRODUCTION

☞ Our study of this marvelous prophecy has explored two critical points in Inspiration's message of hope to mankind living in a hopeless existence.

1. We have seen how mankind has been offered a ☞ REDEMPTION that is "impossible." Left to his own resources the sin-problem can never be resolved. The Almighty God has developed a plan by which ALL can be saved!
2. The marvelous scheme of Redemption was to become a reality through the Abrahamic seed line. But Redemption is NOT based solely upon one's identification and association with a group. Redemption is offered exclusively to those who are identified and associated with the seed line of Abraham and who remain uncompromised. This exclusive group is identified as the ☞ "REMNANT."
3. Our current lesson examines obedience as a requirement for one to be a part of the Remnant. In order to be a part of the Remnant one must be obedient!

God offers Redemption to ALL mankind but only a Remnant will be saved because it has faithfully followed God's Request for obedience!

Isaiah offers mankind the motivational prodding to obey God. A survey of Isaiah's prophecy ☞ lists six motivations for obeying God's commands.

☞ The remaining lessons focus on specific aspects of these three summary points.

I. ☞ The key to life is "motivation."


1. Until one is motivated, he will not be successful.
2. This principle is true in spiritual matters—until we are motivated to obey God, all instruction will be shrugged off with indifference.


II. Isaiah's prophecy identifies motivations for Judah to hear and heed God's message.

1. As we continue our survey of his prophecy, we will observe the requests for Judah's obedience found in the prophecy.
2. God expected His message to motivate people to do something.
3. This lesson discusses the obvious truth that those hearing God's Word must listen with sensitivity and then respond to His commands with eagerness.
4. Modern man must hear and heed these points of the prophecy as well.
 - a. Look carefully at Isaiah's message and examine the motivations to obey and serve God.
 - b. If your heart needs hope revived, perhaps you have failed to be motivated enough to obey and do these things expected by God.








THE MOTIVATION TO OBEY




Isaiah  emphasized that man's imperative duty was to obey God's commands! (Isaiah 1:18-20; 59:1-21).

1. Without this obedience there would only be separation from God.
2. The nation of Judah had failed to obey God's commands with sincerity.
3. Religion was practiced, but it was a lifeless religion with no genuine desire to honor God.
4. Religion was a practice of convenience performed with complacency.
5.  The prophet sought to stimulate Judah to respond to God from the right motives.

This lesson applies in a practical way to modern man.

1.  The modern mind is religiously focused but it is a focused religion of convenient self-satisfaction and not genuine heart devotion.
2.  The hearts of worshipers today are similar to the hearts of worshipers in Isaiah's time.
3.  The religious worshipers in Isaiah's day offered services but they were not acceptable to God.
4.  They understood they should obey God, but ***they did not understand WHY they should obey God.***

Look and observe how Isaiah's prophecy urges obedience (then and now) to God's commands because of the following reasons:  Here is a summary of Isaiah's motivations for obeying God's Word!

- I.  ***We ought to obey to avoid the woe for the wicked*** (Isaiah 5:8ff; 10:3; 14:5ff; 15:1ff; 22:5; 29:15-16; 30:1ff; 33:8; 42:20-25; 43:22ff; 44:20; 50:11).
 - A.  All are guilty of sin and will face divine wrath unless they obey God's will.
 1.  The reality of punishment causes sorrow because God does not want anyone to suffer (Ezekiel 18:23, "Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord God, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?").
 - a. The tears of God for the lost are often forgotten.
 - b. Some delight in hearing "hell-fire and brimstone" sermons but never speak to those lost.
 2. No one should talk about the eternal punishment of the wicked *unless* they have a tear in their eye that comes from realizing the great tragedy that faces those who are lost.
 - B. It is tragic that many ignore and are unconcerned with the eternal destiny awaiting those who fail to obey God.



Those who have knowledge of others lost and straying from God's commands but say nothing, are sinning by their silence. They must speak the Truth of God. They must do all they can to make sure the erring know they face a damnable eternity. Ezekiel 3:19, "When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand." The warning must be clear. A vague insinuation or innuendo will NOT suffice.

The words of this hymn poignantly emphasize the inescapable duty...

When in the better land before the bar we stand, how deeply grieved our souls will be; if any lost one there should cry in deep despair, "You never mentioned Him to me." You never mentioned Him to me, You helped me not the way to see; You met me day by day and knew I was astray, Yet never mentioned Him to me." (*"You Never Mentioned Him to Me,"* Hymn Lyrics, https://www.hymnlyrics.org/requests/you_never_mentioned_him_to_me.php)

1. Eternal punishment should neither be ignored nor applauded!
2. The eternal punishment of the wicked should be viewed by the Christian with the same sorrow that breaks the heart of the Almighty God.
3. It is God's righteousness that issues the judgment and consigns the rebellious souls to an eternity of torment.
 - a. God had urged Judah to repent and turn to Him in trust.
 - b. ☞ The divine offer was met with a stubborn refusal.
 - c. Can you hear the heavenly Father's heart breaking when He commented upon their rebellion by saying, "But you were not willing" (Isaiah 30:15b)?

C. Contributors of a soul's condemnation.

1. ☞ The prophet identifies three actions that contribute to this condemnation of souls on the Judgment Day.
2. ☞ Those guilty and facing eternal torment are charged in Isaiah 24:5-6: "Transgressing laws"; "Violating statutes"; "Breaking covenants."
3. By these actions, the wicked place themselves "above" God. They are deluded into thinking they are not sinning.

These give an unfortunate illustration of the tragic truth stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:10, "with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved."

- a. Incredibly, these believe they can deliberately break God's laws and not be judged wrong.
- b. Each of these phrases reveals a heart of rebellion toward the Almighty God.



- c. These “profess” to know God but their actions demonstrate clearly their profession is worthless (Titus 1:16, “They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed”).

4. Note specifically the heinous nature of these three actions:

- a. ☞ “*Transgressing of laws*” reveals that they have no respect for even the basic guidelines of life.
- 1) God has ordained “law” to govern life. Thus, there is a “rule of law” that governs society so that it is orderly and gives security.
 - 2) This “rule of law” is universal and binds everyone to follow what is “right” and to avoid what is “wrong.”
 - 3) Those who are self-centered have acted arrogantly toward this rule of law and transgressed its restrictions. These think the law does not bind them.
 - 4) ☞ The Hebrew term that is translated as “transgress” literally refers to one “crossing over the line” of what is right. ☞ In English we still use that meaning in our idiom “You have now crossed the line!”
 - 5) ☞ The meaning is that one has arrogantly gone beyond that which is recognized as right.
- b. ☞ The second phrase charged them with “*violating of statutes.*”
- 1) The term translated as “violating” refers to a deliberate change.
 - 2) ☞ These were so arrogant that they arrogantly modified God’s commandments.
 - 3) ☞ Thus, what was once called wrong was now called right.
- ☞ These had been allowed to re-define the “statutes” (i.e. commands, ordinances) of God so that the exact opposite of what God had commanded was being taught!
- 4) ☞ Because the nation thought the boundaries of right and wrong did not apply to them and because they were permitted to redefine the statutes of God, they were charged with “*breaking of covenants.*” ☞ The “covenants” described the agreement that united man and God.
- Only those in the “covenant relationship” with God could be blessed by the Almighty’s grace and be saved.
 - The Almighty invited all to accept the conditions and become members of this covenant and find salvation.
 - Tragically some were so occupied with selfishness they did not realize they had left their covenant relationship with God. It was the discussion of this tragedy that Isaiah began his prophecy:



Sons I have reared and brought up; but they have revolted against Me. An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master's manager, but Israel does not know, My people do not understand...They have abandoned the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him (Isaiah 1:2b-3, 4b).

- 5) 🕊️ The inspired comment on such arrogance is blunt - "You turn things around!" (Isaiah 29:15-16).

God's anger burned because they had violated every command He had given to them.

They had looked at God's commands and decided they did not like the restrictions, the meanings, or the relationship. So, they changed everything.

- 🕊️ They "called evil good, and good evil" they "substituted darkness for light and light for darkness" (Isaiah 5:20).

These would "sniff" at the Law of God and then turn their nose up as if the divine commands were putrid (see Malachi 1:13, "You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it," says the Lord of hosts, "and you bring what was taken by robbery and what is lame or sick; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?" says the Lord).

- D. The contemporary application of this point spotlights a widespread spiritual tragedy in our day.

1. The tragedy of this attitude is not confined to ancient Judah in Isaiah's time.
2. 🕊️ Many today do exactly what Judah did so long ago.
3. 🕊️ They decide that God's limits are not right so they "cross the line."
4. 🕊️ They decide that God's statutes are not "relevant" so they change God's commands.
5. 🕊️ They decide that God's covenant relationship is too restrictive and needs to be more "inclusive," so they break the covenant of God and devise their own covenant.

Here is an incredible illustration of how deluded man thinks God's commands are too restrictive and rigid in requiring exactly what God commands:

Pope Francis, in Christmas Message, Says Church Must Adapt to Post-Christian West

Francis X. Rocca

Dec. 21, 2019 7:10 am ET (WSJ)

Pope Francis has tended to play down doctrinal teachings and focus on social causes such as economic equality, the rights of migrants and efforts to counteract global warming. Pope Francis on Saturday said the secularization of the West "necessarily entails changes" to the Vatican's offices for doctrine and evangelization...The Pope didn't



specify what sort of changes might be in store. Church officials have been working on a revised constitution for the Roman Curia...for more than six years but no date for its completion has been announced.

Pope Francis' words came during his annual Christmas greetings to the Curia, an event he has sometimes used to criticize officials for their...resistance to reform. He struck a similar note in this year's speech, when warning against the "attitude of rigidity."

"Rigidity arises from fear of change and hatred. Let's remember always that behind every rigidity lies some derangement," he said.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/pope-francis-in-christmas-message-says-church-must-adapt-to-post-christian-west-11576930226>

6. ☞ Many today have "turned things around" and are contrary to God's revealed will.
 - a. This is a great tragedy but an even greater tragedy is that these do not realize they have "despised the Holy One of Israel" and have "turned away from Him" (Isaiah 5:24-25). And, NO ONE is telling them what they have done!
 - b. History is filled with illustrations of how man can desensitize his conscience so he will soon begin to approve the evil and condemn the good. Acts 23:1, "Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day." But Paul confessed that during this time he was "formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor" (1 Timothy 1:13).
- E. There is a Judgment Day coming, "The LORD of host will be exalted in judgment, the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness" (Isaiah 5:16).
 1. We must be motivated to obey the will of God because if we do not obey God we will share in the "woes" of the wicked!
 2. If we want to avoid the divine wrath, we must obey God.

- II. ☞ ***We ought to obey because of the holiness of God*** (Isaiah 6:1ff; 17:10; 25:1ff; 29:22-24).
 - A. Obedience to avoid the angry wrath of God is probably the reason that most will say one should obey God, but God desire is that man obeys because man recognizes the holiness of the almighty God.
 1. ☞ God wants man to respect and fear the holy anger (Deuteronomy 32:4-43; Hebrews 10:32).
 2. But God wants man to respond from loving devotion (Hosea 6:1-3; 7:13-16; 11:3, 4).
 3. ☞ Religious services that lack this loving devotion are rejected by God (Isaiah 29:13-14, "Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, but they remove their hearts far from Me, and their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote, therefore behold...the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed"; Malachi 1:10-14).



B. How great is God? How holy is God? How majestic is God?

1. These (the greatness, holiness, and majesty) were trivial concerns to those in Isaiah's day.
2. His audience would recognize that God should be worshiped but it also felt that mortal strength, political influence, and worldly wealth were just as important.
3. 🕊️ The holiness of God had been "downgraded" to a position of equality with worldly factors.
4. 🕊️ God had been trivialized and there was no genuine concern for the holiness of God.

C. Once one comprehends the holiness of the Almighty God, there will be instant obedience.

1. 🕊️ Isaiah says that those who recognize and honor the holiness of God will demonstrate changes in their behavior.
 - *They will be subdued* - Isaiah experienced this holiness of God and was overwhelmed (Isaiah 6:5, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts").
 - *They will switch* - Isaiah understood the holiness of God and that knowledge completely changed the prophet's spiritual life. Isaiah could not understand how anyone could "forget" the holiness of God and pursue selfish agendas (Isaiah 17:10-11, "you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the rock of your refuge. Therefore, you plant delightful plants...but the harvest will be a heap in a day of sickness and incurable pain"). Knowing the holiness of God causes one to switch priorities in life from self to the Lord!
 - *They will be sanctified* - The prophet confessed that those who admitted the holiness of God would live a devoted and sanctified life that honors the great God (Isaiah 29:23-24, "They will sanctify My name; Indeed, they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob and will stand in awe of the God of Israel. Those who err in mind will know the truth, and those who criticize will accept instruction").
 - *They will be secure* - The prophet pled for his people to recognize God's holiness so they would find blessings and spiritual security (Isaiah 25:1ff).
2. Once the holiness of God is understood, disobedience to God's commands will not be considered. They have chosen to obey God and this results in automatic rejection of error. By understanding the holiness of God, we instantly become motivated to obey God.

III. 🕊️ ***We ought to obey and wait for God*** (Isaiah 26:3-4; 30:18; 40:31; 41:10).

A. Are you...

Impatient with the irritations of the world?

Ever wishing that God's justice would strike those who plot and cause evil things to happen?



Ever impatient as you pray that you can know God's will for your life and your choices in certain areas, but all you receive is silence?

- B. Isaiah's words speak counsel to those distressed by the world's trials and are tempted to be impatient with God.
1. Such often question God's "silence" and wrongly conclude that perceived silence indicates God's unconcern.
 2. 🕊️ The prophet urges us to remain trusting of God's Word and not seek help from worldly sources.
 3. 🕊️ Isaiah counsels patience by saying, "I will wait for the LORD who is hiding His face" (Isaiah 8:17-19).
- C. Isaiah's use of the term "wait" (Isaiah 8:17) literally meant that he was going "to tarry" as long as necessary until the Lord's will was revealed to him.
1. Within this expression is the idea that one's faith is strong and expects the certain appearance of God.
 2. Here is voiced strong confidence, firm assurance, absolute trust, and unwavering commitment.
 3. 🕊️ Those who "wait," as Isaiah suggests, will find blessings because their faith trusts in God's deliverance.
 4. Many are willing to obey God but want an instant answer to all their dilemmas. God's prophet tells us to obey God immediately but then "wait."
- D. 🕊️ This "waiting" often becomes a stressful (anxious) process.

"Waiting" requires patience in faith. Isaiah understood that those he challenged to "wait" were being tempted to demonstrate impatience.

What are we to "do" while we are waiting on the Lord? Look at the prophet's answers to this question.

1. 🕊️ *First, express trust in the Lord (Isaiah 26:3-4, "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock").*
 - a. Isaiah's words urge man to "wait" for God's actions because the Lord God is absolutely trustworthy.
 - b. There are many things in life in which one can place trust but the only trustworthy object is our Almighty God.
 - 1) This trust is founded upon the metaphorical "rock."



- 2) The “rock” is unchangeable, unmovable, secure, and a haven of protection. Only when one is able to trust in God, as this “rock,” will he find “peace.”
- c. Many in the world, and unfortunately some Christians, look for this desired peace by their own strength. Isaiah 31:1, “Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, and trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the Lord!” See verses 2-6
 - 1) They cannot find this peace because their minds do not rest upon the firm foundation and their strength is not secure but always changing. Isaiah 31:8-9, “And the Assyrian will fall by a sword not of man...he will not escape...his rock will pass away because of panic.”
 - 2) As the “rock” of our salvation, God will not change. As the “rock” of our peace, God will stand firm in the chaos and confusion of life’s storms.
- d. Those who trust in God and flee to the protection He offers as the “rock” of our salvation will find the peace that comes from the “steadfast mind.”
 - 1) The “steadfast mind” (Isaiah 26:3) will not despair over the traumas of earthly life because it is anchored in the “rock!”
 - 2) Wonderful peace is offered to those who obey God. By trusting God, you will find a wonderful peace in your soul.
2. 🕊️ *Second, enjoy blessings from the Lord (Isaiah 30:18, “Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him”).*
 - a. Those who obey and wait upon God will be blessed.
 - b. God is “waiting on high” to provide blessings to those who “wait” for Him.
 - c. God “waits” for His justice to be reconciled before He can show mercy.
 - d. The image portrayed is God’s eagerness to bestow blessings to those who obey His will. This supernatural eagerness to provide blessings assures us that God desires for man to live in peace and security.
 - e. Those who obey the Lord’s commands and wait for the Lord’s program will be blessed by the Lord’s gracious compassion.
 - 1) Here is a wonderful image of God - He is the eagerly waiting to show compassion!
 - 2) God longs to show compassion to everyone, but He cannot do so until obedience is rendered and sin is forgiven.
 - 3) To the disobedient this image offers a great motivation for obedience. Why should one remain disobedient when God is waiting to bless?



3. 🕊️ *Third, expect strength to endure (Isaiah 40:31, “Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary”).*

a. Those who obey and “wait” for God are promised strength.

b. Here is an encouraging contrast.

1) The “youth” possess a strength that many lack but this strength is still weak.

2) However, those that wait upon the Lord will possess a greater strength.

3) A devoted faith demonstrating an unshakeable faith in the Almighty God provides a strength that cannot fail.

c. Trust in God results in unfailing strength.

1) The verse indicates that the Christian will exchange one kind of strength (youth) for another kind of strength (trusting faith) and greater strength is provided.

2) Have you trials that only make you realize how weak you are? Have you wrestled with the traumas of earthly life only to feel totally exhausted and drained of any energy? Have you continued fighting the “good fight of faith” only to enter combat on weak knees and with drooping arms?

3) Do you need “renewed strength”? This is Isaiah’s point.

The prophet uses three metaphors speaking of a strength that allows the Christian to rise from the dreary depths of earthly grief’s and difficulties.

The first, this strength provides the ease of the *eagle to soar on high*.

Two other metaphors show the strength that results from “waiting” on God.

There is the metaphor of the *runner that agonizes over the contest he faces* and the metaphor of *the daily walk as one goes about the usual routines of life*.

4) Inspiration urges us to trust and obey and wait upon God because we find strength to help us in the cruel contests of living and also in the routine matters of earthly existence.

You can be “re-energized” and re-enter the fight of Faith as you gained renewed strength by “waiting” on the Lord.

This verse (Isaiah 40:31) is a verse of triumph and victory that applies to every Christian. Knowing that this victory awaits the Christian is a great motivation for obedience.

d. 🕊️ *Fourth, encourage faith to grow more devoted (Isaiah 41:10, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand”).*



- 1) If you “wait” on the Lord your faith will grow more devoted.
- 2) “Waiting” on God displays a great commitment to the Lord.
- 3) The greatest threat to the Christian’s trust is the Devil’s “fears.”
- 4) Many will not “wait” on the Lord because they are too fearful. Their fears fuel their impatience and they look to find rescue in a strength that is other than God.
- 5) Those who “wait” upon the Lord will not be haunted by fear. Instead of fearing the unseen future and dreading the possible calamities of things yet to materialize, those who wait upon the Lord are secure in their trust.

There is no enemy, no catastrophe, and no upheaval in life that will shift their focus from God. These are like the Apostles who confessed, “To whom shall we go?” They have no other recourse but God and they are secure in trusting God (see Psalm 121).

Although beset by multiple trials, those who are with God do not look about with “anxiety.” This refers to those who are beset with troubles and are constantly looking in every direction to see if there is any hope of help and rescue. These are the Christians who offer a visible object lesson of the hope stated in Philippians 4:4-7:

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

- e. The Christian should be unlike those in the world searching for peace because he is secured in safety by his obedience to God (Isaiah 41:8, 9, 10 “But you...my servant...my friend, you whom I have taken...and said to you, ‘You are my servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you. ‘Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God’”).

- 1) Those who wait upon God will develop a greater faith because they know God is true to His word. God assures the safety of the Christian by affirming three things:
☞ “I will strengthen... I will help... I will uphold...” (Isaiah 41:10).

Isaiah 41:13-14, “Do not fear, I will help you. Do not fear...I will help you, declares the Lord, and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

- 2) The Apostle Paul understood this truth.

While in Corinth, Paul faced the anxiety that Satan used to try to persuade the Apostle to lessen his work for the Lord. The Lord urged Paul. “Be not afraid...for I am with thee” (Acts 18:9, 10).



3) Every Christian must realize the wonderful blessings that come to those who trust and obey and wait upon the Lord!

f. Once we “learn” the benefits of waiting on God we will be motivated to obey God. Why should we obey the Lord’s commands?

1) ☞ Because we know that those who obey and wait find rich rewards in a stronger faith.

2) When you discover the ability to “wait” on God, you will discover a wonderful blessing that will lighten your burdens and deepen your spiritual life.

Those who visit rural India tell about a post with a study shelf about shoulder height. These posts are called “*Sumai Thaangi*,” which means, “resting place.” As the Indian people travel on foot they can stop at a *Sumai Thaangi* and rest by placing their heavy load on the shelf. Once rested, they can continue their journey. One time a missionary heard a Christian brother in India refer to Jesus as “My *Sumai Thaangi*.” The Lord was this brother’s “resting place” for the burden he carried. Our great God has provided a resting place for our anxieties (1 Peter 5:7; Matthew 11:28-30). What a wonderful motive for one to believe and obey God’s commands.

IV. ☞ ***We ought to obey to honor the sovereign Controller*** (Isaiah 10:5-6, 15; 13:1ff; 23:8-9; 24:21-22; 40:15ff; 31:1ff; 44:6-7; 45:1ff).

A. If the primary motivation of one’s obedience was the holiness of God then the sovereignty of God would have to be considered as a primary motive as well.

1. Why should one obey God?

☞ One should obey because the Lord God is the Almighty Sovereign of creation.

☞ A failure to obey God is rebellion to God’s rightful authority.

☞ Satan’s greatest strategy is to convince mankind that God’s rules are not important and that one can defy God’s rules and not be punished.

2. In Eden, this evil strategy began when Satan began deception with a simple phrase, “You shall NOT...”

a. From Eden’s first sin on throughout history’s civilization mankind has been tempted to believe he can reject or modify God’s rule.

b. Isaiah’s prophecy was directed to a nation that had accepted the delusion that they can rebel against God and not suffer punishment.

Sons I have reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against Me. An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master’s manger, but Israel does not know, My people do not understand...They have abandoned the Lord, they have



despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him. Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion?" (Isaiah 1:2b-5a).

B. God's Supremacy. The prophet's message strongly urged the people to recognize that the Lord is Jehovah, the supreme Sovereign of the universe. Isaiah's message stresses the supremacy of the Lord God by these points:

1. *First*, any nation in the world that establishes and encourages a godless society will be punished. Such a nation, regardless of its wealth, political powers, or military strength will face the "woe" of God because of its abominable pride (Isaiah 10:5-6, 15; 31:1-5, 8).
2. *Second*, any created part of God's universe ought to be in subjection to the Almighty's will. The greatness of Babylon is not equal with the greatness of Jehovah. The heavens, earth, stars, and all of creation are subject to God and will be used by Him. Those who choose to defy God's authority will only find destruction. "Woe to the one who quarrels with His Maker" (Isaiah 13:1-22; 45:1ff).
3. *Third*, any planning that is to be successful **MUST** be in cooperation with God. Arrogant man thinks his plans are superior to the plans of the Almighty. Worldly wisdom deceives mortal minds by persuading man he is more intelligent than the Almighty God (Isaiah 23:8-9).

4. *Fourth*, any sin will be punished.

Royalty will not exempt one from the divine punishment.

Earthly power cannot prevent the day of holy justice.

The power and majesty of earth's Empires will never forestall or cancel God's sovereignty.

Regardless of the awesome power and majestic accomplishments of earth's Empires, they are but a mere "speck" compared with the Almighty God. While earthly rulers extend their influence and power in their realms, the Almighty King "sits above the circle of earth...stretches out the heavens like a curtain...reduces rulers to nothing... He merely blows on them and they wither" (Isaiah 24:21, 22; 40:15ff).

5. *Fifth*, any substitute will be utterly destroyed.

a. Satan tempts man to believe that the Almighty God can be replaced or reduced to a level of equality with other authorities.

b. The Lord God is unique and cannot be replaced or reduced without tragic consequences. Isaiah 44:6-8...

"Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me. 'Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; yes, let him recount it to Me in order, from the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming and the events that are going to take place. 'Do not tremble and do not be



afraid; have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none.”

C. The sovereignty of God is unquestioned.

1. Why is man not motivated to obey this great Sovereign Lord?
2. Repeatedly in the prophecy, Isaiah stresses the fact that God is the Almighty Sovereign.
3. God controls the history of the world. God holds every person accountable. God manipulates history and maneuvers creation to do His bidding.
4. ☞ No one is able to frustrate God's planning: ☞ “Just as I have intended so it has happened and just as I planned so it will stand” (Isaiah 14:24, 27). ☞ We must yield to this Sovereign's rule and obey His will (Isaiah 14:24, 27).
5. Modern man would do well to remember these words of George Washington: *“It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits and humbly implore His protection and favor.”* (George Washington, Thanksgiving Proclamation, 3 October 1789, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-04-02-0091>).

V. ☞ **We ought to obey and accept God's offer of gracious pardon** (Isaiah 22:12-14; 27:5, 9; 30:15; 31:6; 33:24; 35:8-10; 43:1-7; 44:22b; 45:9, 22; 50:4, 5, 10).

A. Isaiah is blunt in telling Israel that they must obey God and find favor by His grace.

1. A failure to obey God results in a horrible punishment.
2. There is offered to sinful man a gracious forgiveness.
3. God is willing to save and strengthen those who turn to Him.
4. Tragically many will never show genuine sorrow for their sins and they will die in their sins and face the righteous anger of a holy God (Isaiah 22:12-14).
5. ☞ Why would anyone choose to reject such a gracious forgiveness? As we recognize the sovereignty of God and understand His revealed will, there will be immediate response to obeying what He has commanded!
6. ☞ God pleads with all on the earth, “Let him make his peace with me” (Isaiah 27:5b).

B. In today's culture, Christians are urged to tolerate everything and condemn nothing.

1. Christians are told to be all-inclusive and never exclusive.
2. Such counsel originates from Satan and not the Almighty God.
3. God's Word condemns sin but extends a gracious invitation to sinners.



4. 🕊️ Those who are polluted by sin can be washed “white as snow” if they are willing to “consent and obey” (Isaiah 1:18-19).
5. Why would one choose to remain in the filth of sin when they could become clean and pure? How wonderful it is to assure the sincere seeker of God that all sins can be forgiven and God will remember those sins no more!

C. The promise of forgiveness and the complete cleansing of sin offers all the motivation to obey the revealed will of God.

The forgiveness that is offered by God provides man with a comforting security. A time-honored truism states: “Without God we face a hopeless end; with God we can experience endless hope.”

VI. 🕊️ We ought to obey remembering God's constancy (Isaiah 14:24, 27; 🕊️ 46:4-11).

A. Obedience results from trust. God is always the same. God will never change. You can trust that what God says today will be the same tomorrow.

1. This constancy of God offers assurance.
2. If you obey what God commands you to because of His promises, things will never change.
3. As the great Sovereign Lord of the universe, no one can force God to change.
4. As the holy God of heaven, God will never plan or do anything that is wrong for us.
5. God's plans are always for our good. We should instantly humble ourselves to the plans of God. Augustine said, “Without Thee, what am I but a guide to my own destruction.” (Augustine's *Confessions*, the second edition, F. J. Sheed translator, page 55).

B. You need to obey God because God does what He says He will. “I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it” (Isaiah 46:11b).

1. Recognizing that God does not change will give us blessed assurance.
2. The divine principles of belief, trust, and compliance that have always been required by God of those who follow Him, have not changed.
3. 🕊️ We must remember that God's commands are not “plastic!”
4. 🕊️ The will of heaven cannot be redefined, molded to suit personal “taste,” moderated, or ignored.
5. Full obedience **MUST** be demonstrated because God does not change! (Malachi 3:6, James 1:17).
6. There is comfort in this knowledge and assurance in these words: 🕊️ “Even to your old age I will be the same” (Isaiah 46:4).



I. We have considered strong reasons why one should obey God's commands.

1. Isaiah's prophecy offered the blessings of peace, harmony, forgiveness, security, and trust.
2. Why should one seek these blessings through another source?
3. Isaiah's message should be received with eager ears and a willing heart.

II. As we conclude this lesson there are ☞ four significant factors that should motivate us to respond energetically to the message that Isaiah proclaimed:

- It was AUTHORED by the Divine Plan (Isaiah 6:8).
- It was ARTICULATED by the Divine Prophet (Isaiah 2:1).
- It was ASSURED by the Divine Purpose (Isaiah 46:9b-10).
- It was ANSWERED by the Divine Person (Son, John 12:36b-41).

III. The message proclaimed by Isaiah hundreds of years ago is still needed in our day.

1. ☞ Have you responded to the wonderful invitation of the Almighty God to find forgiveness of sins and spiritual security for your soul?
2. ☞ After studying this lesson are you convinced that you should respond quickly to God's offer of salvation?
3. As you look over the motivations to obey God's commands, which one is the most persuasive to you?
4. ☞ Why should YOU obey the commands that God has given?