

EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH

Message #60

Isaiah 42:18-43:1

God's people are always loved by God but that does not mean they cannot do things that will make God mad. God is a gracious, patient, longsuffering, loving God especially to His people, but don't you for one second think that because of this God will never get angry with His own people.

We have just come through a section in Isaiah (42:8-13) that presents God as an amazing sovereign God. He declares things and brings them to pass. There is only one true God and there is no other God like Him. In view of this, one must wonder what is this sovereign God presently doing with Israel. He certainly is not showering her with His blessings, so what exactly is God doing. The truth is He is sovereignly seeing to it that Israel is presently receiving a series of negative things. **The land she is supposed to actually have is mostly inhabited by Arabs, not Israelis.** He will eventually chase those Arabs out of the land, but He sure hasn't done it yet. In this text He carefully explains why this is and His answer is because "I am mad."

It is a wonderful thing to know the Lord and to be in a covenant relationship with God. It is a wonderful thing to have God bless you and use you. But it is a scary thing to know the Lord and know He is angry with you. Many will say, but this is all about O.T. national Israel, which is true. However, **God is the same and in the N.T., the writer of Hebrews in talking about the Lord judging His own individual people said, "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).**

We come now to a section in Isaiah in which God flat out tells Israel what they have done wrong and why He is doing what He is doing to them, specifically because He is mad or angry (42:25). God tells them why He has permitted such negative things to come against Israel. This started back in Isaiah's time and it will culminate when God will permit the Antichrist to lead a massive military movement against Israel. Why would God allow such devastating things to happen? You get your answer right here. What Isaiah says here is this:

GOD IS PRESENTLY ANGRY WITH HIS OWN PEOPLE FOR THEIR REFUSAL TO RESPOND TO HIM, BUT THEY CAN BE COMFORTED BY KNOWING THAT THERE IS COMING A DAY WHEN HE WILL SAVE THEM AND DELIVER THEM.

There are some people who do not like the doctrine of eternal security. They believe that you could be saved and then lose your salvation. Such people will have a hard time with this text because Israel has done just about everything bad that she can do and God says I will still save her.

God's approach in getting His rebellious people to respond to Him is not an approach that says, "Let's make life comfortable and enjoyable," but it is one that says, "I'll make their lives miserable." He tells His people, I am mad and I am angry and even though I will eventually save you, I am making things miserable for you. This text is specifically aimed at Israel, but it is certainly applicable to the United States.

I believe that the United States is right now making God angry and one proof of this is the loss of jobs, which is clearly a judgment of God (Isaiah 19:8-10, 15). If the President of the United States would say - We need to turn back to the only true Living God. As President I am asking that we repent of our evil that denies God, and no longer promote sinful idolatrous religions, and we need to stop killing babies, and promoting sins of abomination; we would then discover that the sovereign God who is taking away jobs and wreaking havoc with our economy would shower us with His blessings once again. But the fact is, we are as blind as Israel and I am totally convinced that our nation is in the same state as Israel when Isaiah wrote this prophecy.

Now this section may be broken down into **two main Divine Actions:**

DIVINE ACTION #1 – God is presently angry with His people and that is why they experience bad things. **41:18-25**

How do you really get people to turn from their sin and evil ways? What do you do and say? There is a big push to promote love and forgiveness. Tell people God loves them and everything is okay and it will really cause them to think and to repent.

Apparently God doesn't think this way. When Isaiah wanted to say something to Israel to get her to repent, he did not use flattery or flowery language. He used a different tactic; he called it as straight as an arrow.

There are two points about God's Divine Anger described here:

Category #1 - God gives the reasons for His Divine anger. **42:18-21**

There are four stated reasons why God is angry with His own people.

(Anger Reason #1) - God is angry because His people refuse to hear and see the truth.
42:18

They refuse to hear and they refuse to see. God got sick of His people turning their ears and eyes from His Word so He blinded them so they cannot see. As Dr. McGee said, God is calling Israel His blind servant and "this is God's condemnation of His own people" (*Isaiah*, Thru the Bible, Vol. 3, p. 290).

The great need that any person has is to see himself honestly before God.

(Anger Reason #2) - God is angry because His people do not act like His servant or messenger. **42:19**

Instead of acting like a servant of God or a messenger for God, they are completely oblivious to God's Word or will. They are blind servants. God's point is there is no servant on the earth more blind than Israel. This nation was supposed to be the messenger of God, but it wasn't.

As Calvin said, Isaiah accuses all men of being blind, but especially the Jews because they should have seen more clearly than all the rest (*Isaiah*, p. 307).

(Anger Reason #3) - God is angry because His people refuse to observe all the things He has done for them and learn from them. **42:20**

God reminds His people of all the things they saw Him do. When you and I get before the Lord, our guilt will be doubled if we shut our eyes to the truth of God's Word. When we see truth and hear truth and we refuse to apply truth, there is culpability. The more we have seen God do the more accountable we are.

(Anger Reason #4) - God is angry because His people refuse to apply His great and glorious law. **42:21**

God was pleased to give His people His law so they could live in righteousness. That law contained sacrifices that would cleanse them. Instead of them seeing this and understanding this, they tried to come up with their own laws and codes. They not only didn't apply it to their own lives, they did not communicate it to others either.

Category #2 - God reveals the results of His Divine anger. **42:22-25**

The way Isaiah words this emphasizes that all the terrible things that have happened to Israel are her fault. God would permit His people to be destroyed for her rebellion.

(Anger Result #1) - God's people are plundered and despoiled . **42:22a**

(Anger Result #2) - God's people are trapped in caves. **42:22b**

(Anger Result #3) - God's people are hidden in prisons. **42:22c**

(Anger Result #4) - God's people have become a prey . **42:22d**

In fact, things are so bad that no one says "give the people back to God and to their land."

In **verse 23**, God asks His people, who will take notice of this? Who will realize that He is the One allowing all of these negative things because they refuse to turn to Him? Who will turn to the Word of God? God says you do not observe what I am presently doing and you do not listen to future prophecy and what I will do hereafter.

Verse 24 is powerful - God says who do you think is doing all of these things to you? It is Me, Jehovah. I am the One who has given you up for spoil. I am the One who has allowed you to be plundered.

Many in Israel were saying we are waiting for God to work. They could not believe that the calamities they were suffering could be the work of God. But God says, don't you get it; I am working. Your world is caving in and I am behind it and I'll tell you why.

Just so you don't miss this, I'll state three reasons why I am allowing your world to cave in:

(Reason #1) - God's people have sinned against God. **42:24a**

(Reason #2) - God's people refuse to walk in God's ways. **42:24b**

(Reason #3) - God's people refuse to obey God's Word. **42:24c**

In **verse 25**, God says I am the One angry. I am the One causing your military setbacks. I am the One surrounding you with hot pressure. But you refuse to sense that and see that. You are receiving the brunt of My burning anger. I am the reason you lose battles.

When we consider that we are in a section that is supposed to "comfort" God's people (40:1ff), we must wonder, how do you comfort God's people when this is all true? Thank God Isaiah did not stop in **verse 25**, but he pens the next verse which begins with "But now." This grammatical connective links us to chapter 42 and thank God it does.

DIVINE ACTION #2 – God who created and elected His people will eventually redeem His people. **43:1**

Back in Isaiah 10:25, God said "In a very little while My indignation against you will be spent and My anger will be directed to their (the nations) destruction." God assures His people that eventually, in spite of the fact that they have made a mess of things, He will save them.

In **chapters 43-44**, God wants to emphasize that He is the God who made His people, His people (**43:1, 7, 21; 44:2, 24**). God's people are His people. It is true that He is ticked off at His people, but that will not stop Him from doing everything He has promised to do for His people. Now notice how God describes His people:

Description #1 - God created His people. "bara" create something from nothing (Gen. 1:1)

Description #2 - God formed His people. "yatsar" predestine, plan, form, design and create

Description #3 - God has redeemed His people. "gaal" purchase by paying the price of blood

Description #4 - God has called His people. "qara" call and name these people as His own

Even though God is angry, His people are still His people. He says, "Do not fear; you are Mine."

You may have really messed up in your relationship with Me, but I am still your God. It is true you made Me angry, but you are still Mine and you have nothing to fear.

There are times when we as God's people really make a mess of things. We sin against God. We don't obey His Word and there are times when we don't walk in His ways. We are still God's people and even though God may allow a series of negative things to hit us, we have nothing to fear for we belong to Him. The good news is if God's people will turn to Him, instead of negatives they will receive His blessings.