

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

Isaiah prophetically declared the reaction of men to the Person and work of CHRIST saying, *“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonied (astonished) at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.”* He said they were “speechless” in HIS presence, they are “overwhelmed” at HIS doctrine, and they are “agape” at that which HE has performed, even though they have no understanding of the import of it nor any respect unto HIM.

When the LORD JESUS began HIS ministry in the temple at the age of twelve, HE fulfilled this prophecy in part, *“And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.”* Even HIS parents were “amazed” and HE replied, *“How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.”* Mary “pondered” these things. The Greek word which is translated in the text in Luke 2:47 as “*astonished*,” could be translated as “become insane” or “out of one’s mind”. It carries with it the notion of extreme agitation and wonderment. This is the reaction of all men to the SAVIOR. It is impossible to be neutral in regards to HIM. HE is the KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, worthy of all praise and is the “*fullness of the GODHEAD bodily*”. To, supposedly, be indifferent to HIM is to ignore GOD, the same as being against HIM and is a rejection of HIM as LORD. The person and work of CHRIST is the dividing line between those who are saved and those who are lost.

Some are astonished at HIS doctrine and rise up in rebellion against it, hating not only its content but its MESSENGER. Others are astonished at HIS doctrine and are compelled to bow down before HIS feet confessing, *“Thou art the CHRIST the SON of the Living GOD.”* This is to believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST as they are given the gift of faith. Many pay lip service to being HIS followers, like the multitudes which followed HIM when HE was performing miracles openly and feeding them with loaves and fishes. Yet the day came when those same “multitudes” were “astonished” at the content of HIS message. *“From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.”* That message which “astonished” them, was this, *“no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”* Many of them said HIS doctrine was a “*hard saying*”, since it clearly revealed that salvation was totally of grace and not based on any sort of merit or carnal standing.

This response is not surprising, since the same reaction takes place today when the very message, that CHRIST set forth, is preached. Religious men will “follow” CHRIST for any number of reasons, yet when they hear the truth of HIS electing grace, plainly spoken, they will reject it, saying this is a hard saying. To reject the message which the SAVIOR preached, is to reject the SAVIOR. Did HE not say, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”?* *“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not (or love) the things which I say?”* One of the most astonishing aspects of the LORD’s teaching was that HE spoke with “authority”. HE is the Eternal and Living WORD of GOD and every word which HE spoke was with power and not simple religious sayings which comfort the carnal mind. The words which HE spoke were powerful and smote men in the heart.

The Pharisees, often, tried to trip HIM up with questions which they felt would overturn the truth that HE preached. Yet this was all to no avail because HIS word cannot fail to accomplish the very thing which HE sends it to do, whether it is a word of deliverance to those in bondage or a word of condemnation to those who are satisfied with their religion.

HE is an “astonishing SAVIOR” because HE:

Despised the “righteous” (i.e.: in their own eyes) and companied with sinners. *“for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*

Gained HIS greatest victory by dying. *“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

Was wounded in the house of HIS friends and died to save those that despised HIM.”*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Embraced death and destroyed it in one fell swoop. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*

“Thy free grace alone,” #11 **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthepoor@windstream.net**