

I cannot think of a better way to begin the New Year than with a baptism, baptism which symbolizes new life in Jesus Christ. We are so thankful to the Lord for Tom and Jenny and little Jacob. And now here is Noah. It is a joy and privilege to bring our children to the Lord, standing upon His promises, and standing to the covenant the God has made with His people in all the ages of the church. Tom and Jenny and this church together affirmed the promise that God made with His people in Jesus Christ a few minutes ago in the baptism of Noah. There are so many things connected to the baptism of a person into Jesus Christ, that I cannot even attempt to cover all of them today. But I want to take these few verses of Scripture from Isaiah 1, set them in context, and see how we can place them into our own experience and thought. All of the Old Testament was written for example and admonition.

I. Context.

- A. Isaiah prophesied in a day that might in many respects resembles our day. It was near the end of the golden age of the Kingdom of David. David had become king about 1000 years before Christ and David and son Solomon ruled over the united kingdom of Israel and Judah. But because of Solomon's idolatry, God took away the northern kingdom from David's house and the separate kingdom of Israel was born.
- B. For about three hundred years, from 1000 to 700 Judah had relative peace and enjoyed moderately good governments. These were the days of reigns of David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Josiah, Uzziah and Hezekiah, who were commended for following the Lord. There were some real bad apples among the, such as Ahaz and the children of Ahab of Israel, but God delivered Judah from many perils.
- C. They were delivered from foreign invasion; kings had been assassinated; and it appeared once that the house of David had come to an end, when Athaliah the daughter of Ahab a Jezebel murdered the entire family of David, except one six year old child who would become King Joash and revive the kingdom and the worship of the Lord.
- D. Isaiah began his prophecy near the year 800 bc and continued until the days of Hezekiah, about 750 a.d. Except for Ahaz, it was a period of godly kings and prosperity and God's blessing rested upon Judah, or so they thought.
- E. But God's opinion of ourselves does not always square with our own opinion of ourselves. Isaiah was called to give Judah the true picture.

II. What was the true picture.

- A. Spiritually, it was a time of religious syncretism. Isaiah 2.
 1. The Temple at Jerusalem was still the official religion and worship.
 2. But they put up many idols. It was their uniqueness that they denied. This was from the days of Samuel—to be like the other nations. This terrible condition is described in Is. 2:5ff
 - a. Their land was full of idols: vs. 6-9
 - b. The root of idolatry is pride: vs. 10-19
 - c. It is your idolatry that will damn your soul, and bring about utter destruction: vs. 20-22. Here we have it: the incipient humanism and man worship, represented by their multitude of idols. Vs. 22. Nothing ever changes. Every time you say, “I know that the Bible says, but.....” you reveal your humanism and the only cure is repentance and faith in Christ.
 3. What is an idol: HC 94, 95. [Turn and read] What, don't I get to decide what an idol is? Israel put up idols under every green tree. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes, and professed to call it the worship of Jehovah.
- B. True religion, then became formal, perfunctory, and without energy. Is. 1:1-15
 1. Their true devastation was not discerned by them
 - a. There was no leadership. Seed of evildoers, corrupting children, Didn't know their own crib, their own house.
 - b. Their rebellion was almost total: vs. 5-7
 - c. Most of David and Solomon's estates were devastated and corrupted.
 2. The true Israel was as a cottage in the vineyard; a lodge; a besieged city. The true faith of Israel was besieged on every side, from the nations around them to the betrayers of the faith within them.

III. What then, is the godly man to do?

- A. First: quit doing what you are doing. Vs. 11-15 empty worship and formal pious posturing. Be hot or cold, but lukewarm is not to be.
- B. Vs. 16-20: Be what you are called to be by the nature of your faith: Put away all uncleanness of the flesh and spirit. 1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh

Baptism of Noah Kevin Savage.

and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2Cor 7:1, against the background of idolatry, for Corinth was also an syncretistic society; mixed; not one or the other. “If the Lord the Lord....”

1. Israel was to be a clean and purified nation: Their circumcision and our baptism speak of the same thing:
 - a. Purification from idols. The beginning of our filthiness before god is contamination with idols.
 - b. I Thess 4:1-8
2. This child, born within the purity and the holiness of the church, is set apart unto holiness and godliness. You so vowed, Tom and Jenny, that you would bring him up in this faith. The great doctrines of our pure faith are to be taught, not the filthy dreams of the idolaters; the great purity of the Ten Commandments is to be taught and followed by you and your family, not the filthy ways of the heathen; the great purity of the prayers of the church is to be taught, not the vain and filthy imaginations of sorcerers and idolaters.

Finally: Let the Apostle have the last word on this: 1Peter 2:1ff.