

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • TV173A

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, JULY 25TH, 1982
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Transcribed, edited and published
APRIL 19TH, 2013

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Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Isaiah 28:14-18

“Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.”

I would like very much for you to listen most prayerfully and carefully to the message that I am going to bring to you today.

If you have your Bible you can open it to the **Book of Isaiah**. I will be speaking from **Isaiah 28** and we will read **verses 14 and 15**. Just keep your Bible open in your lap or in your hand there on the table in front of you.

I am going to speak today as plainly and as personally and as down-to-earth as I can so that everybody, at least in their heads, can understand what I am talking about.

My subject is this: **“HIDING FROM GOD.”**

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

You might say, “Preacher; nobody tries to hide from God.” The first man tried to hide from God. This goes back a long ways. Adam hid from God.

Here in **Isaiah in Chapter 28:14**; listen carefully: *“Wherefore, hear the Word of the Lord, ye scoffers that rule this people which is in Jerusalem (that is the seat of religion). You people that rule, your leaders, and you preachers, listen carefully he said to what I am about to say:*

“Because you have said, we have made a covenant with death and with hell are at agreement. When the overflowing scourge (that is the wrath of God) shall pass through it shall not come upon us for we have made lies out of refuge and under falsehood have we hid ourselves, (hid ourselves from the wrath of God, from the face of God, and from the presence of God).”

Now, this is a religious generation, this is a religious day, especially here in America. All religious people have certain things in common. It doesn't matter what denomination, Catholic, Protestant or Jew, whether they are Baptist, Presbyterian, or whatever; they all have something in common.

Here are some of the things that religious people have in common:

First of all: They believe in God. It would be hard to find anyone in our nation who does not believe in God. Like the Jews of old, Paul said; *“my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, (that is religious people) that they might be saved.”*

“I bear them record; they have a zeal for God; (they have an enthusiasm for God), but not according to knowledge.” The devil believes in one God. The Scripture says, *“He believes and trembles.”* So, this is the first thing that all religious people have in common, they believe in God.

Secondly: All religious people have this in common: They have some understanding of good and bad, some understanding of holiness and evil. That's right!

The law of God is written on every heart. That is what **Romans 2:15** says; *“Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.”*

The law of God is written on every man's heart, in his conscience excusing or accusing him. Every man has a conscience and every man to some degree has an understanding of good and evil. He has some understanding of what is holy and what is not holy. So, all religious people have that in common.

Thirdly: All religious people believe that death eventually comes to all men.

They know the Scripture by heart; they quote it often: *“It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment.”* In other words, all religious people believe to some extent that men will die and there will be a judgment, some kind of judgment, everybody is going to give account of himself to God and after that there is going to be an eternity that we will spend somewhere.

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

That's why God says here to these religious people in Jerusalem, the seat of religion, *"because you have said; we have made a covenant with death, (we are going to die and we know it, and are not afraid to die) with hell we are at agreement."*

Fourthly: When the wrath of God, when the over-flowing scourge, the judgment of God, shall come through and fall upon men of all nations, it will not come to us because we have a refuge, we have a hiding place, we have a hope and that is the fourth thing that all religious people have in common.

They believe that there is a God; they know that sin does exist; they know that death is coming, that judgment awaits, but all of them have this in common. They have a refuge, they have a hope of life eternal because they do believe in God, because they do believe and understand the consequences of sin to some degree, because they do know that death is coming and judgment is moving to meet them. So, they have taken the trouble, the Scripture says here, to establish a refuge, to build for themselves a hiding place. Now, let's see what God says to these people:

They believe in God and they understand to some extent the question of sin. They know there is death, judgment and eternity to spend somewhere and they have established a refuge.

But God says, *"You have said, (He didn't say it), you have said, we have made a covenant with death"* God didn't say it, He said, these are your words, this is your claim. This is not my word at all, this is not my claim, this is your claim, *"we have made a covenant with death."*

"We don't want to die but we are not afraid to die. We don't want to die but we are not afraid to die because every one of us has our insurance policy and we have our will made out. Most of us have a cemetery lot bought somewhere and we have made our peace with God."

God says, *"Because you said that, I have a covenant with death with hell we are at agreement."* You said; *"I'm not afraid to die. We don't like the thought of hell but we know that there is a hell and we know that somebody is going to hell but not us. We have an agreement with hell; hell is always for somebody else."*

God said, *"You said that we have a covenant with death. You said, with hell we had agreement and you said that judgment won't come unto us."*

God didn't say that. You said, *"When the overflowing scourge of God's wrath shall pass through (and fall on Adam's race) it shall not come unto us, we have a refuge, we have a hiding place."*

Here is what God says in **verse 14**: *"Hear the Word of the Lord."* That is what you say but now this is what God says. The first thing that He said to the prophet; *"hear the Word of the Lord."*

God speaks, "you say to the religious people in Jerusalem, you say we will have a covenant with death, you say with hell we are in agreement, you say when the overflowing scourge of God's wrath shall pass through it won't touch me; I am not afraid to die, I'm not afraid of hell, and I'm not afraid of judgment."

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

God speaks, He says in **verse 17**: “*You have a refuge but it is a refuge of lies (you have established a refuge; you have a hiding place), you are hiding under a falsehood. You have a false refuge; you have a false hiding place.*”

He says here in **verse 17**: “*Judgment I will lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet.*” Do you know what a line and a plummet is? I don’t know a great deal about this but I do know who uses them. I know that you can’t lay a brick wall or a concrete block wall without a line and a plummet.

The line lets you know that the bricks are straight this way (horizontally) and the plummet lets you know that the walls are straight this way (vertically). No brick-mason or stone-mason will ever attempt to build a wall of brick or stone, unless he has a line and a plummet.

He does not leave it to guess work. He has a line and a plummet. This is what God is saying, concerning this matter of holiness, concerning this matter of righteousness; God doesn’t leave it to guess work.

It is not established on what you say or what you claim. He says that I am going to lay holiness and righteousness to the line, the exact, perfect, line. I am going to lay righteousness to the plummet. There’s no guesswork to judgment.

Almighty God is going to measure us according to His perfect holiness and His perfect righteousness. Anything short of his perfection, you will find judgment, wrath, and condemnation.

Our thoughts are going to be measured by His thoughts. Our holiness is going to be measured by the line, by the plummet, of His holiness. Our righteousness is going to be measured by the line of His righteousness and our goodness is going to be exposed to the plummet, no emotions, no sentimentality, no good feeling, no guesswork, just pure, infinite, immaculate, straight, unchanging, holiness. That is what he says.

And, when this is done, when the living God of eternal glory puts your and my religion to the plummet, and yours and my righteousness to the line, when God Almighty exposes the lives of men and women to His holiness and His righteousness, “*man at his best state is altogether vanity.*”

God said, “*I looked down from heaven to see if there were any that did do good, any that were righteous. I found that they are all gone out of the way.*”

I know that when we compare ourselves with other people, when we compare ourselves with our standard of holiness, and our rules, and laws, and regulations, we come up looking pretty good. But, God said, “*I will lay your righteousness to my line and to my plummet.*”

I will tell you this, as he said in **verse 18**: “*And your refuge of lies will be swept away.*” Our righteousness in view of His righteousness, in the spotlight of His holiness, is going to appear to be what it is, “*filthy, (dirty), rags.*”

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Our light will appear to be what it is, human darkness. Our religious refuge is going to fall before His awful glory because God is going to expose it for the crookedness that it bears. Yes, He said; *“I am going to put judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet and your refuge of lies is going to be swept away.”*

And that’s not all; *“Your covenant with death is going to be disannulled.* It is going to be shown to have no power, it is going to be shown to have no protection, it is going to be shown to have no strength and no health; *it is going to be disannulled.”*

You might say, “But, I have gone to all the trouble to get this refuge established and to build it. I have spent years in my church, and years in my denomination, and years in Bible Study, and years in witnessing.” God said, *“It will all be disannulled.”*

Not only that, *“but your agreement with hell, will not stand.”* But Lord; *“we prophesied in your name and in your name cast out devils and in your name we’ve done many wonderful works.”* He says, *“I never knew you.”*

Yes, my friend, when righteousness, when the righteousness of men is exposed to the righteousness of God, it is swept away, it is disannulled, it proves to be what it is, it is foolishness and your agreement with hell shall not stand.

You said, “Judgment will not come to us.” But God says it will, *“and then will you cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on you and hide you from the face of him that sitteth on the throne.”*

Preacher, what are some of the common refuges of lies? You say that men hide under a refuge of lies, no, God said that. He said, *“You have a refuge of lies; you have a foundation or a hiding place which is falsehood.”*

What are some of the common refuges in which religious men and women seek to hide from God? Well, let’s look at some of them:

First of all I say this: A wrong idea of sin!

Do you know my friend that the average person doesn’t really know what sin is? That is what they said to Christ, *“we be not sinners.”* The average religionist doesn’t really know what sin is.

“Why, everybody knows what sin is.” Do we? You know what the products of sin are, we know what the results of sin are, we know what the consequences of sin are, but when you define sin only to an act, and only to a deed, you show that you do not know what sin is.

Like the Pharisee of old, you stand in your religious refuge and you say, *“God; I thank you that I’m not like other men. I’m not an adulterer, I’m not an extortioner, and I’m not unjust. I fast, I tithe, and I give alms to the poor.”*

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

This shows that you do not know what sin is. Sin, my friend, is in the heart, not just in the habit. Sin, my friend, is an attitude, not just an action.

Now, habits are sin and actions are sin, but they are not the heart of sin and the nature of sin. Sin is in the heart. Christ said this; *“It’s not what a man puts in his mouth that defiles him.”*

Now listen to me and don’t misunderstand. There’s really nothing that you can put in your mouth that will defile your soul. It may kill your body, it may ruin your health, it may affect your mind, but there is no way that anything material can be put in my mouth and reach my soul, no way in this world!

But men are defiled by what comes out of their heart, *“out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, murders, adulterers, fornication, and blaspheme.”* Our Lord Himself said, *“These are the things that defile.”*

Sin is an attitude, not just an action. Sin is a motive, not just manners. Sin is a nature, not just the violation of negative rules. *“Out of the heart proceed these evil thoughts. What the law saith, it saith to every man who is under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.”*

There’s the first refuge, it is common to religious people; they don’t have the slightest understanding of what sin really is. Oh, they have some understanding of the products of sin and the fruits of sin and the results of a sinful heart.

Christ said, *“You cleanse the outside of the cup and you forget the inside is where the problem is, the inside is full of extortion and excess. Cleanse first, that which is within that the outside might be clean.”*

Listen to me; I wouldn’t offend you, not purposely; I wouldn’t hurt you for anything; I am trying to be truthful with you. We are going to have to learn what sin is, it is a nature, and it is a principle. It is an inward enemy, it is not seen with the eye, heard by the ear, and touched with the hand, it is a nature which we received in the fall.

Secondly: Here is another common refuge: A wrong idea of the love and mercy of God.

“God is love;” that is so very true; thank God it is true; God is love, but my friend; God is holy and God is righteous. His love shall never be expressed at the expense of His holiness, at the expense of His righteousness. Now that is so; *“God is love.”*

He loved His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, *“This is my beloved Son.”* Yet, he permitted His Son to suffer under His wrath and judgment, separated from His presence when His Son bore our sins.

God is merciful; I know that. *“Thanks be unto God for his mercy.”* The Lord is merciful; *“he is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy.”* God will not show mercy at the expense of his justice. *“He will by no means clear the guilty.”* His holy law will be honored, either by you or by your substitute.

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

His righteous justice and judgment will be satisfied. If you go and hide under a refuge of lies which says; “God loves everybody and God’s mercy and love is upon everybody and there is no wrath with God and there is no anger with God.” You have got you a false refuge on your hands.

You will find out in the end that God Almighty will punish sin. Every transgression and every disobedience must receive a “*just and recompense of reward*” from the justice and judgment and holiness of God Almighty.

It’s a false refuge. You might say, “God is too good to send a man to hell.” Now wait a minute, now wait a minute! You have got to measure that statement; God is righteous and He is love. I stand here because God loves sinners. I stand here because God’s merciful. I stand here because God is gracious. But, I am telling you this; without Christ, “*our God’s a consuming fire.*”

Thirdly: I will tell you another false refuge: That is a profession of salvation that does not produce a life of faith, and a life of obedience.

Now you listen to me: “*He that saith he has fellowship with God and walks in darkness, he lies and does not the truth.*” My friend; it is a false refuge that lets a man love God and hate other people; that is a false refuge.

If you are hiding in it, I will tell you it is false. It’s a false refuge that grants you forgiveness while you show no forgiveness. That’s a false refuge that gives you mercy while you are unmerciful. It’s a false refuge that says a man will worship God in heaven who does not worship God on the earth.

It’s a false refuge that will admit a man into the presence of a holy God without atonement, without righteousness, and without being sanctified. Now, that is just false; there’s not a word of truth in it.

You can go back to a decision or to an experience or to a feeling or to a church membership or whatever you will, but I say unto you; if you are not panting after holiness and walking with God in fellowship in faith and obedience, you are hiding in a false refuge, if you have a hope of eternal life.

Fourthly: A false refuge in which men are hiding is an old experience that stays old!

I get so tired of hearing somebody say, “Sure, I am saved. I was saved back yonder 25 years ago. I repented 25 years ago, I believed 25 years ago.” Listen to me; repentance is not an isolated act. Faith is not an isolated act.

A man who has repented is repenting and always will. A man, who has believed, believes and always will. We are not saved by an act of faith. This will tear up all of these decisions and easy beliefs, which men are making mints of money. They are talking people into walking an aisle, shaking a preacher’s hand, joining a church, and declaring an act of faith.

We are not saved by an isolated act of faith; we are saved by a life of faith and a heart of faith, a faith that looks to Christ and keeps on looking, a faith that lays hold of Christ and keeps on trusting, a faith

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

that surrenders to Christ and keeps on surrendering, a faith that submits to Christ and keeps on submitting. He said, *“If you continue in my Word then are you my disciples indeed.”*

“We are of the household of God if we hold fast our profession firm unto the end.” I’m telling you the truth; it is a refuge in which half of this religious world is hiding. They say, “I know I’m saved because something happened 20 years ago or 10 years ago or 5 years ago.”

The only way you know that you are saved is right now, if you having a living faith in a living Lord and a living relationship with the living Vine and Christ dwells in your spirit and in your heart by His grace.

Now, there’s a refuge, there’s a refuge that will stand. There is a foundation that will hold. There is a place to hide, not from God, but in God. There is a hope of deliverance from death, judgment, and eternal wrath. I want to give it to you from this same Scripture; look at **verse 16**:

It’s not our refuge, it is His; listen to what he says, **verse 16**, *“Therefore, thus saith the Lord, (now you have said that we have a refuge; you have said that we have a hiding place; you said that we have made a covenant with death; you said with hell we are in agreement; you said, when the overflowing scourge of God’s wrath comes through it won’t come near us).”*

But God saith, *“Your refuge of lies will be swept away. Your falsehood will be disannulled, your agreement with hell. When the overflowing scourge comes through, it will come nigh you.”*

But God says; *“behold”* if you are interested, if you are not in too big of a hurry to meet God at the judgment, if you have the patience to listen, *“behold, I lay in Zion a foundation.”* “I lay a foundation, you didn’t lay it, you didn’t build it, and you didn’t merit it. I lay this foundation and it is a refuge, it’s a hiding place, from the storm, from the judgment, from the scourge of God’s wrath.”

And I will tell you this; men will be saved, not on their terms, but God’s terms. God said, *“I have laid a foundation. I have built a refuge.”*

Now, who is it? He said, *“I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone.”* Do you know who that stone is? It’s a durable stone. It’s a sure, strong, stone. It’s a chief, corner stone. Do you know who that is? That rock is Christ.

When it talks about the man who dug deep and he found a rock and he built his house on the rock. When the rains came and the floods arose and the wind blew and beat on that house it stood and was founded on that rock.

It wasn’t founded on the false profession of easy beliefs; it wasn’t founded upon the merit of human morality, it wasn’t founded on the creed of some denomination; that rock is Christ, that rock is Christ, the Son of God. Christ is that stone.

**“Rock of ages cleft for me
Let me hide myself in thee.”**

HIDING FROM GOD

ISAIAH 28:14-18 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Not only is He a stone, but He is a tried stone. He's already been tried, tried by Abraham and found Him to be sweet and precious. He was tried by Moses who wrote of Him. He was tried by David, who said; "He is my shepherd." He was tried by Job who said, "He's my Redeemer."

He was tried by all of the apostles, tried by believers, and martyrs through the years.
"He was tempted and tested in all points like as we are, yet, without sin."

He was tried by Satan, the arch-enemy of souls. The prince of this world rushed upon Him with all the fervor and all the power and might of darkness, death and hell, and found nothing in Him. He was tried; they found nothing in Him.

Then, He was tried by the Father. The Father Himself poured out His wrath. He walked the winepress of God's wrath in my place and stead. Christ is a tried stone.

You know, if I am going to build for eternity, I would not build on something new, something untested. Some new revelations come from Korea, Rome, or somewhere. I want to build on that stone, strong and durable, which God says has been tried, Christ has been tried.

Not only a tried stone but He said, *"He is a precious corner stone."* To whom is He precious?

First of all: He is precious to the Father

He said, *"This is my beloved Son."* The voice from heaven spake *"this is my Son; hear him."*

Secondly: He is precious to the angels who came to worship Him.

Thirdly: He is precious to the Old Testament saints who wrote of Him, *"and to you who believe, he is most precious."*

I'm not through; God said, *"He is a sure foundation,"* He cannot fail. *"He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."* He cannot fail.

Then, our God sums it all up, He says; *"there is a refuge."* You have a false one and one built on lies and human merit. But, there is one I have laid; it is a stone, tried stone, precious stone, sure, durable stone, a corner stone, a sure foundation and *"he that believeth will never be ashamed."*

He will never be ashamed of Christ now and He will never be ashamed at the judgment. He will never be put to shame; he'll never have the humiliation, even of his own sins. In Christ there is no sins, He has put them away, He has cleansed them, He has washed them, He has atoned for them and *"he has cast them behind his back, in the depths of the sea, blotted them out to remember them no more."*

"He that believeth will never be put to shame." If you have a false refuge you are going to be put to shame. If you are hiding under a refuge of lies; you will be put to shame: But, if you can find your hiding place in Christ; God said, *"you will never, never be put to shame!"*