

Sermon #27 — *Isaiah Series*

Title: **WHEN GOD HIDES HIS FACE**

Text: Isaiah 8:1-22

Subject: *Lessons from Judah's Troubles*

Date: Sunday Evening — June 18, 2017

Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Mark Daniel*

Introduction:

The title of my message is **WHEN GOD HIDES HIS FACE**. My text is the 8th chapter of the Book of Isaiah. — Isaiah 8:1-22 — **WHEN GOD HIDES HIS FACE**.

- Sometimes the Lord graciously hides his face from his people that he may cause us to seek him (Song of Solomon 5).
- Sometimes God hides his face in wrath and in judgment, from a people who refuse the light he gives them, and turns that light into darkness. — That is the situation before us in the passage before us tonight.

CHAPTER 7

WHEN GOD HIDES HIS FACE

Ahaz, because of his unbelief, chose to make a confederacy with the king of Assyria, Tiglathpileser, hoping by this unholy confederacy to preserve his own life and his throne from the fury of Syria and Samaria. **God sent Isaiah to warn Ahaz, to tell him not to look to Assyria, but to heaven for help.**

Isaiah told the king not to trust Tiglathpileser, but to trust the Jehovah. But Ahaz, being the proud wretch he was, would not trust God (Christ – 7:14) or obey the voice of his prophet Isaiah. **Therefore, the Lord God told Isaiah that he would use Assyria and Tiglathpileser to bring Judah into utter humiliation.**

- Ahaz's unbelief would bring Judah into great desolation and sorrow.
- He would become the victim of the one he trusted.
- But the Christ he despised would accomplish his work and save his people.

That was the message of Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 8

WHEN GOD HIDES HIS FACE

In chapter 8 Isaiah begins a sermon which God gave him to deliver to Judah. The sermon which begins here, in Isaiah 8:1, is not concluded until we get to the end of chapter 12. **In this sermon, God told Judah of the certain, impending judgments he would bring upon them and of the extent of his judgment. But in wrath he remembers mercy. And, even in this message of judgment, rich provision is made for the comfort, encouragement, and instruction of his people.**

This chapter is a prophecy of darkness, desolation, and destruction. The Lord hid his face from his people. He brought much sorrow upon the people he loved. Yet, he never forsook them.

Proposition: There is much for us to learn in this chapter about the providence of God, the grace of God, and our responsibilities before him, especially in times of trouble and darkness.

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Divisions: As we read these twenty-two verses together, I want us to learn these six things from them.

1. The Prophet of God is a man with a message from God (vv. 1-4).
2. The actions of one person greatly affect the lives of many (vv. 5-6).
3. Unbelief provokes God to wrath (vv. 5-8).
4. God will never forsake his own elect (vv. 9-10).
5. God always honors faith (vv. 11-18).
6. The only foundation for faith is the Word of God (vv. 19-22).

GOD'S PROPHET

1st — **The prophet of God is a man with a message from God** (vv. 1-4).

(Isaiah 8:1-4) “Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man’s pen concerning Mahershalalhashbaz. ⁽²⁾ And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of

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Jeberechiah. ⁽³⁾ And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz. ⁽⁴⁾ For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.”

- Isaiah got his message directly from the Lord (v. 1).
- He was required to deliver it in clear, unmistakable language (v. 1).
- He wrote the message out and had it witnessed as a matter of public record (v. 2).
- And this man of God utilized everything in his life for God, as the prophet of God, and for the people of God, even to the naming of his sons (vv. 3-4).

His first son's name was **Shearjashub** (7:3). His name means “the remnant shall return.” **God has an elect remnant in this world whom he will save.**

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- They have been chosen by him.
- Christ has redeemed them.
- God the Holy Ghost will call them.
- And they shall return to the Lord in true faith.

But Isaiah's second son was named **Mahershalalhashbaz**. His name means, "He that hastens to the spoil." The great God of glory will punish his enemies, without mercy.

- The Lord our God always prevails over and spoils his enemies, using them to accomplish his own purpose.
- He overthrows Satan's designs and from the evil the Devil brings gets himself glory in saying his people.
- He even makes our fall and sin to be a matter of praise and thanksgiving to him by delivering us from all evil (Romans 6:17).
- And God's church always prevails over and spoils her enemies (Revelation 18).

The servant of God must be a man like Isaiah, separated to the gospel.

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- John the Baptist
- Paul

Isaiah was commanded to commit to writing the message he was given to deliver. How we ought to bless God for this appointment, by which Scripture records have been handed down to us.

How I thank God for him who is the Prophet of prophets, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom Ezekiel saw with a writer's inkhorn by his side to mark his people (Ezekiel 9:2). If you trust him, if he is yours and you are his, if he is mine and I am his, let us never cease to rejoice and give thanks that he has written our names in his book in heaven (Luke 10:20).

MANY AFFECTED BY ONE

2nd — **The actions of one person greatly affect the lives of many** (vv. 5-6).

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(Isaiah 8:5-6) “The LORD spake also unto me again, saying, ⁽⁶⁾ Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah’s son.”

This was the cause of God’s judgment upon the nation. The inhabitants of Judah forsook the Lord because their king, Ahaz, forsook him. They suffered the consequences of Ahaz’s stubbornness, rebellion, and unbelief.

What a warning this is! None of us live as an island. What we do, or do not do, does affect other people, for good or for evil. Cain asked, “*Am I my brother’s keeper?*” You are either your brother’s keeper or your brother’s murderer. **Ahaz was as responsible for the desolations of Judah as the King of Assyria himself.**

- Pastors and Churches
- Husbands and Wives
- Parents and Children.
- You and Your Neighbor, Co-workers, Employees, Employers, etc.

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PROVOKING UNBELIEF

3rd — **Unbelief provokes God to wrath** (vv. 5-8).

(Isaiah 8:5-8) “The LORD spake also unto me again, saying, ⁽⁶⁾ Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah’s son; ⁽⁷⁾ Now **therefore**, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, *even* the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: ⁽⁸⁾ And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach *even* to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.”

Because Judah refused the gentle waters of Shiloah, God flooded them with the waters of destruction. Because they refused to trust the Lord, God gave them the terror of Assyria’s king.

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- God always warns before he punishes.
- God gives mercy and grace to sinners in Christ.
- He graciously calls rebel sinners to trust his dear Son, promising salvation to all who trust him.
- But those who despise God's mercy provoke his wrath (Proverbs 1:23-32).

(Proverbs 1:23-32) “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. ⁽²⁴⁾ Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; ⁽²⁵⁾ But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: ⁽²⁶⁾ I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; ⁽²⁷⁾ When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. ⁽²⁸⁾ Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: ⁽²⁹⁾ For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: ⁽³⁰⁾ They would none of my counsel: they despised all my

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reproof. (31) Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. (32) For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.”

- Though great desolations came by his hand, God would not allow the utter destruction of Judah. — It was Immanuel’s Land!
- And though God often purges his church, he will never allow the destruction of his church. — It is Immanuel’s land!

GOD WITH US

4th — **The Lord our God, faithful and true, will never forsake his own elect** (vv. 9-10).

(Isaiah 8:9-10) “Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. (10) Take

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counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God *is* with us.”

- The confederacies of our foes, no matter how great, shall be broken to pieces.
- The counsels of our enemies, no matter how well laid, shall be brought to nought.
- God is with us (Romans 8:28-39).
- Romans 16:20

(Romans 8:28-39) “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. ⁽²⁹⁾ For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. ⁽³⁰⁾ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. ⁽³¹⁾ What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? ⁽³²⁾ He that spared not his

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own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? ⁽³³⁾ Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. ⁽³⁴⁾ Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. ⁽³⁵⁾ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ⁽³⁶⁾ As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. ⁽³⁷⁾ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. ⁽³⁸⁾ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ⁽³⁹⁾ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

FAITH HONORED

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5th — **God always honors faith** (vv. 11-18). God honors faith (faith in Christ) because faith in Christ honors God. And he has sworn, “*Them that honor me, I will honor.*”

(Isaiah 8:11-18) “For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and **instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people,** saying, ⁽¹²⁾ Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them to* whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. ⁽¹³⁾

Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

⁽¹⁴⁾ And **he shall be for a sanctuary;** but for a **stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel,** for a **gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.** ⁽¹⁵⁾ And

many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. ⁽¹⁶⁾

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. ⁽¹⁷⁾ And **I will wait upon the LORD,**

that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and **I will look for him.** ⁽¹⁸⁾ **Behold, I and the**

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children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

Here is God's counsel to you and me.

- Walk not in the counsel of the ungodly (v. 11).
- Do not fear man (v. 12).
- Sanctify the LORD of Hosts (“*Let him be your fear and let him be your dread!*” v. 13). — Fear Him! — Trust Him! — Honor Him! — Only the fear of God drives away the fear of man.
- The LORD himself (Christ Jesus the Lord) will be your Sanctuary (Refuge) (v. 14).
- Bind his Word to your heart and your heart to his Word (v. 16).
- And wait upon the LORD (v. 17).
- Christ will save his people (v. 18 *cf* Hebrews 2:13).

(Isaiah 8:18) “Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for

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wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts,
which dwelleth in mount Zion.”

GOD’S WORD

6th — **The only foundation for faith is the Word of God** (vv. 19-22).

(Isaiah 8:19-22) “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? ⁽²⁰⁾ **To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.** ⁽²¹⁾

And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward. ⁽²²⁾ And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and *they shall be* driven to darkness.

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Isaiah concludes this chapter with three points which he would have us lay to heart.

1. We must resist every temptation to make any confederacy with false religion (v. 19).
2. We must judge every prophet and every doctrine by the word of God (v. 20).
3. Those who refuse to walk in the light of divine revelation must reap to rewards of ignorance, darkness, and superstition.

How truly blessed and profitable it is to observe the Lord's care of his people! Though in times of general wickedness, he takes care of his own. If men will look to the arm of the flesh, that arm shall be their confusion. But if we sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, trusting him, looking to him, waiting for him, he will be for our souls a Sanctuary.

When our God sends trouble on the earth, like a Father to his children, who sees a storm approaching, he brings us into the house and shuts the door, securing his family from the danger.

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In this chapter, our God, our heavenly Father, says to you and me, Come, my children, enter into the chambers of my providence and the covenant of my love, and shut, the door, until the storm is over. — **Take refuge in Christ** (Proverbs 18:1)).

“In the dark of the midnight
have I oft hid my face
While the storm howls above me,
and there’s no hiding place
‘Mid the crash of the thunder,
Precious Lord, hear my cry
Keep me safe till the storm passes by

Many times Satan whispered,
‘There is no need to try
For there’s no end of sorrow,
there’s no hope by and by’
But I know Thou art with me,
and tomorrow I’ll rise
Where the storms never darken the skies

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When the long night has ended
and the storms come no more
Let me stand in Thy presence
on the bright peaceful shore
In that land where the tempest,
never comes, Lord, may I
Dwell with Thee when the storm passes by

Till the storm passes over,
till the thunder sounds no more
Till the clouds roll forever from the sky
Hold me fast, let me stand in the hollow of Thy hand
Keep me safe till the storm passes by

Oh! The love of God in Christ to his people!

Precious Savior, blessed Rock of ages, and the Rock of my salvation! While to many he is a stone of stumbling, and a rock offense, he has made himself to every believing sinner a sure Foundation and the Corner Stone upon which he has built us by his grace! While falling upon many in judgment, to grind them to powder, he has caused us to fall on him that we might be broken, obtain mercy, and be saved by

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him! — Wondrous Grace! — Wonderful Savior!

Amen.