

## The Only Cure for Unbelief

Scripture Reading: John 12:37-41

Unbelief is the worst problem in the world. With unbelief, of course, comes all manner of sin. We have been looking at Isaiah 53:1-12 and studying its gospel-centered content. At the same time there is a prevailing question that starts this chapter. ***“Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?”*** As Isaiah received a report from God about the Son of God (I John 5:9-11) he immediately realized that this narrative is unbelievable to the natural man. Yet, in faith, Isaiah gave the report. It will have to be revealed to men by the Spirit of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:18-24; 2:12-16 cp. I Peter 1:10-12, 20-25).

### Consider John 11:1 – 12:50

There were very diverse and intense reactions to the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

**John 11:1-44** – Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

**John 11:45** – Some believed on Jesus.

**John 11:46** – Others reported Him to the Pharisees.

**John 11:47-57; 12:9-11** – The Pharisees decided to kill Jesus and Lazarus, hoping to quench the popularity of Jesus.

**John 12:1-8** – Jesus had supper with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Mary anointed Jesus’ feet. Jesus spoke of His burial.

**John 12:12-36** – Jesus entered Jerusalem. He spoke of His death by crucifixion.

**John 12:37-43** – John commented on the unbelief of Israel. This was of great prophetic importance (Two quotes from Isaiah). People had mixtures of faith, doubt, and fear.

**John 12:44-50** – Jesus spoke of a faith that must come from the words of God.

- Those words give life (John 5:24-25; 6:44-45, 63).
- Those words make us accountable to God (John 5:37-47; 8:30-55 cp. II Peter 2:20-22).
- Note that this is the end of Jesus’ public ministry. After this, Jesus focused on his disciples in John 13:1 – 17:26.

## **Consider Some Insights from The Book of Isaiah in John's Gospel**

In John 12:37-41, John quoted twice from the book of Isaiah as he explained the unbelief of the people of Israel

- **John 12:37-38** – Unbelief, among the people of Israel was predicted **cp. Isaiah 53:1**
- **John 12:39-41** – To clarify the previous statement, John makes it clear that this is not a mere prediction, but rather it is the work of God's Spirit, withholding the revelation of God's Son, at that time, so that greater purposes could be fulfilled **cp. Isaiah 6:10**

It was necessary that Christ be rejected by Israel, so that His crucifixion could be used to save many, many others (**Isaiah 53:10-12**). See also Romans 11:25, 30-36; Romans 1:16; Galatians 3:28-29 (See God's master plan to save Jews and Gentiles cp. Ephesians 2:11 – 3:9. Note II Corinthians 3:14-16.) God used man's unbelief to fulfill His greater plan of salvation for people of all the families of the earth – not just the Hebrew people (Genesis 12:3).

## **Consider the Judgement and the Mercy of the LORD**

It is hard for us to reconcile our thoughts about God's justice, sovereignty, grace, and mercy.

- Romans 1:16-18 shows us that the gospel that saves those who believe also reveals the righteousness of God and the wrath of God.
- Romans 1:21-32 shows that God gives certain people up to their lusts and gives them over to a reprobate mind that utterly confuses what is right and wrong.
- Romans 5:6-8 shows us that God the Father lovingly sent Christ His Son to die for ungodly sinners who were without any strength (See I Corinthians 6:9-11).
- Romans 9:14-18 shows that God has the right to show mercy or to harden people's hearts.
- Romans 10:9-17 shows us that all people are invited to call on the Lord and be saved.
- Romans 2:2 shows us that the judgement of God is according to truth.
- Romans 2:4 shows us that the goodness of God leads us to repentance.

## **The only Cure for Unbelief is The Grace of God, The Son of God, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

Fear the Lord. Repent to the Lord. Believe what God says about His Son. Call upon the Lord. And give thanks for His grace and salvation. See Proverbs 1:7; 3:5-7; Acts 17:24-31; Romans 3:19-26; I John 5:9-13; Romans 6:17-18; I Timothy 1:12-17; II Corinthians 9:15.