

I. Introduction

A. Proverbs 5:1–14

1 My son, give attention to my wisdom,
Incline your ear to my understanding;
2 That you may observe discretion
And your lips may reserve knowledge.
3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey
And smoother than oil is her speech;
4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.
5 Her feet go down to death,
Her steps take hold of Sheol.
6 She does not ponder the path of life;
Her ways are unstable, she does not know *it*.
7 Now then, *my* sons, listen to me
And do not depart from the words of my mouth.
8 Keep your way far from her
And do not go near the door of her house,
9 Or you will give your vigor to others
And your years to the cruel one;
10 And strangers will be filled with your strength
And your hard-earned goods *will go* to the house of an alien;
11 And you groan at your final end,
When your flesh and your body are consumed;
12 **And you say, “How I have hated instruction!
And my heart spurned reproof!**
13 **“I have not listened to the voice of my teachers,
Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!**
14 “I was almost in utter ruin, In the midst of the assembly and congregation.”

B. Proverbs 1:20-33

C. Pride and humility.

D. Examine/compare.

II. vv. 37-41

A. v. 37 “But Like these kinds He made signs before them, they did not believe into Him.”

1. “signs” = these don’t have to be signs in the sense of miracles.
2. These can be “signs” in the sense of overt activities which Messiah would do.
3. The nearest “sign” which Jesus did in this narrative is His magnanimous entry into Jerusalem.

a) *He came in on precisely the day Daniel said He would - Nisan 10, AD 33 (Daniel 9:24ff.)*

b) *He rode in on the foal of a donkey, as Zechariah said He would (Zechariah 9:9).*

c) *He entered the gates of Jerusalem just as the Psalmist said He would:*

d) *Psalm 118:19–20*

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness;

I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord; The righteous will enter through it.

e) *The people announced His coming just as the prophets said they would (Psalm 118:26).*

4. These signs are huge.

a) *To the watching and waiting saint of Israel, like Simeon, these would have been unmistakable.*

b) *No faithful saint would have missed them.*

- B. “...they did not believe Him...”
1. Here begins John’s point.
 - a) *Although Jesus made so many signs that were only valid for the Messiah to do, they refused to believe Him.*
 - b) *How incredible!*
 2. What would it take in order to believe what Jesus said?
 3. What would it take in order to believe what Jesus did?
- C. Well, you need to understand what the Jews did not.
1. Zechariah 12:10 = “in that day”
 - a) *Jerusalem is sieged - v. 3*
 - b) *The Gentiles who come against Jerusalem will be struck blind - 4.*
 - c) *Judah will fight and be victorious, and Jerusalem will be at peace - v. 5.*
 - d) *God will defend Jerusalem and the inhabitants will become mighty warriors - v 8.*
 - e) *God will purpose to destroy the raging nations that come against Jerusalem - v. 9*
 - f) *The mighty inhabitants of Jerusalem will mourn in that day like they have never mourned before - v. 11.*
 - g) *It will be a day when Jesus returns to Jerusalem, the inhabitants see Him, and begin to wail like a parent who has lost their only son (v. 10).*
 - h) *They will see Him.*
 - (1) “...whom they have pierced...”
 - (2) In the plan of God, as Isaiah would say, it was the good pleasure of the Father to crush Him (Isaiah 53:10).
 2. The fruit of that crushing would be eternal redemption for the sons of God.
 - a) *However...*
 - (1) The crushing necessities a rejection.
 - (2) The rejection, in the face of so many clear signs, necessitates a blindness.
 - (3) And, the blindness must be provoked, lest God be seen as “unfair.”
 - b) *Romans 9:18-33*
 - (1) His wrath and judgment, as well as His mercy and compassion, are meted out by His own will.
 - (2) He will even raise up men in order to demonstrate His great power over them but ruining them.
 3. Does this make God “unfair”?
 - a) *No.*

- b) *Don't forget, the natural inclination of men is to rebel.*
- c) *Therefore, whether Pharaoh, or someone in your family, He is right to judge them for their sins.*
 - (1) Further, have we forgotten the many years He is patient with the same wicked (v. 22)?!
 - (2) The righteousness that God expects was never pursued by "faith" (v. 32).
- d) *Therefore, in their unbelief, they committed the transgression of disobedience to their Messiah.*
- e) *"Unbelief can always assign the most plainly providential arrangements to happy accident."¹*

D. v. 38 "In order that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which says, "LORD, who has believed our report?", and, "To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

- 1. Jesus said, "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).
- 2. Therefore, the blindness of Israel in the face of Messiah was necessary.
- 3. It could not happen any other way.

E. What does this mean?

- 1. It means that the words which Isaiah wrote are from the heart of God and therefore, accurate.
- 2. However, directly, we need to look at Isaiah 53:1ff. in order to really understand what John meant.

F. Isaiah 53:1ff

- 1. Context:

G. Isaiah is prophesying to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin primarily.

- 1. The northern tribes have been subsumed by Tiglath-Pileser and his successor, Shalmaneser IV and Sargon in 722 B.C., Assyrian kings.
- 2. It was a very complicated time. However, the subjugation of northern Israel caused tremendous fear in the heart of King Hezekiah in Judah.
- 3. He gave in, to some degree, and paid a ransom to the king in order to keep him from attack.
- 4. However, a few years later, King Sennacherib, following King Sargon, attempted an attack on Judah in order to wipe out, once and for all, the vestige of the Jews, and was horribly defeated.
- 5. 2 Chronicles 32:20–23

20 But King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed about this and cried out to heaven.

21 And the Lord sent an angel who destroyed every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in shame to his own land. And when he had entered the temple of his god, some of his own children killed him there with the sword.

22 So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria and from the hand of all *others*, and guided them on every side.

23 And many were bringing gifts to the Lord at Jerusalem and choice presents to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations thereafter.

H. As a result of his healing, the nations praise Hezekiah and payed him tribute.

1. From this, Hezekiah grew more and more arrogant.
2. Isaiah 39:1-8 = when Hezekiah heard that Babylon would carry off Judah, he was just glad that it was not going to happen during his lifetime.
 - a) *From here, we learn of Isaiah turning to both comfort and call to repentance.*
 - b) *In the middle of the rest of this prophecy, God writes Isaiah 53, a chapter concerning the Servant of YHWH who would die as an offering to God for His people.*

I. Isaiah often calls for Judah to “listen to him...” (Isaiah 46:3; 48:12; 51:1, 7).

1. However, because of the leadership of the priests of that time, they did not hear.
2. Since they will refuse to listen, they will hear a shout of rage (Isaiah 42:20-25).
3. Therefore, Isaiah says, “Who has believed our report (rhetorically, “No one.”)? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed (rhetorically, “To Judah, but they did not recognize it.”).”

J. Like Hezekiah, they became arrogant in their deliverance.

1. Like you and I, we actually believe that God owes us our good fortune.
2. Isaiah 59:1–8

1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that He does not hear. 3 For your hands are defiled with blood And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken falsehood, Your tongue mutters wickedness. 4 No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies; They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. 5 They hatch adders' eggs and weave the spider's web; He who eats of their eggs dies, And *from* that which is crushed a snake breaks forth. 6 Their webs will not become clothing, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of iniquity, And an act of violence is in their hands. 7 Their feet run to evil, And they hasten to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, Devastation and destruction are in their highways. 8 They do not know the way of

A. ¹ H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Isaiah*, vol. 2, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1910), 294.

peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have made their paths crooked, Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

K. “arm of the Lord...”

Isaiah 51:5

5 “My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth,
And My arms will judge the peoples;
The coastlands will wait for Me, And for My arm they will wait expectantly.

Isaiah 59:16

16 And He saw that there was no man,
And was astonished that there was no one to intercede;
Then His own arm brought salvation to Him,
And His righteousness upheld Him.

III.

Isaiah 63:5–6

5 “I looked, and there was no one to help,
And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold;
So My own arm brought salvation to Me,
And My wrath upheld Me.

6 “I trod down the peoples in My anger
And made them drunk in My wrath,
And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”

1. The history of Israel is that of a call to listen, but a refusal to hear.
 - a) *Deuteronomy 6:4 = “Hear!”*
 - b) *Deuteronomy 31:12, 13*

Deuteronomy 4:10

10 “Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.’

B. v. 39 “Because of this not being able to believe, because Isaiah has said again.”

1. As a result of refusing to listen to Isaiah, or the Prophet, Jesus, Israel was now forced to be deaf.
2. Now, they are not able to believe.
 - a) *It is final.*
 - b) *It is just like in the days of Isaiah.*
3. God is now making it so that their hearts simply cannot be turned toward hearing/believing.
4. Why?
5. Because, they would not hear.
6. Because, they were proud.
7. Because, they thought they knew it already.

C. What is the result?

1. Deafness to God.

IV. v. 40 “And they will understand (with) the heart, and they will turn, and I will heal them...”

- A. God now, here, makes a judicial choice to refuse to heal them.
- B. Because of their refusal to listen to the prophets and to Christ, God will now not hear them.

V. v. 41 “Isaiah said these things and he spoke concerning Him, because He saw His glory.”

- A. It is best to keep this in the context of Isaiah 53, not Isaiah 6.
- B. He saw the glory of the Servant, His sacrifice, and spoke of Him.

VI. Conclusion

- A. James 1:19