

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

Good evening and welcome to our Bible Study on Thursday nights. We're going through the Bible book-by-book and chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse. Tonight, we are in Isaiah, making our way through this amazing book. Last week we finished chapter 19; tonight, we're going to pick it up in chapter 20. Lord willing, we're going to make it all the way through to chapter 23, four chapters. Why are you looking at me like that? I'll have you out of here by about midnight. It shouldn't be a problem. But we're going to do this, alright?

Let's pray. We'll ask God to bless our Bible study tonight. Father, thank you so much for your Word and for this portion that is here before us tonight here in Isaiah. Lord, we so look forward to this time that we can just come to this place and open up our Bibles, put aside all the busyness, stress and pressures of our lives and focus our attention on you and your word and that which you have for us in your Word. Tonight Lord, we're asking you as only you can to bless our time together in your Word, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen and amen. All right.

I spent some time seeking the Lord and made the decision after praying about this to complete four chapters tonight from chapters 20 through 23 for a couple of reasons.

The first of which is that I kind of want to finish what's referred to as the "book of burdens." These are burdens, and I kind of want to get done with these burdens. These weighty, is that bad? Actually, by burdens, I mean these weighty, heavy, burdensome prophecies that Isaiah was to proclaim and pronounce and declare about these coming judgments. We're going to see this a little bit tonight with Isaiah, where he just breaks down and cries and weeps over the judgment that is coming. Would to God that we would have a heart like Isaiah when it comes to the wrath of God, the judgment of God, the justice of God. He meets out justice because he is a just God.

One of the other reasons I wanted to take and tackle all four chapters tonight is that the common denominator with these chapters is that they speak to how God gets our attention. Do you know how that is when God has to get your attention? Yeah, me neither, so it's all just kind of a hypothetical study, I guess tonight - theoretical. Oh, my goodness! How many times has God had to just kind of do whatever it takes, right, to get my attention?

Never imagine that God does so for any other reason other than because of his love for us and his desire to protect us. Think of it like this. Do you know those danger signs, those warning signs that are there to get our attention, to alert us to danger ahead? They are there to protect us, and this is what we have before us tonight. These are these burdens, these judgments, these warnings. This is a loving God who chooses and uses whatever it takes to get people's attention so that he can warn them about what's coming.

We're going to jump in verse 1, chapter 20, "In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon, the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it." The first verse, right out of the chute is a prophecy, a burden concerning Ashdod, which was one of the five cities of the Philistines. This prophecy was fulfilled exactly as we were told it would be here in the year 711 BC.

Now verse 2, it starts to get a little bit gnarly, and for those of you that read ahead to stay ahead, you know what's coming. Verse 2, "At the same time the Lord spoke by Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saying, "'Go and remove the sackcloth from your body, and take your sandals off your feet.' And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

Then [verse 3], the Lord said, 'Just as My servant, Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia, so shall [verse 4] the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners and the Ethiopians as captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.'"

Is everybody okay? What is this about? Well, this was a sign. It was to Israel, and it had this purpose in mind. It was, of course, to get their attention. That would get my attention. But it was with the

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

hopes that Israel would not look to or trust in Egypt. He has Isaiah the prophet, take off his outer garments, and for 3 years, he literally did this as a sign to them, to get their attention, to warn them because what they were doing was putting their trust in and looking to Egypt. What God was saying through the Prophet Isaiah is, don't look to them because this is what is going to happen to them. And it did – exactly as God said it would.

Now a couple of things here that I think I should probably mention because I'm just looking at the look of horror on all of your faces, thinking... don't think too much about this. But it should be noted that Isaiah was not completely naked. The reason for that is because it would've been against the law of Moses. Rather he was stripped of his garments as a sign to them, a picture to them, a warning to them because that's exactly what was going to happen to Egypt. Egypt would be stripped of everything, and they would be taken away and stripped naked when they were fallen. This is what God wants Israel to know.

There was another prophet, the Prophet Ezekiel. He was commanded to lay on his side for 390 days. Here's the thought, and I went to some commentators on this, as you might imagine. I wanted to see what they had to say about this because it's kind of hard to get your mind around it. The thought is that the prophets did this throughout the day, every day as God had commanded them.

This was a prophecy in a very dramatic way, a very visual way to get their attention. Once God had their attention, he would warn them because of his love for them and his protection because they were erring in looking to Egypt.

Verse 5, "Then they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation and Egypt their glory." Did you catch that? They were looking to Ethiopia with great expectation, and they were looking to Egypt and glorifying Egypt. God is saying don't do that because it's not going to be long before this is what happens to them.

Verse 6, "The inhabitant of this territory will say in that day, 'Surely such is our expectation, wherever we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape?'" That explains a lot right there.

Let me explain. God will often time do whatever it takes to get our attention when we're looking to our Egypt, and Egypt in Scripture is always a type of the world. When we're looking to the world for help, we're looking to the world and not the Lord. Then the Lord who is a jealous God, not of us, for us, because when we shift our attention, and focus, and affection onto anyone or anything, but where it belongs on the Lord alone, the Lord, because he loves us, says to us, that is no help to you. That is no God to you: I am the Lord, your God. If you're looking to that, you will be ashamed and disappointed and let down because they will not be there for you. I will always be there for you.

Here you're looking to them for help against this invading army from the Assyrians, and instead of looking to them, I want you to look to me. From where does my help come from? This again is a loving God who is warning his people: Look to me.

Chapter 21, doing pretty good so far. All right. "The burden against the Wilderness of the Sea. As whirlwinds in the South pass through, so it comes from the desert, from a terrible land. A distressing vision [verse 2] is declared to me; The treacherous dealer deals treacherously, And the plunderer plunders. Go up, O Elam! Besiege, O Media! All its sighing I have made to cease.

Therefore [verse 3], my loins are filled with pain. Pangs have taken hold of me, like the pangs of a woman in labor. I was distressed when I heard it; I was dismayed when I saw it."

That's Isaiah speaking. That's what I mean, and we're going to see it here again shortly. Isaiah is very grieved, very distressed as he hears this and sees this that which is coming. This particular prophecy

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

is concerning the destruction of Babylon and it was fulfilled by Cyrus, the king of the Medo-Persian Empire exactly as God said it would.

Now think about that for a moment. First of all, think about Isaiah for a moment. God tells him for 3 years, I want you to be humiliated, stripping yourself of all of your outer garments, basically in your undergarments. I want you to proclaim this prophecy, and you're going to do it for three years. Nowhere do we find any mention, let alone a hint of Isaiah in any way contending with the Lord concerning that which he was commanding him to do.

In other words, Isaiah was obedient to that which God had called him and commanded him to do as difficult as that must have been. If you think about it, it's when God called him in chapter 6 when he looked and beheld, seated on the throne, high and lifted up, and then he realized he was unclean. He said, take that coal and touch my lips and here I am. Then the Lord says, 'Whom shall I send?' Isaiah's response, I imagine it instant, immediate, "Here am I, Lord. Send me." He knew what he was signing up for. He had counted the cost. No matter the cost, Lord, here am I. Send me. Whatever you say to do, I will do it! Even this! No complaining, no arguing, no hesitating. He just did it. He was faithful to do it.

Now we see him here in this chapter with this prophecy, and he is distressed. He was grieved. He was dismayed. Never imagine the Prophet Isaiah or any of the prophets like him ever taking any delight in prophesying these coming judgments. Actually, I think I had better take that back. There was one guy, you know him. You know who I'm talking about, right? Jonah. Other than Jonah, none of... Never mind; that's another topic for another time. But not Isaiah! "Here am I. Send me." No matter what it is that you tell me, Lord, I will do it. I will do it, and he did.

Verse 4, "My heart wavered, fearfulness frightened me; The night for which I longed, he turned into fear for me." This is again what is meant by the "burden of the Lord." You know how it is that God will put a burden; He will burden your heart for people. He will burden your heart for the lost. It's the burden of the Lord. Where your heart is grieved with the things that grieve the heart of God. This is Isaiah.

Verse 5, "Prepare the table. Set a watchman in the tower. Eat and drink. Arise, you princes. Anoint the shield! For thus, has the Lord said to me: 'Go, set a watchman. Let him declare what he sees.' And [verse 7], He saw a chariot with a pair of horsemen, a chariot of donkeys, and a chariot of camels."

What? That's not usual. That's uncommon. Oh, that's because they are fleeing any which way they can. I don't care if all we've got left are camels. Hook up the chariots to them; we got to get out of here if we're going to have any hope of surviving this.

"And he listened earnestly with great care. Then, [verse 8] he cried, 'A lion, My Lord! I stand continually on the watchtower in the daytime; I have sat at my post every night. And look [verse 9], here comes a chariot of men with a pair of horsemen!' Then he answered and said, 'Babylon has fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground. Oh, my threshing and the grain of my floor! That which I have heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared to you...'"

By the way, if this sounds familiar, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" That's because it should. This again is one of those dual prophecies like we saw in chapter 19 with Egypt, chapter 17 with Damascus. But it's a dual prophecy in the sense that it was fulfilled then, and it will also be fulfilled yet future, as described in Revelation Chapter 18. In Revelation 17 and 18, we have what is referred to as the two Babylons. This is during the time of the 7-year tribulation. Chapter 17 Revelation is religious Babylon, and chapter 18 Revelation is economic Babylon. This is the Babylon – yet future in this dual prophecy that this speaks to almost verbatim.

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

In fact, this is probably as good a time as any to mention this again and we'll be talking about this as well. Again, we've already seen it heretofore in the book of Isaiah predominantly. But well-nigh, 90 plus percent of the book of Revelation is a direct reference, almost verbatim to the Old Testament. More than 90% of the book of Revelation is a direct reference to the Old Testament, and such is the case here with this prophecy concerning Babylon.

Verse 11, "The burden against Dumah. He calls to me out of Seir..." This is the area we know today as modern-day Jordan. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?' The watchman said [verse 12], 'The morning comes, and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; Return! Come back!'"

Did you get that? Self-explanatory, right? What is this about? Okay. This prophecy is against Edom. Edom was the descendants of Esau, known as the Edomites. This comes from the watchman of the night, who's put in place, and God uses the watchman. Why? To sound the alarm; to warn the people; to get their attention: This is what's coming. What's coming, watchman? And it is incumbent upon the watchman on the wall, the watchman in the tower who keeps watch over the city. Anything that comes, any threat, any harm, any danger that approaches, that watchman is responsible to sound the alarm, to wake the people up in the middle of the night, and to get their attention because of what's coming.

When we get to Ezekiel... Again, there's a lot of intersecting here with Ezekiel. We'll see; I think one more tonight. But Ezekiel is pretty explicit concerning the watchman.

So, here's what happens. If you're a watchman and you don't warn the people? Their blood is on your hands. That's pretty serious. As a teacher and student of Bible prophecy, I take that very seriously because as a watchman as it were, it is my responsibility to sound the alarm about what's coming. Because if I don't sound the alarm, then your blood is on my hands. Conversely, if the watchman, I like this part of it better because it works both ways; you flip it around. If the watchman is faithful and does sound the alarm and the people do not respond. The blood is not on my hands; it's on yours. My hands are clean of the blood of any man.

I'm reminded of what the Apostle Paul said. It's recorded in the book of Acts. I have the blood of no one on my hands. Why? Because I did not cease from teaching the whole counsel of God. When I'm standing before God, giving an account before God, I will have the blood of no one on my hands because I did that which God commanded me to do. This is what the watchman is doing here in this prophecy.

Verse 13, we're going to kind of turn a corner here. This is a prophecy, a burden against Arabia. This is the area we know today, modern-day Saudi Arabia; at that time, it was ancient Sheba and Dedan.

We see this again in Ezekiel. That very well-known prophecy yet future. Ezekiel 38, specifically verse 13, where Sheba and Dedan and Tarshish, which we'll see as well, only protest this allied invasion of Israel to take a spoil. This invasion that it has at the helm, Russia, Iran, and Turkey, along with other nations listed there in Ezekiel by their ancient names; Saudi Arabia, by their ancient name, is mentioned in verse 13 of Ezekiel 38.

But here, ironically enough, in verse 13, we have another prophecy concerning this region we know as Saudi Arabia, "The burden against Arabia. In the forest in Arabia, you will lodge, O you traveling companies of Dedanites [Dedan, Sheba, and Dedan.] O inhabitants [verse 14] of the land of Tema. Bring water to him who is thirsty; With their bread, they met him who fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow, and from the distress of war. For thus the Lord has said to me..."

This is very specific. By the way, parenthetically, let me say, I don't mean to be too discombobulating here, but this is very important. No other religious writing has prophecy. The Koran? The amount of

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

prophecy in the Koran? Are you ready for it? Wait for it: Zero. Only the Word of God. The infallible Word of God dares to prophetically declare that which is going to come in the future. God says this is how you will know that I am God. I'm going to tell you by way of prophecy what's going to happen so that when it happens, you'll know. And the litmus test is 100%! Not 99.999999 ad infinitum. 100% accuracy when it comes to prophecy.

This is a specific prophecy, and make no mistake about it, when God says it's going to happen, it's going to happen! I mean, is that... I'm not upset... Verse 16... Yeah, maybe I am! "For thus, Within a year..." That's pretty specific. You know, these false prophets and their prophecies are so generic. The sun will rise. Wow, that's really specific, isn't it? Got a pretty good chance of that happening. From the east, wow. No way.

"Within a year, according to the year of a hired man, all the glory of Kedar will fail; And [verse 17] the remainder of the number of archers, the mighty men of the people of Kedar, will be diminished; For the Lord God of Israel has spoken it."

I love that. Translated? God said it; that settles it. The Lord spoke it. What did the Lord speak? He spoke this prophecy that it would happen in a year. Guess what? I know you're going to be shocked. It happened in exactly one year from the prophecy when it was declared, and the year was the year 716 BC. Exactly as God said it would happen.

That should be so encouraging to every single one of us tonight, right? Because God has prophesied and foretold us what is going to happen in the future, and he has spoken it. We have his Word, and if we have his Word and God said it? It's going to happen! It's going to happen. Okay, I feel better now. Let's move on.

Chapter 22, doing pretty good, huh? Verse 1, "The burden [prophecy] against the Valley of Vision. What ails you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops, you who are full of noise, a tumultuous city, a joyous city? Your slain men are not slain with the sword nor dead in battle. All your rulers [verse 3] have fled together; They are captured by the archers. All who are found in you are bound together; They have fled from afar. Therefore, I said, 'Look away from me, I will weep bitterly; Do not labor to comfort me because of the plundering of the daughter of my people.'"

Do you know who this prophecy is about? Sadly, it's about Jerusalem. This explains why it is that Isaiah would weep so bitterly. So much so that he would say, don't even try. Don't even bother trying to console me; I am inconsolable. This is a prophecy against Jerusalem. It is a prophecy about Babylon conquering Jerusalem and taking captive the Israelites, and this is the prophecy that Isaiah is to declare.

Verse 5, "For it is a day of trouble and treading down and perplexity by the Lord God of hosts in the Valley of Vision- Breaking down the walls and of crying to the mountain. Elam [verse 6] bore the quiver with chariots of men and horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield. It shall come to pass that your choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate."

I want you to pay particular attention to verse 8. "He removed the protection of Judah. [Hang on to that.] You looked in that day to the armor of the House of the Forest; You also saw the damage to the city of David, that it was great; And [what did you do?] you gathered together the waters of the lower pool..." They started to strategize and figure out how you're going to stand up against this invasion and attack.

"You numbered [verse 10], the houses of Jerusalem, [took stock] and the houses you broke down to fortify the wall." I know, let's take our houses and take the lumber and let's build the wall so that we can withstand the Babylonians coming against us to take us captive.

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

And he didn't stop there, verse 11, you think you're so clever. You think you're so smart coming up with your own strategies and plans in your own strength. "You also made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you did not look to its Maker, nor did you have respect for Him Who fashioned it long ago.

And [verse 12] in that day, the Lord God of hosts called for weeping and for mourning, for baldness, and for girding with sackcloth." Which was an outward sign of mourning and grief and sorrow and remorse and repentance.

"But instead [verse 13, instead of responding like that, your response was] joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating meat and drinking wine: 'Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die!'"

Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me right now? The Lord has got your attention. He's told you what's going to happen and what is your response? You don't repent; you party! You don't fall on your face before the Lord in repentance. Instead, you start shoring up the walls of defense.

"Then [verse 14] it was revealed in my hearing by the Lord of hosts, 'Surely for this iniquity, there will be no atonement for you, even to your death,' says the Lord God of hosts. There is a very important lesson to learn here, and it's that of yeah, God might get our attention, but that doesn't necessarily mean we're going to turn our hearts to the Lord once He does.

You see, the choice is ours. God will never force us to choose him. He's given us free will. He doesn't want us to choose him by force. He wants us to choose him and his will of our own volition. This is why it is; I believe that there was that one tree in the garden, in the midst of the garden. Of all the trees, they could eat; but of this one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they were forbidden to eat. Why put it there? Because now they have a choice. They have a choice to obey me. They have a choice to choose me. See if all the trees they could eat from, then it's just automatic. But I've given them a choice.

Never think for a second that God, in His omniscience, didn't know that was the choice they were going to make and never imagine... I mean, it's almost blasphemous to even utter it from one's lips but never imagine that Jesus as the second and final Adam was Plan B. No way! This was the plan from the very beginning. God and his foreknowledge knew that Adam and Eve would choose to sin, that sin would enter the world.

See, I remember early on as a young believer... I know I'm digressing here a little bit, but maybe this is for somebody here today, especially if you're struggling with this. I know I did early on in my walk with the Lord. I just could not wrap my immature spiritual mind around why it is that when Lucifer rebelled in heaven...

This is before he was cast down to earth. When he said, I will ascend my throne above the Most High. Oh, you will, will you? And he caused that rebellion. Do you know that was the first sin, by the way? The first sin wasn't in the garden; the first sin was in heaven. That's why there's going to be a new heaven and a new earth. By the way, Satan still has access to heaven. I hope that doesn't mess you up.

Ask Job. I don't think you'll be interested once we're there, but Satan still has access to heaven. So, if I were God and Lucifer did that, I would have just said, you know what? Zap! Took care of that. Anybody else wants to rebel? No! I'm good. I'm good. Do you see what just happened there? You have just changed the entirety of eternity because now, instead of serving God out of devotion and worship and gladness and joy and love, you are serving Him out of fear.

Can you imagine the dialogue in heaven after something like that? This is why I'm not God; that's why you're not God either. Because we would've zapped him, right? Can you imagine the dialogue in heaven after something like that? Did you see what God did to Lucy? I mean Lucifer, sorry, that

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

slipped, totally slipped. That's a whole other topic for another time. Don't get me started. Yeah, ho! He wanted to rebel! Did you hear about that? Yeah, we were ready to go with him; a third of us were. Yeah, well, God just zapped him. I know; we'd better watch our P's and Q's. Right?

All of a sudden, now it's all out of fear. God had to let sin run its course so that by the time... I know this might be an oversimplification. But by the time you get to the book of Revelation and there is this, I mean, I don't know for lack of a better word, there is this cry, "Who is worthy to open the scrolls?" Then when Jesus is the one that is worthy, throughout all of human history, all of the suffering, the death, because of sin. Now we have a Savior and a Redeemer who is worthy, and his name is Jesus. The relief is like, ho! Now I get it.

By the way, one more thing. If God would have done what I would have done if I were God and zapped Lucifer? We wouldn't be here tonight. Think about it. We wouldn't be studying our Bibles. No need, no name. Aren't you glad? I know that was really a digressing, but who knows the mind of the Lord, right?

But when God gets our attention, the choice is ours. What are you going to do? Are you going to turn to the Lord? Or are you going to turn away from the Lord? It's your choice. Okay, you got my attention. Well, it's about time I got your attention, boy. No, it's not like that. It's like I got your attention because of danger! Danger! Danger! What are you going to do? What are you going to do? The choice is ours.

Verse 15, "Thus says the Lord, God of hosts, 'Go, proceed to this steward, to Shebna...' We are introduced to this man. This is an interesting guy. "...who is over the house, and say: 'What have you here, and whom have you here, that you have hewn a sepulcher here, as he who hews himself a sepulcher on high, who carves a tomb for himself in a rock?'" Making a name for yourself, are you?

"Indeed [verse 17] the Lord will throw you away violently, O, mighty man and will surely seize you. He will surely turn violently and toss you like a ball into a large country; There you shall die, and there your glorious chariots shall be the shame of your master's house. So, I will drive you out of your office, and from your position, he will pull you down."

Whoa! Who is this guy? Well, his name, we're told, is Shebna. We know from Scripture that he was a servant of King Hezekiah, but this guy had a problem. It's kind of interesting that it would be included here in this chapter in this prophecy, but it's a prophecy not concerning a nation or a people. It is a prophecy concerning a man. This man was a man full of himself. Everything was all about himself. He wanted to make a name for himself, and God is going to have the final word. Not only will he have, even though he carved out a tomb... You had to be pretty wealthy at that time to do that, to make a name for yourself.

It's kind of interesting, and it's missed here in our culture. But in the Middle East, in the Arab culture particularly, and so too in the Hebrew culture. But in the Middle East to this day, by the way, if you have a girl, it's kind of like, oh, it's a girl. I'm sorry, everybody goes home. If it's a boy, celebrate, why? Because the boy carries the family name. If you're a girl in the Middle East, you're nothing. The firstborn son, which I was, anyway... My poor sister, I love her so much. She just never really had a fighting chance growing up in our home with our culture. The boy is who carries on the family name, not the girl. Because if you don't have any boys, then they don't carry your name because you want to make a name for yourself.

And God says, no, it's not going to happen. Not only are you not going to be buried in that tomb that you made for yourself, but you're also going to die in exile.

"Then [verse 20] it shall be in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah. I will clothe him with your robe And strengthen him with your belt. I will commit your responsibility into his hand. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. The key of

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

the house of David, I will lay on his shoulder. So he shall open, and no one shall shut, And he shall shut, and no one shall open."

Does that sound familiar? It should. The book of Revelation again. It's actually a prophecy concerning Jesus himself. Oh, do you want to make a name for yourself? I'm going to take what you've done for yourself and give it to this man: this Eliakim, a picture, a type of Jesus.

Revelation 3:7, "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shuts and shuts and no one opens.'" That's the reference from Revelation to Isaiah and Isaiah to Revelation. It gets better.

"I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, and he will become a glorious throne..." Listen to the verbiage here, the wording, "...to his father's house. They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring, and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the pitchers.

'In that day,' [verse 25] says the Lord of hosts, 'the peg that is fastened in the secure place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that was on it will be cut off; for the Lord has spoken.'" This is speaking of Jesus, and again Eliakim is a type of Christ. This is how the chapter ends, and it bears out.

Just one last thing, and then we'll go to chapter 23 really quick. Here's a guy, this Shebna, that wanted to make a name for himself. There is only one name given among men whereby we must be saved, and it's the name of Jesus. At the name of Jesus, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess the name above all names. The name of Jesus. Chapter 23... Yeah! Praise the Lord, right? Don't you just love God's Word? And to think that people say, wow, you guys study the Old Testament? The Old Testament is old. Ho! You have no idea! The Word of God is alive!

Chapter 23, almost done, verse 1. This is where it gets personal for me because it's the prophecy or "The burden against Tyre." This is the area known today as modern-day Lebanon - my birthplace. "Wail, you ships of Tarshish! For it is laid waste so that there is no house, no harbor. From the land of Cyprus, it is revealed to them. Be still you inhabitants of the coastland, you merchants of Sidon, whom those who cross the sea have filled.

And [verse 3] on great waters the grain of Shihor, the harvest of the River, is her revenue; And she is a marketplace for the nations. Be ashamed [verse 4], O Sidon; For the sea has spoken, the strength of the sea, saying, 'I do not labor, nor bring forth children; Neither do I rear young men, nor bring up virgins.'

When [verse 5], the report reaches Egypt, they also will be in agony at the report of Tyre. Cross over to Tarshish; [Verse 6] Wail, you inhabitants of the coastland! Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is from ancient days, whose feet carried her far off to dwell? Who has taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city?"

This was the prosperous, business, rich capital of the known world at the time. They've become so wealthy. "Whose merchants are princes, whose traders are the honorable of the earth? The Lord of Hosts [verse 9] has purposed it, to bring to dishonor [listen] the pride of all glory, to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth. Overflow through your land like the River, O daughter of Tarshish; There is no more strength."

Do you see what's going on here? Here is this city that has become so rich, so wealthy, so prosperous - they don't need God. They've become so arrogant, so proud in their riches, and God is like, looks like I'm going to have to humble you. I'm going to get your attention first, and I'm going to get your attention because...

Unless we get too hard on them or come down on them, I think we would do well to consider ourselves. Isn't it true that during times of prosperity, we're just as prone as the next guy to start

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

putting our trust in the riches and the blessing and the prosperity that God has given us? We start looking to that instead of to the Lord.

One of the things I had seen over the years and had occasioned, especially when I was in the business world, I had occasion to do business with very wealthy people, and these were very arrogant people. They had no time for God. I tried to share the Gospel with them. I had one guy; this guy was so rich. I took him to lunch. I'd been praying for him, and I wanted to share the Gospel with him. I waited for the appetizers; I was buying, by the way. Then I just started sharing the Gospel with him, and he stopped me dead in my tracks. With a firmness, he says to me, is that why you brought me to lunch? Because I'll finish this lunch, but I don't want you to say another word. And I didn't out of respect. I was reminded of what Jesus said, "It is harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

And this is what's happening here. This city, Tyre had become so wealthy and so proud and so arrogant. They were looking to their riches and putting their trust in their riches. Verse 11, "He stretched out his hand over the sea, He shook the kingdoms; The Lord has given a commandment against Canaan to destroy its strongholds.

And he said [verse 12], 'You will rejoice no more, O, you oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon. Arise, cross over to Cyprus. There also you will have no rest.'" They tried to escape. "Behold the land of the Chaldeans. This people, which was not; Assyria founded it for wild beasts of the desert. They set up its towers. They raised up its palaces and brought it to ruin. Wail, you ships of Tarshish! For your strength is laid waste."

Now, when we get to Ezekiel 26, I should say it differently, Lord willing. If we're still here and we make it to Ezekiel Chapter 26, we will find a very detailed prophecy concerning Tyre. I would encourage you in your own time in God's word if you're interested, Ezekiel chapter... The whole book of Ezekiel is, wow. Just a wow. Alright, let's finish up.

Verse 15, "Now, it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre will be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king. At the end of seventy years, it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the harlot. 'Take a harp [verse 16], go about the city, you forgotten harlot; Make sweet melody, sing many songs, that you may be remembered.' And it shall be, at the end of seventy years, that the Lord will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire, and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth. Her gain [verse 18] and her pay will be set apart for the Lord; It will not be treasured nor laid up, for her gain will be for those who dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for fine clothing."

This is how it works in God's economy. The wealth of the wicked is laid up for the righteous. So the chapter ends, but I don't know if you caught this in this last verse. So, these treasures they are going to bring to the Lord. Do you know what this is talking about? Check this out. I can't think of a better way to end a Bible study than this way. The chapter ends with Isaiah's prophecy about this proud, pompous city being humbled by God. But God in his mercy will restore Tyre in what some believe will be the Kingdom Age, the Millennium.

Think Isaiah 19 concerning Egypt: God calls Egypt, my people, along with the Assyrians, my inheritance, the work of my hands. Egypt, my people? Those are my people. My dad was born in Egypt. I'm half Egyptian. I don't walk like an Egyptian, but I might look like one. Those are my people, and God's calling them, my people. And then now Tyre. We're going to see them in the Millennium coming to the Lord, bringing gifts to the Lord, worshiping the Lord. Yes!

Psalms 45:12, "And the daughter of Tyre will come with a gift. The rich among the people will seek your favor." Ho! Yeah, God is a merciful God. God is a merciful God.

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

I'm going to end the way we began. Yes, God will do whatever it takes to get our attention. Because he's a loving God. He's a merciful God, and he wants us right with him. He'll do whatever it takes, as difficult as it might be. But in the end, he wants us with him worshiping him. That's the purpose of it. That's the reason for it. Never misunderstand or misinterpret the heavy hand of God when he's trying to get your attention.

Don't despise even as the writer of Hebrews says, as we're going to see in our study through Hebrews, don't despise the chastening of the Lord. The Lord chastises those whom he loves. That's how you know you're his children. I mean, I wish there were another way. I wish I could get a plaque, "I'm a child of God." That's how you know. No.

Do you know how people would know my kids were my kids when they were young? Because I spanked them. That must be his kids because he's spanked... He's not going to spank somebody else's kids. They're not his kids; you don't spank somebody else's. Sometimes you want to spank somebody else's kids, right? But you have no right to spank somebody else's kids. I know that must be your kid. Well, first of all, looking at him; he looks like you. Pray for the kid.

But you're disciplining your child; that's because he's your child to discipline, and that's how you know he's your child. So too, with God, he disciplines us because he loves us. As parents, even grandparents, remember when your children were young? I'm trying to forget, so are they, by the way. When you would have to discipline them, and you would say to them something to the effect of, this is going to hurt me a lot more than it's going to hurt you. To which my kids, you know how smart, these kids are smart now. Well, why hurt yourself then? Just spare both of us.

My mom growing up... and I'll end with this. This will be the last thing. Don't look at your watches. My mom used to say to me when... She disciplined me a lot, oh man! And I deserved every single bit of it. But she would always say, Wahido! She would have that high pitch, you know, thick accent. You know, I do this because I love you! To which I would say then don't love me so much, you don't have to discipline me.

But that's why we do it, right? Think about it. My daughter, we've had this conversation so many times. I tell her, and I say, you know what. We are kind of hard on you and strict with you. Yeah, you know we discipline you; but it's because we love you so much. Think about it like this. If we didn't care, that means we don't love you. It's kind of like, yeah, do whatever you want. I don't care. It doesn't bother me. When our boys were young, I used to jokingly say yeah, I mean if I didn't love you, I wouldn't discipline you. I would just let you go juggle knives on the H-3 during rush hour. I don't care if you got a better one than that. I mean, of course, it's too late as my kids are grown up. That's why it might explain maybe some of the neurological conditions that have developed because of it.

But you get the point. If I didn't love you, I wouldn't bother. Why do I discipline you? Because I love you so much. I love you so much, and I care so much about you. I mean, there are times when you're so tired; what gets you up to go do the hard thing and discipline your child when you don't feel like it, and you don't want to do it. Love. It's so hard. When our boys were... This will be the last, last thing; the last, last one. I had so many things the Lord taught me through parenting as an earthly father.

But man, just the disciplining of our boys in those younger years. I remember one time in our devotions in the morning, I said, you know you guys, your mom, and I contrary to what you think. We don't get up in the morning, your mom and I, and say to ourselves, all right, I can't wait to ground them and discipline them. No! We don't want to do this. We have to do this. Love compels us to do this. How much more our heavenly Father.

Isaiah 20 - 23 - June 10, 2021

How God Gets My Attention

JD Farag

Okay, I'm done. Why don't you stand? Hey, we did pretty good tonight, huh? Four chapters, yeah. Let's have the worship team come up. Oh, ye of little faith who thought we couldn't do it. Okay, I admit. I wasn't sure either but thank you, Lord. Wow.

Lord, thank you so much. There's just so much here that we can take home with us tonight, and Lord, as we do, we look to you by the Holy Spirit to take all of these truths, all of these life lessons that are here and take heed to them. That we would take heed to your Word, Lord. Lord, for any for whom you, in your love for them, have sought to get their attention to stop them so that they will consider their ways, the direction they're going. Lord, I pray that it would be seen as coming from a God who loves them so much. Lord, thank you for doing everything and stopping at nothing to get our attention. So be it, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.