

Series: Questions

Title: What Mean Ye to Oppress my People?

Text: Isaiah 3: 15

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Isaiah 3: 15: What mean ye *that* ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

God is speaking to the religious leaders of Judah in Jerusalem and their self-righteous followers. The high priests, the priest, the Sanhedrin, the scribes and Pharisees, as well as their self-righteous followers.

The LORD asked this in defense of those he calls “*my people.*” God’s people are his elect—chosen by God in Christ before the world was made—but they are from every tribe, tongue, kindred and people on earth. Most people think everyone in Israel are God’s elect. But God was speaking to the majority in Israel, defending a remnant he calls “*my people*”. This shows that God’s people are not all the children of Israel, nor are they the children of any particular nation, they are God’s elect called in Christ Jesus.

Romans 9: 6: Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8: That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

God divides the whole world into two kinds of people: *the wicked and the righteous.*

Isaiah 3: 10: Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. 11: Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

The wicked are the devil’s children. The righteous is Christ himself and all God’s elect in him. After the fall of all men in Adam, God said to the devil:

Genesis 3: 15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

As Cain persecuted Abel, Ishmael persecuted Isaac, and in our text the wicked persecute the righteous, we are reminded what Paul taught in Galatians 4.

Galatians 4: 29: But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

When it comes to the wicked in will-works religion, Christ said,

Matthew 23: 4: They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

Proposition: The good news: it shall be well with the righteous because the LORD stands up to plead and to judge the people on our behalf.

Divisions: 1) The wicked 2) The righteous 3) God’s declaration concerning each

THE WICKED

Isaiah 3: 8: For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory. 9: The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves...12: As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

The wicked are against the LORD—“*For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.*” God’s judgment fell upon Israel—including Judah and Jerusalem—because their *religious* words and works were *against the LORD God* because they were against his Christ. They provoked God to his face—before eyes—by commending their own works and by rejecting God’s very glory, his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The wicked are proud of their works—“*The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not.*” Their sin are their religious works whereby they attempt to make themselves righteous and holy. God says their pride shows in their countenance. Christ said, “*All their works they do for to be seen of men.*” (Mt 23: 5) But God says their countenance is a witness against them. Their proud works bears witness of this: “*The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.*” (Ps 10: 4) Christ is the Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption of the righteous. Therefore, God calls all self-teaching, self-justifying, self-sanctifying, self-redeeming works *the sin of Sodom*. Remember, sodomy typifies will-works religion because neither is capable of bearing fruit.

The wicked oppress the righteous with a false gospel—“*As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*” The men who teach will-works religion are *children in understanding*: they do not know and preach Christ. The Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, “*Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?*” (Jn 3: 10) Christ called them “blind leaders of the blind.” (Mt 15: 14) They are *women, weak and effeminate*, unwilling to suffer persecution for the cause of Christ. Paul said,

Galatians 6:12: As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

So the wicked “*cause [God’s people] to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*”—destroying the truth of Christ. He said,

Luke 11:52: Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

They major on minor things, and by that, totally omit the weightier matters of the gospel. Mingling a little works totally does away with the gospel of God’s grace. Christ said,

Matthew 23: 23: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: [the gift of God, apart from our works, whereby we establish the whole law of God in Christ] these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24: *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. 25: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26: *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, [trusting the Holy Spirit as you preach the faith of Christ our Sanctification] that the outside of them may be clean also.

But instead of using the law to give a knowledge of sin and declare all guilty, the wicked break the law teaching men they can keep it by teaching only outward obedience is required. Christ declares:

Matthew 5: 17: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18: For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19: Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20: For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. 21: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

The wicked even invent their own laws by which they disannul God's law.

Matthew 15: 1: Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, 2: Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. 3: But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? 4: For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. 5: But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; 6: And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. 7: *Ye* hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8: This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. 9: But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

This is the way of the wicked in our day in churches everywhere. Much more could be said, but this is the way of all men by nature. *And this is the mind and sinfulness of God's people as we come into this world.* So all God's people come into the world under this same oppression. In Isaiah's day, the same will-works salvation in Jerusalem, the heathen believed outside Israel. Today, natural men believe and teach the same whether religious or not. So all God's elect people must be saved from this oppression. How then shall it be well with the righteous? Who makes the difference?

THE RIGHTEOUS

Isaiah 3: 13: The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. 14: The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.

In the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, God stood up to both plead for his people and to judge—he is the advocate pleading the cause of his people and he is the judge judging his people.

Christ Jesus, the Righteous, presented himself to God to be made sin for us. Doing so, he laid down his life the just for the unjust. The Lord having laid on him the iniquity of all his people—“*the spoil of the poor was in his house.*” So God stood and judged Christ in the room and stead of his people.

“*God shall enter into judgement with the ancients of his people and the princes thereof*”—Christ is the Ancient of days, the Prince of his people. So when he bore the sin of his people God entered into judgment

with him. Since all his people were in Christ, all God's elect ancients and all his elect princes we were judged once for all time when God judged Christ in our room and stead.

“What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.”—when God judged our Substitute he gave his back and his face to the smitters for us. Our old man of sin was crucified and destroyed. Oh, don't just read over that statement! When Christ was crucified on the cross, our old man of sin—our sin past, present and future—was judged. We were crucified and destroyed. And in Christ, we arose to newness of life. Therefore, Christ will not allow his people to be smitten

Therefore, in time, when Christ found us under the oppression of the wicked, dead in sins, Christ our King and Savior pleaded for us with God. Due to Christ's righteousness, God judged it just to send the gospel to his lost child. Christ established us in righteousness on the cross. It is a must, therefore, that he establish righteousness in our hearts. So God send the Holy Spirit and gave us life and faith in Christ. God brought us out from the oppressor by making Christ all unto us. Now, we are no more children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, now we say,

Galatians 2: 19: I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20: I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21: I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Be sure to get this brethren! As he did on the cross, as he did in our hearts, as he did for his elect in Israel, when we are oppressed by the wicked in this life, Christ beholds his believing people. And *“The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.”* Oh, what comfort to know that Christ beholds your every need, believer! Are you oppressed? Christ knows and in his time, he says,

Psalm 12: 5: For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that puffeth at him*.

Proverbs 22: 23: For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

To the oppressor who would attempt to bring us back under the law or under a false gospel, the Holy Spirit says,

Proverbs 23: 10: Remove not the old landmark;

Remove not the *'no trespassing sign'* that Christ put around his people when he purchased us with his own blood.

Proverbs 23: 10:....and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

Though my people appear helpless as an orphan, do not tread into the field Christ purchased for him.

Proverbs 23: 11: For their Redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

When Christ beheld what the wicked were doing in Israel to his people, he said,

Isaiah 5: 5:...I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; *and* break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: 6: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. 7: For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the

house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

Christ gave the same parable to the wicked oppressors when he walked this earth:

Matthew 21: 34: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. 35: And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. 36: Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. 37: But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. 38: But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. 39: And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. 40: When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? 41: They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. 42: Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? 43: Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. 44: And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

So after Christ called out his elect remnant from Israel, in 70AD he destroyed Israel as he promised. In that, we behold what the Lord shall do with this whole world after he has called out his last elect child.

GOD'S DECLARATION

Isaiah 3: 9: Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves...11: Woe unto the wicked! *it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him*

God declares all men shall receive the just reward for their works.

To the wicked who attempt to save themselves by their works, God says all their words and works are sin. Therefore, God shall give them the just wage they earned, "*the reward of his hands shall be given him.*" "*For the wages of sin is death.*" (Rom 6: 23) Oh, may God prove you to be one of the righteous right now by bringing you to believe on Christ our Righteousness!

To the righteous, God says "*Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.*" The doings of Christ Jesus, are our doings because we were in Christ when he obeyed God unto death. So God says, "*Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.*" "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Rom 6: 23)

Psalm 128:1: « A Song of degrees. » Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. 2: For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou be, and *it shall* be well with thee.

Amen!

