

(The Word for Today) Isaiah 8:16 - Part 3

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith explores the themes of judgment, repentance, and the promise of light in Isaiah 8:16, emphasizing the importance of seeking God over worldly practices.

Duration: 25:59

Scripture: Isaiah 8:16-20, Isaiah 9:1-2

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck discusses the consequences of turning away from God and the importance of learning from history. He emphasizes that God is merciful even in judgment and always gives us the opportunity to repent. The sermon highlights the story of the nation of Israel, who failed to repent despite warnings and were ultimately dealt with in a more severe way by God. Pastor Chuck warns against the allure of sin, reminding listeners that it may seem enticing at first but will ultimately lead to despair, darkness, and destruction.

Transcript

Welcome to The Word for Today. The Word for Today is a continuous study of the Bible taught by Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently teaching from the Old Testament.

And for those of you following along in your Bibles, we'll be continuing today in Isaiah, Chapter 8, beginning with Verse 16, as we continue with an in-depth message entitled, The Sign, Part 1. One thing is needful, O my Father, One thing is needful, O my God, That I sit at your feet and pour out my love. This thing is needful, O my God. And now with today's study, here's Pastor Chuck.

And seal the law among my disciples. So take and make the scroll, bind up the testimony, seal this law among the disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord that hides his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

So the general rejection, but those that are waiting, looking. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel, from the Lord of hosts which dwells in Mount Zion. So he and his children were to be for signs and wonders.

The names of the children significant. They shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and chirp and mutter. Should not a people seek unto their God? Why would you seek the dead to find out about life? Now, you say, well, that sure applies to a different age and to a different people.

Oh, does it? What about this new age channeling? Where people pay several hundred dollars for a weekend to listen to Ramtha, a 35,000 year old wise man of the past, speak through the channeler. I mean, this stuff is big stuff in Hollywood and around the world. The new age movement, this pagan invasion of our Western world is powerful.

It is strong. It is infiltrated our nation deeper than you imagine or suppose. You can't dream how far reaching is the effect of the pagan invasion.

In a pilot program in the Los Angeles public schools, a pilot program that they're testing its effectiveness with the kids. And if it is successful, they plan to inaugurate it within the California state school system. This pilot program teaches the children how to contact spirit guides.

And they tell the children to just relax. They turn the lights down low and they say, no, just start breathing deeply and feel very relaxed and very comfortable. And like you were lying on the beach and it's just a lovely day and and all.

And now, as you are looking around, look within yourself and you will find within yourself. There is a house and in that house there dwells a very wise old man. And this wise old man has the answers for your problems.

And whenever you're in trouble, you can just stop and and look in the house and you can talk to this wise man and he will guide you. If you're having problems with your test, just seek the guidance of this wise man who lives in the house inside of you. And they are teaching the children how to make contact with spirit guides.

Now that's in modern day USA, Los Angeles, in the school curriculum. That isn't 2700 years ago in a group of people who were superstitious and backwards and believed in spirits and spirit guides and all. That's something that is happening today.

They are still seeking to the dead to find wisdom for life. They're going to those who chirp and mutter and peep and they go into the gibberish and all. And then, you know, these voices speaking out supposedly with the wisdom of the past.

And so the rebuke for those who are seeking familiar spirits, you ought to be seeking to the law of God and to the testimony of God. And if they speak not according to the word of God, it's because they have no light in them. They are living and abiding in darkness.

And they shall pass through it hardly be stead and hungry and it shall come to pass within. They shall be hungry. They shall fret themselves and they will curse their king and their God and they will look upward.

Now they're going to go into captivity as they're being carried away captive. Through the wilderness and they're hungry and they're thirsty. And here they are captives.

Actually, when the Assyrians led them away captive, they put hooks through their noses or hooks through their lips and they pulled them like a dog on a leash with this hook through their lips so that you weren't tempted to bolt and run. And so as they were leading them, no water, no food. Isaiah is warning they're going to curse the king who led them into this sin that brought their destruction.

They will curse their king, but also they curse their God. Now that's the tragic thing is that so many times when people have turned their backs on God and God's judgment begins to fall upon them because of their sin, rather than repenting of their sin, they curse God for the misery of the woe that they've experienced because of their sin. And they start to blame God for their miseries.

We find that that will be so in the Great Tribulation when God begins to pour out his judgments upon the earth. And these horrible judgments begin to fall. The trumpet judgments begin to sound and the subsequent events upon the earth.

That men will curse the God of heaven. Neither will they repent of their fornications and their sorceries and their blasphemies and all. And so here is the prophecy of this time when God's judgment has fallen and they're being taken away captive.

They're cursing their king and their God. And they shall look unto the earth and behold, there is nothing but trouble and darkness, dimness and anguish and they shall be driven to darkness. The horrible result and consequence of sin.

Leading them to despair, leading them to hopelessness, leading them to captivity. And these are always, and you need to remember this when you become attracted by sin. You become allured by sin.

It seems so enticing, it seems so beautiful, it seems so pleasant. Remember that it will ultimately lead you into barrenness. It will lead you into captivity.

It will bring you into misery, despair and hopelessness. And it will drive you ultimately into darkness. And Jesus said the ultimate result, they will be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Sin and its consequences. Now a person before he gets involved in sin, when he is at that stage of excitement and curiosity and you think, Oh my, you know, doesn't that look good? You need to consider the end results. Because they're always destructive.

It is always despairing. Ultimate darkness. Chapter 9 is tied with chapter 8. He speaks of the dimness of anguish.

Nevertheless, the dimness, so tied just right to it. The dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea beyond the Jordan in the Galilee of the nations. Now, God sort of gave them a warning.

They went through some difficult times. Times of real hardship and difficulty. But they failed to repent.

They failed to turn to God. And thus, God then dealt with them in a more severe way. God is merciful, even in judgment.

And God always gives to us the opportunity to repent. God does not afflict willingly, the scripture tells us. In a sense, you might say that God is a poor disciplinarian.

He's soft. He doesn't afflict us according to what we deserve. The psalmist recognized that.

That we deserve much worse than what God gives to us. But God is gracious, even in judgment. And sometimes he allows things to happen which are bad.

Which are only a foretaste of the worst things that will happen if we do not repent and turn. There are sort of just warnings of God to turn from your wickedness. Now, I have often said that there are important lessons that we need to learn.

And God intends that we learn these lessons. Because they are important to our own welfare. We have to know these things.

Just like there are certain things that your children need to know. There are important lessons they need to learn. They need to learn not just to run out into the street.

They need to learn to stop and look both ways before they go out into the street. And if they're playing ball and the ball rolls out into the street. They're not just to run out into the street to retrieve the ball.

They should stop on the curb and they should look both ways. Now, that is an important lesson. Because your child's life may depend upon his learning that lesson.

If he doesn't learn that lesson. It could mean horrible maiming or even death. And so as a parent in seeking then to train your child and to teach them that lesson.

You first of all may just speak to them and tell them. But then you see them running out into the street without looking. And so you may say, all right, you know you can't have TV for a week.

And so it's tough when kids are used to watching cartoons. Not to be able to watch a cartoon for a whole week. And to them it seems like a lifetime.

But it's an important lesson. Now there are many important things that we need to learn. Because our lives depend on it.

And God is determined that we're going to learn. And as He is training us. Maybe in the beginning it's just sort of a light reprimand.

In hopes that we will use good judgment. And we'll see the danger and the folly of it. But if we persist as did the nation of Israel.

Then God becomes stronger and stronger in the methods that He uses. To teach those important lessons. And so their affliction was rather light at the first.

But it was a foreshadowing of that which was to come if they did not change. God has important lessons that you need to know. That you must learn.

And if you don't learn the easy way, you'll learn the hard way. For there is always an easy way and a hard way to learn things. And if we are stubborn, then we'll learn the hard way.

And a lot of times people say, oh, why did God ever allow this to happen to me? Well, you just didn't learn, friend. You needed to know, but you wouldn't listen. And so it gets tougher.

I think of Jonah. He learned the hard way. That you can't run from God.

That you can't hide from the call of God. He learned that lesson. It was important that he learned that lesson.

But he learned it the hard way. So, you can make up your mind. To learn the easy way or you can learn the hard way.

It's up to you. You're going to experience this dimness. Not as bad when God first began to vex them.

That was just slight. It's going to get worse. Until it will be complete darkness.

The dimness will turn to darkness. But then, out of that darkness, those people sitting in darkness, having been taken captive by the Assyrians, the people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light. They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

God, it seems, just never gives up. He continues to pursue. Even when we've turned our backs upon Him.

Even when we've gone into captivity. God continues to pursue. And they now sitting in this darkness, God brought to them a glorious light.

The people who were walking in darkness have seen a great light. And we know that that light is this child that was to be born. The sign of the virgin that would conceive and bear a child is the great light that is promised.

They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, this land had now been forsaken. It was empty. The villages were destroyed.

And the land was desolate. The land of Zeppelin and Naphtali. The Lord declares, You have multiplied the nation and increased the joy.

The word not is, should be omitted from the translation. The joy before thee according to the joy in harvest. And as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

The day is coming. Those that are sitting in darkness are going to see the great light. It will be a day of tremendous joy.

God will multiply the nation. He will increase their joy. It will be the same joy that they have at harvest time.

As men rejoice when they've won a victory and are dividing the spoils of war. Because you have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of the oppressor as in the days of Midian. The Midianites who were defeated by Gideon.

And actually defeated by the Lord. Gideon was the human instrument. And so will Assyria be broken even as Midian was broken.

For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and the garments are rolled in blood. But this shall be with the burning and the fuel of fire. And this will all take place when unto us a child is born.

Unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. Face to face, Lord let me know.

Face to face, Lord let me see you. Pastor Chuck Smith will return with a few closing comments. But first I'd like to remind you that today's message is available in its unedited form on cassette or CD.

Simply write or call and ask for ordering details on tape or CD number C-3245. Again, that's tape or CD number C-3245. Well, it's that time of year again.

It may seem innocent, but the symbols of Halloween like black cats, jack-o'-lanterns, and trick-or-treat all have roots in sorcery and Satanism. We would never knowingly get involved with anything related to Satan. But many Christians don't understand what's really behind the pagan holiday.

The word for today would like to offer you a presentation hosted by Pastor Chuck Smith called Halloween Trick-or-Treat that traces the pagan origins and history of Halloween. This powerful movie uncovers the mystic rites and ceremonies of Satan and will forever change your opinion of Halloween. Every year as the end of October approaches, we are faced with the dilemma of family and friends pressuring us to participate in the celebration of this pagan holiday.

This documentary will definitely challenge you to decide whether or not you'll continue to participate in this tradition. If you'd like more information on Halloween Trick-or-Treat, then simply write or call and ask one of our operators for the ordering details. Again, it's called Halloween Trick-or-Treat.

And right now, if you place an order, the word for today would like to bless you with Pastor Chuck Smith's pamphlet, How Can a Man Be Born Again? Absolutely free. Instead of just giving candy this year, the pamphlet is the perfect tool for Christians to share the gospel with loved ones and friends. Available in both English and Spanish.

Again, it's free when you call right now. To order Halloween Trick-or-Treat for yourself or for a friend, you can call the word for today at Once again, that number to call is And for those of you that would like to visit our website, you can do so at www.twft.com Or if you would like to email us, you can do so at info@twft.com Well, coming up next time on The Word for Today, Pastor Chuck will be continuing his fascinating study through the book of Isaiah. That's coming up next time on The Word for Today.

And now with our closing prayer, here's Pastor Chuck. So we pray, Father, we see the pain that the prophet experienced as he was directed to deliver this difficult message to the people who had turned away from you and who in their folly had taken a path that was going to bring destruction. People who were resting in false confidences and in false hopes, thinking, Lord, that their religious rituals would guarantee their safety.

We thank you, Father, that you have written all of these things as examples to us that we might learn from them. Help us, Lord, to learn from these lessons in history. And may we set aside every false god.

And may we love you with all of our hearts and mind and strength. In Jesus' name, Amen. I pray that the Lord will give you just a wonderful week.

May it be a time of spiritual growth and development in your life. May it be a time of seeking the Lord. May He draw you away from the other distractions and those things that would take you away from Him.

And may He draw you unto Himself that you might have sweet communion with the Father and with the Son. As He reveals unto you His love and His plan and purpose for your life. May the Lord be with you to guide and to bless throughout this week.

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