

Series: Isaiah 2023
Title: God's Knowledge of Us
Text: Isaiah 48: 3-8
Date: Sept 1, 2024
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Isaiah 48: 1: Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, *but* not in truth, nor in righteousness. 2: For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

All in Israel were called by the name of Israel; most everyone today calls themselves a Christian. All in Israel claimed to have been redeemed; most today say the same. All in Israel swore by his name and made mention of the God of Israel; they called themselves the holy city; they stayed themselves upon the God of Israel. But the Lord said of most in Israel, they did so—*not in truth and in righteousness*.

When God's true saints hear this, we personally ask, "Is it me?" Remember when the Lord said someone would betray him—each true child of God said, "Lord, is it I?" We see that God could easily say it is us. We ask God continually, "Lord, do I know you in truth and in righteousness? Am I a true child of God?"

Isaiah 48: 3: [God says] I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did *them* suddenly, and they came to pass.

That is how God does all things that come to pass. He said, "*I have declared the former things from the beginning.*" God purposed what he would do from eternity and declared it from the beginning of time. He said, "*They went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them.*" God slew a lamb in the garden and covered Adam and Eve's nakedness showing how Christ would be the Substitute of his people and how he would cover our nakedness. He declared from the beginning that Christ is the Seed of Woman who would bruise the serpents head then he showed it in Abel's lamb. Throughout the ages God declared and showed how he would make his people righteous and holy by Christ alone. God said, "*I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.*" One day when no one expected it, suddenly...

Galatians 4: 4: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

And one day when you and me did not expect it, suddenly,

Galatians 4: 6: And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Why did God chose to save his people this way? Why did God purpose from eternity how he would save his elect in and by Christ alone? Why did God preach the gospel from the beginning and show his people what he would do then Christ came suddenly and accomplished everything God declared? Why does God save this way?

Isaiah 48: 4: Because I knew that thou *art* obstinate, and thy neck *is* an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; 5: I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass I shewed *it* thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. 6: Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare *it*? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. 7: They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them. 8: Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time *that* thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

Proposition: God saves according to his eternal purpose: he showed in pictures and type, declared his salvation through the gospel, then suddenly sent his Son and brought it all to pass because he knew that every sinner is a fallen transgressor from the womb.

Subject: God's Knowledge of Us

GOD DETERMINED THE END FROM THE BEGINNING

Isaiah 48: 3: I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did *them* suddenly, and they came to pass. 4 Because I knew that thou *art* obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

Before time, God determined the end from the beginning for this reason, “*Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass.*” God did not chose his elect based on any good or evil in us. He did not pass by Esau based on any good or evil in Esau. God did it because he would. The elect are saved in righteousness by Christ's obedience alone. The reprobate is condemned in righteousness by their own disobedience alone. But God knew every sinner would fall in Adam. God purposed it from eternity. That is why God chose his Son to be the Surety of his people from eternity! God was not surprised by Adam's fall. God did not tell Adam, “If ye eat of the tree.” He said, “in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2: 17).

God declares it right here in our text, “I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass.” God is not a creature of time. He knew from eternity what God knows right now!

Psalm 14: 2: The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. 3: They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

Before God sent Moses, God told Moses Pharoah would harden his heart and reject Moses. God said of Pharoah,

Romans 9: 17...Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.

That is so of Adam and all of mankind who fell in Adam. God knew from eternity the all would fall in Adam. He knew every unregenerate fallen son of Adam was obstinate and God knows it about all men now! God says I knew thou art “*obstinate, your neck an iron sinew, your brow brass.*” He says I knew that thou wouldest “*deal very treacherously and wast called a transgressor from the womb.*”

But God knew this would be the old man of flesh that is still in those God has sanctified, too! The difference with our confession is the difference God's grace has made in our new man. By God creating a new spirit within us in which is no guile, God's saints are truthful and say with Paul,

Romans 7: 18: For I know

God says I knew. Now, by God's grace, we say, “I know”.

Romans 7: 18: For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. 19: For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20: Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21: I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. [that is not us excusing our sin—that is a holy child of God confessing our flesh is only sin and we hate it]... 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Unregenerate sinners will not hear this. I pray God give you a heart to believe today. But to you that God has made new, you know, don't you? God said, "I knew." Now, by God revealing to you your sin, you know. God said, "*I knew you would be obstinate (self-willed), your neck an iron sinew, your brow brass.*" Child of God, do you find in your flesh an obstinate, self-willed old man of sin? Do you not find that were it not for God's subduing grace, in yourself is an obstinate old man of sin insistent on having your way?

God says that in our flesh we are as sinful as the worst unregenerate sinner in this world. Do you find a self-righteous Pharisee in your flesh? We say things like, "I wouldn't have done that?" or "How could they do that?" But we do the same sin in our flesh.

Romans 2: 1: Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

Our sinful, wretched old man of sin is self-wise. How many times have we said, "I knew that would happen?" God says, "No you did not!"

Isaiah 48: 6: Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare *it*? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. 7: They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them. 8: Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time *that* thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

But now, by God revealing what we are, we know what God knew. We say, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I AM CHIEF. (1 Tim 1: 15) We confess this, including our own selves, "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah" (Ps 39: 5).

GOD DECLARED AND SHOWED

Isaiah 48: 5: I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

From eternity, then from the beginning of time, God declared what he would do before it came to pass. He showed us what he would do before the Lord worked it. He did so because he knew we would praise our idol.

Who is the idol we would have praised? Us! God did not choose his people because he foreknew we would choose him. He said you would have praised your idols. That is what men do when they say God chose them because he saw they would believe on him. Election could not have been based upon God seeing some goodness or some works in us because God gives the dead sinner life, faith, repentance and all things that pertain to godliness. God says in our text that he declared and preached the gospel beforehand then God brought it to pass because he knew we would praise our idol and deal treacherously. He knew that every fallen sinner would ascribe salvation to himself. From the beginning God declared and showed us salvation is only in and by his Son because God knew we would praise our idol self! God's election was all of God's grace, not due to any foreseen merit in man.

Romans 9:11: (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

GOD MADE CHRIST WISDOM UNTO US

Isaiah 48: 6: Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare *it*? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. 7: They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.

From eternity, God purposed to make Christ Wisdom unto us because he knew would praise our own understanding, "*Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things*

from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them."

God says, I knew you would brag on your wisdom saying, "*Behold, I knew them.*" He chose to reveal Christ, and make Christ Wisdom unto us through the preaching of the gospel, because God knew we would praise our own wisdom. There are no self-made wise men in Christ's church. In the regenerated, true church of our Lord Jesus, God has made us to see our wisdom as utter foolishness.

1 Corinthians 1: 20: Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

God declares, "*I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.*"

1 Corinthians 2: 7: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9: But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10: But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God....

GOD OPENED OUR EAR

Isaiah 48: 8: Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

Sinners make their boast that they came to God by their will. God says that he knew we would do that, too. The Spirit of God opened our ear. He revealed Christ in us. We had heard not till God made us hear. Each sinner God saves knew not until God made us know Christ.

John 6:44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Regeneration and faith is God's gift of grace. Walking by faith is a good work God foreordained that his elect shall walk in. Therefore, God revealed Christ in us and brought it to pass.

Ephesians 2: 8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Psalms 65: 4: Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

Psalms 110: 3: Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

God says I declared beforehand and performed all my works long before you ever heard of them. God said I revealed them to you by my Spirit, "*lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.*" God, in wisdom, teaches by divine revelation. He does so through the preaching of the gospel. God does it to keep his child always dependent upon Christ. He does it to keep us always needing the gospel. God saves this way so that none will glory in self but only in Christ our Wisdom.

CHRIST KNEW THIS OF US

Think of the unchangeable love of Christ our Savior. He knew this about us! Yet, he said, “Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life” (Is 43: 4).

Romans 5: 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Knowing our sin and rebellion against him, Christ gave himself willingly into the hands of treacherous sinners just like us to save his elect from condemnation, even to save us from ourselves. His unchangeable redeeming love and grace is what makes our iron neck submissive. His love for ungodly sinners like us melts our brass brow. God’s love in Christ for his own is unchanging, unbreakable, everlasting love!

1 John 2: 1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

What is your problem? Christ is the cure. He promises, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.” (Deut 33: 15) If you have never believed, cast all your care on Christ today! For you in whom God has revealed Christ, flee to Christ today like it is the first time! Never lean to your own understanding but trust Christ our Wisdom. Never look to your good works but trust Christ our Righteousness. Christ is Salvation! But salvation is Christ alone! God trusted his Son because God knew from eternity that he could not trust us. So you trust in his Son!

Amen!