

I. OUR UNFAITHFULNESS BRINGS REPROACH UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD (v.23-27)

- In ISAIAH 52:5, because of His peoples' unfaithfulness, the LORD says, "continually all the day my name is despised."
- The Apostle Paul says in ROMANS 2:24, "As it is written, 'The name of God is blasphemed among the nations because of you.'"
- EZEKIEL 36 17 ...when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds. Their ways before me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity. . . . 19 I scattered them among the nations. . . . 20 But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name. . . .
- One of the most gripping sermons I have ever read was one that Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached almost 100 years to the day before in birth. In July 1886, Spurgeon preached on the little phrase in Matt 26:67, "Then did they spit in his face."
- 1. If you prefer the company of sin rather than friendship with and obedience to Jesus, then it must be said of you, "Then did they spit in his face."
 - Q. Are you friends with the world or Christ? Do you carve your own path OR do you read the Word of God saying, "Make my paths straight"? Are you making peace with that which Jesus was killed for OR do you make it your business to "kill sin"?
- 2. And if you prefer your merits to His, it must be said of you also, "Then did they spit in his face."
 - Q. Do you look to your own performance—your ability to attract God's love for you—rather than fixing your eyes on Jesus?

II. FOR THE SAKE OF HIS NAME, THE LORD WILL OVERRULE HIS PEOPLES' UNFAITHFULNESS & CAUSE THEM TO GLORIFY HIM AGAIN (v.28-31)

- There are at least two clear reasons the LORD overrules his peoples' unfaithfulness and causes them to glorify Him again. 1. In response to them crying out in prayer! 2. For the sake of His holy name!
- 1. In response to His people crying out to Him in prayer.
 - Like KING DAVID, hear the prophet Nathan say "You are the man! . . . Why have you despised the LORD and done what is evil in His sight?" Like David, cry out, "I have sinned against the LORD... (2 Sam. 13) "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions!" (Psalm 51) And when you cry out to the LORD, looking to Jesus in faith you will the same words David did: "The LORD has put away your sin."
 - Like JONAH, cry out to the LORD from the belly of the beast and be vomited out on dry land, then proclaim the good news and see the LORD save His people!
 - Like PETER, weep bitterly for your sin; cry out to Jesus, "Lord you know everything. You know that I love you!"; dry your eyes; turn again and strengthen your brothers!
 - Like PAUL, humble yourself to the dirt; look to Jesus in faith; "rise;" proclaim Jesus as "The Son of God!" Then all who hear you will be amazed and say like they did of him, "Is not this the man who made...havoc for those who called upon the name of Jesus?" Then they will glorify the Lord Jesus because of you!
 - On march 18th, 1767, John Newton wrote his friend a letter: "Are not you amazed sometimes that you should have so much as a hope, that, poor and needy as you are, the Lord thinketh of you? But let not all you feel discourage you. For if our Physician is almighty, our disease cannot be desperate, and if He casts none out that come to Him, why should you fear? Our sins are many, but His mercies are more: our sins are great, but His righteousness is greater: we are weak, but He is power."
 - And as the heavenly doctor Richard Sibbes was so fond of saying, "There is more grace in Christ than sin in you."
- 2. For the sake of His holy name.
 - EZEKIEL 36 21 But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came. 22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. 23 And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name. . . . And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the LORD God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. 24 I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries.... 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.
 - ISAIAH 42:8 "I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols."
 - ISAIAH 42:8 is wonderful news for a Christian to hear! It is wonderful because the chief way the LORD God is glorified is by justifying, sanctifying, preserving, & then glorifying His people! As Jesus said in Judges 3, "I will never"

III. SAMSON IS NEVER MORE REMINISCENT OF JESUS THAN IN HIS DEATH

- We have a better Samson! He entered into the den of serpents not for his failure, but for ours; He was made a mockery not because of his weaknesses, but because of yours; He was crushed not because of his sins, but because of mine.
- Samson died to kill his enemies; Jesus died to save His!
- Jesus did not put his right hand and his left on pillars to destroy idolators; He put His right hand and his left hand on wood to be slain for them!
- Beloved, see the wonderful news of the gospel and the love of God in Christ Jesus! Samson said, "LORD, Let me die with [my enemies]." Oh! but Jesus said, "LORD, Let me die FOR my enemies!"