

God's Covenant With Us

Whose Report?

Isaiah 53.1

“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”

The media are fuelling a spirit of fear by the constant reports – their reports are filled with statistics: how many have contracted the virus, how many have died but what you don't hear is how many have been cured, how many have survived, how many don't have it.

Perspective:

People listen to the reports and get fearful – fear is worse than a virus.

The children of Israel had been out of Egypt about one to one and a half years, during which time they had -

- witnessed many great and mighty miracles of provision, protection and deliverance
- received the Law at Sinai
- constructed the Tabernacle of Meeting

Now they were on the borders of the Promised Land. Moses sent twelve men into the land to assess the country, the people so that they could prepare to enter in and take the land as their possession. They went in and spent forty days looking at the land, observing the people. They came back:

Numbers 13.27-28, 32

“Then they told him, and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this *is* its fruit. (28) Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land *are* strong; the cities *are* fortified *and* very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there... (32) And they gave the children of Israel a **bad report** of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature.”

Ten of the spies returned and gave a bad report of the land, they focused on all the negatives – fortified cities, strength (might) of the people, giant citizens and they convinced the majority that they could not overcome them and take the land. They instilled fear into the hearts of God's people.

God Can Be Trusted

In Isaiah, God asks the question ‘Who has believed our report?’. His report is true, it can be trusted.

The word **report** is *shemua* (H8052) and means ‘*news, tidings, a report, an announcement, something that is heard*’.

The apostle Paul quotes this verse from Isaiah in **Romans 10.16** and uses the Greek word *akoe* (G189) which means 'hearing, something heard, a report, the preaching of the gospel'. Then he uses the exact same word in the next verse (v17):

So we could legitimately read this next verse as "faith comes by [hearing] the report, the report is the word of God"

Listen to this verse in the Amplified translation

"So faith comes by hearing [what is told], and what is heard comes by the preaching [of the message that came from the lips] of Christ (the Messiah Himself)"

God has given us His word and He cannot break that word, we can trust Him implicitly –

He had given His word to the Israelites but only Joshua & Caleb believed it.

He had promised them the Land, it was promised to Abraham hundreds of years before – but they didn't trust Him, they didn't believe Him when they faced a situation that seemed overwhelming, instead they were fearful and refused to believe. That cost them very dear – the very blessing that God wanted them to enter into.

There are many reports about which could overwhelm us – the report of a doctor, the WHO, an employer who is having to release his workers. God wants us to believe His report, stand on His word.

His word cannot fail - He has made an unbreakable covenant with us. That covenant is His word.

The question God asked is in Isaiah 53, this is connected to the chapters either side (read 52-54 together as one thread)

- In chapter 52 he states – the one who announces the good news (report) has beautiful feet. He is the redeemer and comforter – therefore break forth into joy and sing
- In chapter 53 he tells of the suffering of the Christ and what His sacrifice would accomplish. His blood is the basis of the covenant.
- In chapter 54 he starts break forth into joy and sing and then goes on to remind his hearers about the everlasting covenant of peace that they have and finishes that no weapon formed against them will prosper

God made a covenant with Abraham and his Seed (you and me)

Galatians 3.5-16, 29

"(5) Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

- Hearing of faith – hearing the report, the word of God which produces faith.

(6) just as Abraham "BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

- Abraham put his faith in God – this was credited to him as righteousness. Faith pleases God (Hebrews 11.6)

(7) Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

- The Jewish leaders claimed to be Abraham's children (John 8.) yet Jesus said they were not of faith because "... My word has no place in you" (John 8.37) and "you would do the works of Abraham" (John 8.39)

(8) And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel to Abraham** beforehand, saying, "*In you all the nations shall be blessed.*"

- preached the gospel to Abraham - God made a covenant with Abraham – He called him His friend, *His covenant partner* (James 2.23)

(9) So then those who *are* of faith are **blessed with believing Abraham**.

- Those who are of faith enter into the same covenant that God made with Abraham – this is dealt with a little later in this chapter.

(10) For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "**CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT CONTINUE IN ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM.**"

- This comes from Deuteronomy 27 & 28 – where God confirmed His covenant blessings for those who were obedient to His word. Those who did not continue in His word were under the curse – the penalty of breaking the covenant.

(11) But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

(12) Yet the law is not of faith, but "THE MAN WHO DOES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM."

(13) **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law**, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"),

- Jesus' death on the cross ratified the new covenant, His blood was shed – He took the punishment, the penalty for breaking the covenant.

(14) that the **blessing of Abraham** might come upon the **Gentiles** in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

- Blessing of Abraham – the blessings of the covenant that God had with Abraham. These are ours through faith – we enter into the covenant through faith in Jesus.

(15) Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a **man's covenant**, yet *if it is confirmed*, no one annuls or adds to it.

- Man-made covenants when confirmed and are without annulment or addition. Yet man continually breaks them seemingly without consequence. How much more is God's covenant lasting and unbreakable.

(16) Now to **Abraham and his Seed** were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "AND TO YOUR SEED," who is Christ....

- The covenant God made with Abraham, He also made with Jesus.

(29) And if you *are* Christ's, then you are **Abraham's seed**, and heirs according to the **promise.**"

- You are a joint-heir with Jesus (Romans 8.17) – the covenant was made with you as well

God cannot break that covenant

"My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips" Psalm 89.34