

Text: John 12:37-41

Subject: The Problem of Unbelief II

INTRODUCTION

1. The problem of Unbelief

- a) It is serious
- b) It is deadly
- c) It must be addressed urgently and thoroughly

2. The Challenge is to cultivate Faith

- a) A Faith that is personal
- b) A Faith that is deep
- c) A Faith that can overcome Unbelief

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

1. Part One of Isaiah's Prophecy

That the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

"Lord, who has believed our report?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" John 12:38

- a) The nature of Prophecy
 - i) It is uttered by the prophet faithfully
 - ii) It will be fulfilled
- b) Lord, who has believed our report?
 - i) The problem of Unbelief had already set in
 - ii) Who would believe in any word from God (report)
 - iii) The word of the prophets was not well-received most times

- iv) The case of King Ahaz well-illustrates this problem
Isaiah 7
- c) And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
 - i) This is a reference to God showing His great power
 - ii) It could be deliverance
 - iii) It could also be chastisement
- d) The arm of the LORD may be revealed
 - i) But there would be some who would misread and misinterpret
 - ii) There would be some others who would not believe anyway

2. Part Two of Isaiah's Prophecy

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,
Lest they should see with *their* eyes,
Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them."

⁴¹ These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

John 12:39-41

- a) They could not believe
 - i) The heart did not believe in God in the first place
 - ii) Further revelation does not mean that Faith would result
- b) There is a punitive aspect
 - i) God had blinded their eyes
 - ii) He had hardened their hearts
 - iii) This is the consequential aspect of God's decision

- iv) Since they had refused God, He has also decreed that it would remain so!

3. Isaiah's understanding

These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him John 12:41

- a) Isaiah saw the glory of the Messiah
 - i) Though he did not see the Lord Jesus personally
 - ii) He understood the glory that the LORD had given to His Messiah
- b) Isaiah wrote extensively about the Lord Jesus
 - i) His birth
 - ii) His suffering
 - iii) His death
 - iv) His blessings to all who believe in the LORD Isaiah 53

THE CHALLENGE TO DEEPEN OUR FAITH IN THE LORD

1. Review Lessons taught by the Lord Jesus

- a) List the Lessons
- b) Ponder the Lessons till understanding comes

2. Building a strong Foundation Matthew 7:24-27

- a) Coming to the Lord
- b) Hearing His teachings
- c) Heeding His word
- d) Building the House of Faith upon the Rock
- e) This House will be able to withstand Floods/ Storms

3. To Have a Poor Foundation

This would lead to Ruin!

CONCLUSION

1. Deal with Unbelief till it is overcome
2. Build a strong and vibrant Faith (Hebrews 11)
3. Faith is worth devoting much time and energy to cultivate it

