

Come NOW!

Isaiah 1:18-20

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FOCAL Read Responsively Isaiah 1:18-20 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. {19} **If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: {20} But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.**^{KJV}

I watched a young father shopping with his son the other day, and saw how that father – though sincere – was starting his son out on the wrong path. The father passed by a large display filled with large, rubber beach balls. When the child saw these balls he first pointed, then reached, then began to scream. The father resisted for a moment as the child's wails became louder and louder, then he gave the boy a ball. That didn't satisfy him, for he quickly pointed to another, smaller ball, and became loudly vocal when it wasn't immediately given to him. Dad relented, gave the boy the second ball, and moved on. When I finished my shopping I found myself in the checkout line behind this father and son. The father put everything on the conveyor belt so it could be checked out *but* the two balls his son had. Once everything else had been paid for he took the balls from his son and told the clerk quietly “I'm not going to buy these”. The reaction from the child was expected – and immediate. The child screamed like a banshee caught in a trap. Dad diverted and quietened the child by saying “I'll get them for you in just a moment. Be quiet!” He paid for his groceries and, quickly, before the child could start up again, walked out of the store.

What lessons were the father teaching his child? First of all the father was showing his child that he himself had no concern for the commands of God. The child violated the fifth commandment of God by disrespecting his father, and was guilty of extortion – among other sins. But the father, rather than correct his child, violated the ninth commandment by lying to the boy.

How many commands of God were violated by this father and son? The son disrespected his father from the beginning, violating the fifth commandment of God “Honor your Father and Mother”. The child was guilty of *extortion* by forcing his father into giving him the balls in the first place. The Bible tells us that **neither thieves, nor drunkards, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:10)**. This was not mere childishness, but a grievous sin that any child should be led away from. The father violated the ninth commandment by lying to his child. Who shall be excluded from God's heaven but **dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (Revelation 22:15)**.

What was the greatest sin that this father committed toward his son? He did not show the boy that there is a much better way of life. The best way of life is one that has a living and loving relationship with God our Father. Humans were not made from some accident or freak of nature. Humans are not animals – though we can degrade ourselves to where we descend into animalism – but were created to live *above* the status of an animal. Man is

not an animal, but was created by God to **subdue** the animals. The Lord told Adam and Eve:

Genesis 1:28 ... Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and HAVE DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

We were made in the image of God to rule this creation – not to be ruled by it. An animal knows nothing of sin. It may eat its own young, mate with its sister, kill the innocent in order to feed, watch until the baby chick is hatched when it can slither into the nest and eat the helpless – and none of this is sin. But when humans – made in the image of God – willfully do things that only animals do – then this is called sin. Animals have no relationship with God. They cannot worship God, nor can they be saved. Jesus Christ came to this earth not as dog, or cat, or billy goat, or snake, or any other *living creature*. Jesus Christ:

Philippians 2:7-8 ... made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: {8} And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

God took upon Himself humanity that He might make payment for *our* sins. He did not pay for the sin of angels, nor did He pay for the sin of animals, but He paid for the sin of man so that:

John 3:15 ... whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Those who come and reason with God, who come to fellowship with Him by faith are raised back to *where they should have been had it not been for Adam*. Those who come and answer His call are led from a defeated, animal like existence and are brought to a state where they are **kings and priests unto God**. As the Scripture says:

Revelation 1:5-6 ... Unto {Jesus Christ} that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, {6} And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

1. God Has Made You For Something More

FOCAL Isaiah 1:18-20 **Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:** though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Let's note first of all *to whom* does the Lord extend an invitation. He says **Come now, and let US reason**. Who is the **US**? It's certainly not the animals, nor is it the angels, but it is the human who has been made in the **image of God**.

The Scripture tells us:

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Man – literally **mankind (or male and female) is created in the Image of God**. What does that mean?

First of all it means that **Darwin was, is, and will always be wrong. Humans are made in the image of God – you are not an animal**. Darwinism would have you believe you are an animal – but I want you to carry out Darwinism to its furthest point. What are *some* of the things that you have seen animals do? Consider the **pig which will eat anything, any scrap boiled up to be its slop**.

I have known farmers to throw bits of ham or bacon rinds in the trough, and **the pig is not hindered by eating its own**. Many female animals have to **guard their young lest the hungry father eat its child**. The male baboon will kill its son if it believes **the son threatens his harem**. **Wolves will often turn on their own wounded** – even their mates – **in order to feed its belly**. **Cats will force themselves on others cats**, usually underneath my house late at night.

And yet, *none of this is personal sin*. It is surely an *effect* of the fall of Adam. Prior to the fall the Bible tells us that prior to Adam's foolishness that God said **“I have given**

every green plant for food” (Genesis 1:29-30). Adam's fall brought corruption even on the animals themselves.

But beloved, animals *have no morals*. Animals have no way to reason with God. They were created with but two parts – body and soul – whereas humanity was created with **body, soul, and spirit**.

Paul told the Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As God is Triune, each human was made Triune, in Three Parts. That third part, the Human Spirit, is that which separates us from the animals. **Dr. Adrian Rogers** wrote:

“The uniqueness of man is seen in that he has a spirit. Animals, by contrast, can be spoken of as having bodies and souls, but they are void of spirit. God describes the creation of the animals this way: “And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so” (Genesis 1:24). The Hebrew word translated “creature” in this verse is nephesh and is usually translated “soul”. It means self conscious life, as opposed to plant life, which is without soul or spirit. Plants and animals have bodies. Animal also have souls. So what makes a man

unique? It is his spirit. When God made man He breathed into him the “breath of life” (Genesis 2:7). This breath of life became the human spirit. ... Man was endowed with a spiritual nature and thus the glorious ability to know and worship God. God did not breath this special breath of life into any other of His creatures.”¹

We who are human are **created in the image of God**. God literally **“breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7^{HCSB})**. You are created in the **image of God**, and are created to have a **ongoing and ongrowing relationship with God**. God wants to **reason with you**. He often walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve, talking with them, until the day that they followed Satan's advice.

Consider this: Satan came into the Garden of Eden in **the form of a serpent (Genesis 3:1)**. Adam and Eve had been told to **dominate and subdue the animals** – not to follow them.

Adam and Eve fell by *doing as the animal, the Serpent suggested, rather than listening to God*. And in so doing they plunged all of creation into the chaos of sin.

God has made you for something more than sin – He has made you to be a Son of God. Heaven is not made for the animals, dear friends, but is made for those who are able – because they are *spiritually alive* – to talk with and

¹ Adrian Rogers, *The Secret of SuperNatural Living*, page 21. Nelson Publishers

reason with the God Who made us. How does the Bible classify those who reject His offer of salvation? The Bible says:

Philippians 3:2 Watch out for "dogs," watch out for evil workers, watch out for those who mutilate the flesh. ^(HCSB)

Those who refuse to reason with God, those who reject what He has planned for them, those who decide to stay in a state of *body and soul* apart from an operating *spirit* are called “**dogs**” or animals.

The Bible says of those who reject a right relationship with God that they *shall not enter Heaven*. The Bible says:

Revelation 22:14-15 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. {15} For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Who dies and remains outside of Heaven? Those who choose the lesser rather than the greater. Those who choose to follow the way of the Animal rather than the Way of the Christ.

2. God Calls *Whoever Will* Into A Right Relationship With Him

FOCAL Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

ILLUSTRATE I was turning off the lights in the new facility the other night when I saw something quite interesting. The fire extinguishers appeared to be *white* instead of *red*. I walked down and looked at them and, sure enough, they were indeed white. I turned the light on and they turned red once more. What caused this? When I turned the lights off I noticed that the *exit* signs above the doors gave off a red light. The red light that shined out of these signs was being absorbed by the red of the extinguishers, giving off a strange white light from that which was indeed red. Here's a sermon illustration.

It is a fact of life that we all sin. If you don't think you sin ask somebody else to watch you all day long. Before long that person will see something where they will cry out “Aha!, Gotcha!”. We are sinners. **All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.** We cannot please God in our own power. We cannot *work our way* into God's good graces. What must we do? We must surrender to Him. We must hear His call **Come NOW, and let us reason TOGETHER.**

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Salvation begins not by works, but by faith. You must heed His Voice and **come NOW**. You must **believe that He is** in order to come to Him.

God has taken extraordinary measures to bring you into a right relationship with Him. First of all He came to this Earth as Jesus Christ. God told the ancient Joseph:

Matthew 1:20-21 ... Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. {21} And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

God would be born into His own creation. When He said **come now, let us reason together**, God would make it easy for us to reason with Him. Knowing our propensity to have to be shown He showed us Himself, and lived on this earth sinless and pure for 33 years. Jesus Christ came to reverse the terrible impact of Adam's sin. He came to make payment for the sin of Adam and of all his children. From the beginning of His ministry Jesus taught that God the Father sent Him, saying:

John 7:28-29 ... he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. {29} But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

Jesus made it clear that He came to **lay down His life for the sheep (John 10:15)**. Jesus Christ:

Mark 8:31 ... began to teach them, that the Son of

man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Here is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Here is He of Whom Abraham prophesied to Isaac, saying **“My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering” (Genesis 22:8)**. God Himself would have to provide a way. We would have to be **made free**. Our sins would have to be changed from scarlet to snow, from crimson to wool, and *we would not be able to do it*. God would have to save us.

JESUS CHRIST WOULD HAVE TO BE OUR EXIT SIGN. His light would have to shine on us, and our sins would have to be poured out on Him and judged.

Who shall have peace? The wicked shall not have peace. Those who refuse God's gracious call to “come” shall not be blessed. **“There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked”.** (Isaiah 48:22) God cannot bless those who will not come unto Him.

Isaiah 55:6-11 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: {7} Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. {8} For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. {9} For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and

my thoughts than your thoughts. {10} For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: {11} So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Let the wicked hear God's Voice.

FOCAL Isaiah 1:18-20 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Come unto God *now*, and – as you were designed – **reason with Him**. He has provided a way of salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus hung on that Cross dying for you. He took your penalty upon Himself, so that you could return to a healthy and wholesome relationship with God. Only a right relationship with God can change your sin from crimson to snow, and from scarlet to wool. Only He can cleanse you of your evil.

3. Come NOW, And Escape The Effects of Sin

FOCAL Isaiah 1:19-20 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: {20} But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.^{KJV}

The life lived in God is the victorious life. The life lived for Christ is the life that is worth living. How horrible to live life from paycheck to paycheck. Bill Cosby tells of those who work hard all week long just so they can go out on the weekend and kill themselves with liquor and drugs. The life that chases after sin is a life that becomes like the animal.

The person who laps up booze on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday is the same person who, like a dog, is on his knees in front of a toilet on Sunday night.

Sin kills its host!

ILLUSTRATE I remember years ago watching a movie about an alien that forced itself on its host. The alien used the host until, one day, it killed the host. This is *exactly* what sin will do. Listen to the Scripture, dear friends:

James 1:14-15 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. {15} Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

“When sin is finished, it bringeth forth death”. The Bible tells us that “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). God wants you to be above that! Satan wants to waste your life, but God wants you to reason with Him, to come to Him, to let Him bless your life. Jesus promises:

John 8:34-36 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. {35} And the servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever. {36} If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

Can sin destroy the righteous? Absolutely! Sin is regression into animalism, it is the following of the serpent, it is submission to Lucifer and not to the Light of the World.

Jesus Christ **came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly.** Sin takes that which should be a son and turns him into a sow.

Where did sin take the **Prodigal Son**? We read:

Luke 15:15-17 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and **he sent him into his fields to feed swine. {16} And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. {17} And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!**

This young man, walking the way of sin, used to look with lustful longing on the “good life”. His sinful behavior has led him to the place where now he looks with longing at the hogs, desiring their food.

Sin has reduced the Prodigal Son to the state of an animal. **There is no peace to the wicked. You must come unto God and be renewed. You must surrender your lives to Him Who loves you and gave Himself for you.** God longs to bless your lives. He longs to bring you to a place where the animal is not. The Apostle John says:

1 John 3:10 **In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.**

You were not made to be children of fallen angels. You were not made to be animals. You, dear ones, were made to **be children of God.**

God will take the drunkard, the liar, the oppressor, the vengeful, the pitiless, the greedy, the dishonest, the fornicator, the unclean and, if they **come now unto Him** then by His mighty Grace **He washes them, cleanses them, sanctifies them, and makes them new creatures in Christ.** God receives those who are sick with sin and *heals them* through His mighty Spirit.

We who are saved are changed *forever*. We are raised from the animalism of sin *forever*. Before Christ we are *sinner*s by nature. After Christ we are *saints and sons* by nature.

Oh, will you not surrender to Him today? God says **Come NOW, and let us reason TOGETHER, saith the Lord.** He could have said “These people have sinned against Me, let them die! I have sent My Sabbaths and they have mocked them. They have despised My Word and take My Name in vain”. Yet God does not say what I or you might have said if we were God. He has said:

Ezekiel 33:11 ... As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live ...

If you were wise you would shake off your sin and turn to Him while there is time. There is a whole universe for God to govern, yet He makes time to talk to you. **Come now. Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.**

Choose life.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

