

## John 12:34-43

### Verse 34

- The use of the word Law in this context indicates the whole of Old Testament scriptures. The term law was used at times to mean the OT as seen in **John 10:34** where Jesus states, “has it not been written in your law” and then cites a verse from **Psalm 82:6**.
- The people had a misunderstanding of the Old Testament scriptures as they could not rationalize the fact that Jesus could be the Messiah or the Son of Man who was to rule and reign forever if He was about to die.
- Some of the verses from the Old Testament that they could have had in view to indicate the Messiah and the Son of Man was to remain forever could have been: **Psalm 89:36-37, Psalm 110:4, Psalm 89:36, Micah 5:2, Daniel 7:13-14**
- However, they overlooked verses in the Old Testament that the Messiah would suffer and die including: **Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:26**
- We see that Peter even struggled to rationalize that Christ would have to suffer: **Matthew 16:21-23**
  - **Matthew 16:21-23** From that time <sup>[a]</sup>Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. <sup>22</sup>Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “<sup>[b]</sup>God forbid it, Lord! This shall never <sup>[c]</sup>happen to You.” <sup>23</sup>But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on <sup>[d]</sup>God’s interests, but man’s.”

### Verses 35-36

- Jesus’ time on earth in coming to an end as His death is imminent.
- He gives a final warning to heed to the people to believe in Him as He is the Light (**John 1:4-9, John 3:17-20, John 8:12, John 9:5**) so the darkness would not overtake them and they may become sons of Light (**1 Thessalonians 5:5, Ephesians 5:8-9**).
- After He spoke those words, Jesus went and hid Himself from them.

### Verse 37

- Jesus had performed numerous miracles and signs before them. John has recorded many miracles, but this was a small number compared to the all the miracles Jesus had performed.
  - **John 20:30-31** Therefore many other <sup>[a]</sup>signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is <sup>[b]</sup>the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.
  - **John 21:25** And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they \*were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself \*would not contain the books that \*would be written.
- Despite all the undeniable evidence in front of them by way of the miracles of Christ with the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead the most recent, the people did not believe.
- This speaks to man’s total depravity or radical corruption and inability to see and believe in Christ apart from the sovereign hand of God.
  - **John 6:44** No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.
  - **John 6:65** And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”
  - **Acts 13:48** When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of <sup>[a]</sup>the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

## **Verse 38**

- The people of Israel's unbelief was to fulfill what Isaiah spoke about in **Isaiah 53:1**.
  - **Isaiah 53:1** Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

## **Verses 39-40**

- The people COULD not believe in fulfilling another prophecy by Isaiah. This time the scripture in reference is **Isaiah 6:8-10**.
  - **Isaiah 6:8-10** Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"<sup>9</sup> He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.'<sup>10</sup> "Render the hearts of this people [a]insensitive, Their ears [b]dull, And their eyes [c]dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed."

## **Hardening**

- In our unregenerate state, we despise the things of God by our sinful nature and are in rebellion to the things of God. Without the sovereign hand of grace and mercy upon us from God, we will continue to reject the gospel.
- Every time someone rejects the gospel, their heart is hardened more to the things of God.
- There are examples in the Bible of God hardening the hearts of people and giving them over more to their sins and evil desires.
- This is a judicial judgment of God to harden someone's heart.
- In God sovereignly hardening someone's heart, He does not put extra evil into that person, but rather pulls back His sovereign restraint and lets that person be who they truly want to be in all their evil desires.
- God by His sovereign will, hardens men as He pleases.
  - **Romans 9:18** So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.
  - *"The greatest judgment which God Himself can, in the present life inflict upon a man is to leave him in the hand of his own boasted free-will." Augustus Toplady*
- This sovereign judicial hardening is predestined and from God but it does not negate or eliminate the responsibility of man.
  - **John 8:24** Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that [a]I am He, you will die in your sins."

## **Example of God hardening hearts**

- **Pharaoh**
  - Verses where God states He will harden Pharaoh's heart: **Exodus 4:21, 7:3, 14:4**
  - Verses where God hardens Pharaoh's heart: **Exodus 9:12, 10:1, 10:20, 11:10, 14:8**
  - Verses where Pharaoh hardened His own heart: **Exodus 8:15, 8:32, 9:34**
  - **Romans 9:14-18** What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!<sup>15</sup> For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."<sup>16</sup> So then it *does not depend* on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.<sup>17</sup> For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed [k]throughout the whole earth."<sup>18</sup> So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.
  - **Exodus 9:15-16** For *if by now* I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth.<sup>16</sup> But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to [a]remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.

- **Romans 1- Romans 1:18-32**
- **Israel- John 12:40**
  - The nation of Israel as a majority had rejected Jesus. He came into His own and those who were His own did not receive Him (**John 1:11**).
  - Every time they heard His words and saw His miracles and rejected Him and remained in unbelief, their hearts became more hardened.
  - God's patience with unbelieving Israel had run out and He in a divine act of judgment brought judicial hardening upon them so they could not see and perceive the things of God and be converted.
  - This hardening was predetermined, ordained, and brought about by the sovereign hand of God to bring about His redemption plan that was set in place in eternity past.
  - If the people would have believed, they would not have crucified Christ and there would be no substitutional death and atonement and there would be not hope of heaven for anyone.
    - **1 Corinthians 2:6-8** Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; <sup>7</sup>but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory; <sup>8</sup>*the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;
    - **Acts 2:22-23** Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man <sup>l</sup>attested to you by God with <sup>l</sup>miracles and wonders and <sup>l</sup>signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— <sup>23</sup>this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of <sup>l</sup>godless men and put *Him* to death.
    - **Acts 4:27-28** For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy <sup>l</sup>servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the <sup>l</sup>Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, <sup>28</sup>to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.
    - **Proverbs 16:4** The Lord has made everything for <sup>l</sup>its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil.

God sovereignly hardened the hearts and blinded the eyes of the majority of the people of Israel. This was done in accordance with the ordained and predetermined redemptive plan set from the foundation of the world. If their hearts were not hardened and they had believed in Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory and there would be no salvation for anyone. Through this hardening and their hatred for Christ, they murdered the only innocent person ever to live! Their hearts were so hardened and their eyes so blinded, they committed first degree murder against the eternal God. It would be through their actions and the brutality of the cross that the Son of Man would atone for the sins of His people, redeem His elect, and lay His life down for His sheep for them to secure their salvation. The hardening was so that the Son could redeem those the Father had given Him on the cross and complete the redemptive mission that was planned from the foundation of the world.

#### **Verse 41**

- The context in this verse is Jesus. Where did Isaiah see Jesus' glory and speak about Him?
- Isaiah saw the pre-incarnate Jesus in **Isaiah 6:1-7**
- Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and he saw it and was glad (**John 8:56**) and before Abraham was I am (**John 8:58**). Isaiah saw His day and rejoiced and before Isaiah was I Am.

## Verses 42-43

- Despite the majority of Israel being hardened, there are some who did believe in Him. However, their faith was weak as they feared men, feared excommunication from the synagogue, and loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.
  - **John 9:22** His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be <sup>[a]</sup>Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.
- Two examples may include Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus who had feared their fellow rulers, but later showed courage in the risk of being exposed as followers of Christ.
  - **John 19:38-39** After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret *one* for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. <sup>39</sup>Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a <sup>[a]</sup>mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred <sup>[b]</sup>pounds *weight*.
  - **Luke 23:50-51** And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man <sup>51</sup>(he had not consented to their plan and action), *a man* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God;
  - **Mark 15:43** Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.
- There are moments where we are ashamed and lack courage and boldness for Christ. There are times where we may be ashamed to profess Christ to others.
- However, there are no secret Christians. There must be at some time a profession of faith (**Romans 10:9-10**).
- Whoever is ashamed of Christ and His words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of when He comes in His glory (**Luke 9:26**).
- **Galatians 1:10** For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

Do we seek the approval of God or man more? If we please God, it doesn't matter who we displease. If we don't please God, it doesn't matter who we please. Let us as Christians be bold and courageous in our witness for Christ. Let it be the desire of our hearts to seek His approval in all we do. Because as Isaiah saw Him and declared He is Holy, Holy, Holy!