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## You Will Die in Your Sin

*Gospel of John, Part XXVIII*

John 8:21-30

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### I. The Counterfeit and the True

### II. The Danger of Rejecting the Light

#### A. The Warning (21 cf. 7:33-36)

There will come a time when it is too late, when their opportunity will pass. The time to listen is now. They need to turn from their sin and believe in Jesus.

#### B. Jews' Dismissal and Jesus' Repeated Warning (22-24 cf. 1 Jn 5:1)

The reason they will die in their sins is that they have not been born from above; they are not children of God. Jews though they are, they remain men of this world, fallen sinners whose hard hearts have not been transformed by the Spirit of God.

#### C. Jews' Feigned Ignorance and Jesus' Response (25-29 cf. 5:16-23)

But the Jews don't get it. They ask, "*Who are you?*" Jesus responds, "*Exactly what I've been telling you from the beginning. I am the Son of the Father, sent to reveal His will to you.*"

#### D. Belief (30)

### III. Unless you believe that I am...

#### A. "I am" in Isaiah (cf. 41:4; 43:10, 13, 25; 46:4; 47:8; 48:12)

Jesus makes a number of astonishing claims in this text. I want to begin by focusing upon the most astonishing of these. Before we can appreciate it, however, we need some background. In Isaiah 40-66, God issues a challenge to the idols of the nations. In the context of this challenge, He repeatedly ridicules idolatry.

*Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, who dwell securely, who say in your heart, "I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children"; But these two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day: the loss of children, and widowhood (Is 47:8-9).*

Throughout Isaiah, God contrasts Himself with the idols of the peoples (43:8-13):

*Bring out the blind people who have eyes, And the deaf who have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, And let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, And show us former things? Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified; Or let them hear and say, "It is truth." "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have*

*chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior. I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, And there was no foreign god among you; Therefore you are My witnesses,” Says the LORD, “that I am God. Indeed before the day was, I am He; And there is no one who can deliver out of My hand; I work, and who will reverse it?”*

When Jesus says (v. 24), “For if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins,” He is claiming deity (cf. v. 58). He is claiming to be the source of all that was, is, and will be; the ground of all existence; a claim the Jews rejected (59).

#### B. “Lifted up” in Isaiah 52-53

In v. 28, Jesus ties the knowledge of His identity with the “lifting up” of the Son of Man: *When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He...* In other words, it is through His voluntary sacrifice that His true identity will be revealed to the world. How so? Isaiah provides the background (53:4-10a):

*Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all... For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.*

This passage highlights the sacrificial calling of the Servant of the Lord. God’s Servant, God’s Messiah, would give His life a sacrifice on behalf of His people. So if the Servant voluntarily did this thing, what would be the result (10b-12)?

*When You [the Lord] make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I [the Lord] will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.*

It is through Jesus’ voluntary death for His people that His true identity is revealed to the world. In lifting up the Servant of the Lord, the Jews ironically played the part of revealing the glory of God.

#### C. If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins (cf. Jn 14:6)

*If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.* Jesus ties one’s eternal destiny with their relationship with Him. Unless you believe that Jesus is God, that Jesus is one with the Father and yet distinct from the Father as the Servant of the Father whom the Father delighted to bruise and to crush on the cross, then you will perish.

## IV. Conclusion