

# Isaiah 1

2-26-04

*“A People...Long on Religion, Short on Morality!”*

## 1. Book Intro:

- 1.1. **The Mini-Bible!** - 66 chapters.
  - 1.1.1. The 1<sup>st</sup> 39 chapters are like the OT's 39 books.
  - 1.1.2. The next 27 chapters are like the NT.
  - 1.1.3. Ch.1-39 = a message of judgment (on immorality & Idolatry) regarding “Judah, surrounding nations, & whole earth”.
  - 1.1.4. Ch.40-66 = A message of hope (Messiah is coming as **Savior** & **Sovereign**. To bear a **cross** & to wear a **crown**)
- 1.2. **Isaiah the Major Prophet!**
  - 1.2.1. His prophetic ministry **spanned 4 Kings** (see vs.1).
    - 1.2.1.1. Like Billy Graham to...what, 10 presidents?
  - 1.2.2. Approx. 60 years of ministry (740-680bc).
  - 1.2.3. Some have called him the “**Prince of Prophets**”, “**St. Paul of the OT**”
    - 1.2.3.1. At times you'll forget you're in the OT.
  - 1.2.4. His name = “Yahweh is Salvation” (excellent summary of the book!)
    - 1.2.4.1. The prophet deals w/4 diff. kinds of salvation:
    - 1.2.4.2. [1] Judah's **National Salvation** from the attack of **other nations** [2] Judah's salvation from the **Babylonian captivity** [3] The **future salvation** of the Jews in the kingdom [4] The **personal salvation** of the **sinner** who puts his faith in the redeemer.
  - 1.2.5. **Contemporary prophets?** – **Amos & Hosea** (North/Is.) & **Micah** (South/Judah) {23 years before **Jeremiah**; 7000 years before **Christ**}
  - 1.2.6. He writes with rich images of the coming Messiah.
    - 1.2.6.1. His **birth**, “**For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;**”; his **death** in ch.53; His **Kingdom reign** in the final ch's.
  - 1.2.7. **Personal Life** – Married; Had at least 2 sons: **Shear-Jashub**(7:3); **Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz**(8:3).
    - 1.2.7.1. He spent most of his life in Jerusalem.
    - 1.2.7.2. Looks like he also wrote a history about the reigning king Uzziah (2 Chron.26:22).
  - 1.2.8. His death – (Jewish Tradition) sawed in half during the reign of Manasseh.
    - 1.2.8.1. Heb.11:37 “**They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword.**”

- 1.2.9. **His favorite name for God** – “*The Holy One of Israel!*”
  - 1.2.9.1. **Q:** What’s yours? (change it up/what does it mean?)
- 1.3. **World History** – **what was happening back then?**
  - 1.3.1. 1<sup>st</sup> recorded **Olympic Games** 776bc.
  - 1.3.2. Official founding of **Rome** 753bc.
  - 1.3.3. **Homer** (Gk. epic poet) earlier wrote *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, 850bc.
- 1.4. **Controversy!** [**Deutero-Isaiah** or 2<sup>nd</sup> *Isaiah*] {Deuteronomy=2<sup>nd</sup> Law}
  - 1.4.1. Some have even suggested a 3<sup>rd</sup> (**Tertio-Isaiah**, 3<sup>rd</sup> – cuz 56-66 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ is after Babylonian captivity)
  - 1.4.2. **Liberal critics** reject the belief that it was possible to **predict future events** (see Is.44:28, Cyrus to rebuild Jerusalem 170 before there was a Cyrus!).
    - 1.4.2.1. Ch.’s 1-39 focus on Isaiah’s day.
    - 1.4.2.2. Ch’s 40-66 depict a period of Babylonian captivity, which occurred long after Isaiah’s death.
    - 1.4.2.3. **So, there must have been 2 different authors?** (*they say*)
    - 1.4.2.4. **See Jn.12:38-40.**
- 1.5. **His writing Style** – **he loved the technique of personification:**
  - 1.5.1. “The **moon & sun** are ashamed” (24:23)
  - 1.5.2. “The **wilderness & desert** are glad” (35:1)
  - 1.5.3. “The **mountain & forests** shout for joy” (44:23)
  - 1.5.4. “the **trees** clap their hands” (55:12)
  - 1.5.5. **He also used metaphors:**
    - 1.5.5.1. “Israel = Vineyard” (5:7)
    - 1.5.5.2. “Winepress = judgment” (63:3)
    - 1.5.5.3. “God = Rock of refuge” (17:10)
    - 1.5.5.4. “Israel = Vineyard” (5:7)
- 1.6. **His NT Stats!**
  - 1.6.1. He is quoted **far more** in the NT than any other prophet.
  - 1.6.2. He is mentioned **21 x’s** by name.
  - 1.6.3. Ch.53 is quoted or alluded to at least **85 x’s** in the NT!

## 2. **Chapter 1 Intro:**

- 2.1. **Title:** “A People...Long on Religion, Short on Morality!”
- 2.2. **Outline:** Their Nation; Their Religion; Their Society.

### 3. Long on Religion, Short on Morality! (1-31)

- 3.1. **THEIR NATION!** (1-9)
- 3.2. **Worse Than Animals!** (1-3)
- 3.3. Even **animals** know their **master**, but **Israel** doesn't know its **Master**!
  - 3.3.1. Even our Cockatiel chirps when we walk in the door at home.
- 3.4. **Lepers!** (4-6)
- 3.5. Like a body sick head to toe.
- 3.6. **Sodom & Gomorrah!** (7-9)
- 3.7. **Sin** has a price tag & **payday** is imminent.
  - 3.7.1. Apostasy was so severe that the Lord referred to them by the metaphors of **Sodom & Gomorrah**.
- 3.8. “The kernel of every **national problem** is how people **relate to God**. They cannot be right anywhere if they are wrong here. Religion determines everything.”<sup>1</sup> (Haiti example)
- 3.9. **THEIR RELIGION!** (10-20)
- 3.10. **Religion!** (10-15)
  - 3.10.1. **Q:** What would you say about a church that had **generous givers**, its **attendance** was growing, its **monthly & weekly programs** were well attended; & **prayer meetings** were full?
  - 3.10.2. **Judah** had these things, but though “**long on religion**” they were again “**short on morality**”!
  - 3.10.3. A time when Religion was **popular** but not **spiritual**! [Sound familiar?]
- 3.11. **Punctilious Devotion!** (every minute detail)
  - 3.11.1. They were extremely religious!
- 3.12. **Sacrifices were abundant!** (11)
  - 3.12.1. The standing error of the ritualist is that if all depends on performing the ceremonial act, then the more you do it the better!
- 3.13. **Temple attendance up!** (12)
  - 3.13.1. **Trample**—a religion of ritual is only the noise of feet on a pavement.
- 3.14. **Monthly & weekly observances plentiful!** (13,14)
- 3.15. **Prayers bountiful!** (15)

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<sup>1</sup> J. Alec Motyer; pg.45 Isaiah; Tyndale OT Commentaries.

- 3.15.1. Ok, picture hands raised up next to you during worship tonight & you glance over & see they are full of blood!
  - 3.15.1.1. Here their **hands** held out in prayer were **blood stained** (i.e. covered in "*unrepentant personal wrongdoings*")
- 3.15.2. **Hide My eyes** – the opposite of the **shining face** of approval & blessing.
  - 3.15.2.1. "**LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.**" (Ps.4:6)
- 3.15.3. Be guaranteed the Lord's **eyes** & **ears** will be cut off from such praying! (i.e. "*I'm not even listening*")
- 3.16. **Clean up!** (16-20)
- 3.17. **But there is a way back to God!** 😊
  - 3.17.1. Here's the solution to their problem...& possibly yours tonight???
- 3.18. **9 Actions!** (16,17) [3 groups of 3]
  - 3.18.1. **Clean!** - Wash – Make – Put Away –
    - 3.18.1.1. Yes in Ps.51:7 David says "**wash me**". But God also says, "**Wash yourselves**". Paul wrote, "**let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**" (2 Cor.7:1)
  - 3.18.2. **Command!** – Cease(a decisive abandonment of sin) – Learn(cultivate a new mind) – Seek(set different objectives) –
    - 3.18.2.1. **Seek Justice**(what is right) - A student told about a famous lecturer who came to the college he attended. The lecturer spoke about feeding the people of India. **He listed several good reasons** for doing so, **such as** more men would be employed, friendly relations with other countries would be established; in addition, he would continue to be in the good graces of the Indian people and of the government. During the informal discussion the oldest and most revered professor at the college asked, "But, Doctor, don't you think maybe we ought to feed them just because they're hungry?"
  - 3.18.3. **Change!** – Rebuke(the 1 inflicting, "*the oppressor*") - Defend & Plead(the one's suffering hurt/ *fatherless* & *widows*).
    - 3.18.3.1. Do justice in the social realm.
- 3.19. **A Promise!** (18)
  - 3.19.1. **Come** – the invitation.
    - 3.19.1.1. **Sin:** breaks God's heart; cheapens a nation or an individual; & invites the judgment of God.
    - 3.19.1.2. **God:** graciously offers His **forgiveness**, if we will **repent!**

3.19.2. **Reason** – arguing a case in court.

3.19.2.1. The Lord calls His people to **the bar of justice** where, of course, they can only be found **guilty**.

3.19.2.1.1. **Like with Job**.

3.19.2.2. But note it doesn't say come let us "feel" together...nope we can use our **minds**!

3.19.3. **Scarlet** is the color of **guiltiness** (vs.15; i.e. bloodshed).

3.19.4. **Snow & Wool** - In England there's a **paper factory** that makes the finest stationery that's made. One day a man touring the factory asked what it was made from. He was shown a **huge pile of old rags**. The rag content is what determined the quality of the paper. The man wouldn't believe it. In 6 weeks he received a package of paper from the company with his initials embossed on it. On the 1st page were written the words: "Dirty Rags Transformed." The same is true of the Christian life.

3.20. **A Blessing to Find!** (19)

3.21. **A Blessing to Lose!** (20)

3.22. **THEIR SOCIETY!** (21-31)

3.23. **Depreciation!** (21-23)

3.23.1. Depreciation – "A decrease or loss in value".

3.24. **Purge!** (24-26)

3.24.1. Note the "**I will's**".

3.25. **Future!** (27-31)

3.25.1. Note the "**Shall be's**".