

“Isaiah Speaks to U.S.!”

Selected Passages from Isaiah 5

Intro. – A book I would highly recommend reading... is entitled “*The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*” by Hans Finzel... It has been suggested that Isaiah was never voted one of the “Top Ten Most Popular Christian Leaders” of his day. Fact of the matter, this intense and uncompromising prophet received little if any applause for his messages. You see, Isaiah spoke the *truth* and the *truth* pierced the conscience and threatened the godless lifestyles of his peers.

Today, although the words of this great prophet were specifically directed at the nation of Israel, Isaiah’s words are a disturbingly accurate description of the United States of America right now. To the undiscerning, “religion” was a big business in Israel. Sacrifices and incense were offered regularly, and religious holy days or feasts were being observed. But under the watchful eye of a holy and all knowing God, the external mask of piety could not hide the hypocrisy of Israel. Indeed, they honored God with their lips, but their hearts were far from Him (29:13).

God’s grievances against His people were numerous. As we examine these grievances it will become even clearer the sins of America are no less a magnified reflection of the sins of Israel: Isaiah 1:2 “*Hear, O heavens, and give ear O earth: for the Lord hath spoken; ‘I have nourished and brought up children, and they rebelled against Me.’*” God has a serious case against Israel. God has a serious case against these United States of America today. God uses Isaiah as an instrument to lift the *deceptive mask*.

Purpose: to see how God wants to use His people to restore the United States of America

These grievances of God against Israel then and the United States of America today are numerous. Looking at Isaiah 5 summarizes them:

I THE MATTER OF MATERIALISM

A. Isaiah 5:8

- “*Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land.*”
- i.e. Israel was moved and motivated
- 1. Here are a people motivated by nothing less than materialism... MORE was never enough!
- 2. Israel had become restless, discontent... their heart’s attitude could be described in one word – MORE – they wanted more and it didn’t matter how they were going to get it!
- 3. It was obvious – Israel was motivated by one thing – lust for more material possessions.

B. Isaiah 5:9

- “*And the Lord Almighty has declared in my hearing: ‘Surely the great houses will become desolate, the fine mansions left without occupants.’*”
- i.e. U.S. is moved and motivated
- 1. Like Israel of old, America is being motivated by MORE. There’s little “material girl” in each us...
- 2. The affluence of America is mind boggling – it is everywhere...
- 3. The matter of materialism is not going to be addressed by the world – God’s people are going to have to “lift the mask” for America and help her see the direction she is taking.
- 4. Must “flesh out” the song “*He is All I Need*” – demonstrate by seeking kingdom of God and His righteousness first which in turn results in NEVER lacking anything!
 - Illus. – Psychiatrist – “That will be \$200.00
 - Patient – “That seems awfully high. All others charge \$100.00
 - Psychiatrist – “This is part of the treatment. It’ll help you put less importance on things

Our nation needs the Lord and His Word to help it put far less importance on things!

II THE PROPAGANDA OF PLEASURE

A. Isaiah 5:11,12

- *“Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink; who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them! And their banquets are accompanied by lyre and harp, by tambourine and flute, and by wine; but they do not pay attention to the deeds of the Lord, nor do they consider the work of His hands.”*
- 1. Why, why not pay attention to God? – implication is that there is no time because all of it is being used to pursue MORE pleasures.
- 2. Hedonistic Israel didn’t have time to seek God because lived only for the moment to have pleasure.
- 3. I would suggest to you this morning that nothing is sapping more vitality and power from the life of America and God’s people in this country than the pursuit of pleasure.
- 4. We have time for everything in the form of recreation and pleasure, most of which is “wholesome and good” but the BEST, most important matters (i.e. eternal matters) are getting shelved!...

B. Isaiah 5:18

- *“Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes.”* Word used here can be used to describe an unrestrained, vicious dog...
- 1. The picture here is open rebellion – Israel had no sense of shame, didn’t even try to hide their sin... like another prophet (Jeremiah 6:15; 8:12) *“...didn’t know how to blush.”*
- 2. Hasn’t America seemingly lost her ability to blush? Sin is openly practiced and tolerated
 - Illus – adultery and fornication = “an affair”... homosexuality = “alternative or gay lifestyle...” murder of unborn = “abortion or a woman’s choice”... murder of the weak = “death with dignity” etc.
- 3. Only hope of turning such around is that the blood, bought Bride of Christ must get into the fray and peel off the mask of propaganda of pleasure...

III THE BLUNDER OF BOASTFULNESS

A. Isaiah 5:20

- *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”*
- 1. Israel repeatedly disobeyed God – the result was a seared conscience.
 - a. i.e. God’s people developed a twisted/perverted sense of right and wrong...
 - b. they could no longer discern between good and evil... they found satisfaction in things God hated and scoffed at the values, commands, the authority of God.
- 2. The parallel with U.S. is frightening – no one can argue our nation presently has values, standards contrary to God and truth! Gotten to point where the U.S. has no morals...
 - a. Proverbs 6:17 *“...and hands that shed innocent blood.”* Here we are told is an abomination to God; yet, our highest court protects the “right” of the mother to take unborn child’s life.
 - b. marriage is sacred, God designed and instituted – the effort to redefine marriage in order to recognize same sex marriage is a slippery slope this country cannot afford if she is going to exist...
 - c. God resists the proud (James 4:6); yet our society urges self-assertion, ladder climbing, dog eat dog...

B. Isaiah 5:21

- *“Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight..”*
- 1. In their pride and arrogance, Israel had become blind to their true spiritual condition – i.e. they had an inflated view of themselves – “they thought they were all of that and a bag of chips.”
- 2. America is so frighteningly similar... How we need to return to the roots that made America great!...
- 3. Again, the Church is the only avenue through which the mask of boastfulness can be peeled away.

Conclusion: Written into the constitution of God’s universe are the consequences of sin... Israel sowed materialism, pleasure and boastfulness. The early chapters of Isaiah graphically describe the price paid. Israel reaped what she had sown. Do we see the same message for America?

Illus. – Article “Reap What You Sow”

As God used Isaiah to peel back the mask for Israel, may God use the Church of Christ in Eaton, Ohio to peel back the mask these United States of America need:

1. RETURN to God’s Word (1:10) *“Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the instruction of our God you people of Gomorrah.”*
2. REPENT (turn back to God) (1:16) *“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil.”*
3. RESTORE God as King and His righteousness as the standard for living (1:19) *“If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land.”*