

“God’s Final Appeal To A Wicked Nation”

Scripture: Isaiah 1:1-20

Introduction:

I want to start off by saying that I am very proud to be an American. Every time I have ever been over seas and come back to the U.S.A., I get a really special feeling when the plane sets down in the greatest nation on earth, except Israel. I am telling you all of this because I am going to share with you that our great nation is in a desperate condition, and unless we repent of our sins and turn back to God, America may be breathing its death rattles. Yes, I do believe that Jesus is coming soon, but I also know that God’s patience eventually wears out with any nation that turns its back upon Him.

What I am going to share with you from the text above is that just like Israel experienced the judgment of God in the days of Isaiah because they would not repent and change their ways, we are going to see this happen to our beloved land. The list of things that Isaiah indicted Israel for in this chapter one is a vivid description of the condition that America is in. I am calling this message, “God’s Final Appeal To A Wicked Nation”. It could very well be that because we did not respond to the blessings of God upon our nation with thanksgiving and humility that God has given us horrible political leaders who now are oppressing us with bad news and scare tactics every day when we turn on the TV. We have reached a point to where there is no good news outside of the Word of God. And, because of this I have not lost hope. I am believing God to bring us to repentance of our sins as a nation, and then to see God open the windows and bless us again. If there has been the early rain, there must be the latter rain for the harvest to be complete.

Let’s take a step now to dig into this wonderful passage of warning from God’s precious Book. This message must be heard, believed, and applied through genuine obedience and surrender to God. To do less at this serious time in history, may just result in the destruction of our nation as Israel received because of their stiff necks and hardened hearts. May we not follow their example!

I. PLEASE NOTICE THE CHARGE THAT INITIATED THE APPEAL. vs. 1-3

Let me begin by saying that when God Almighty indicts any nation or individual, it is a serious matter! This is especially true when the people are His own people. In verses 1-3 of this text, Isaiah just jumps right in with God’s accusation toward His beloved Israel. Because of their willful disobedience to God’s Word, they are told that they have invited the chastisement of God. Isaiah starts off like a prosecutor who is charging an accused suspect with a serious crime. In other words, God through the prophet wanted Israel to know the charges and come to understand why they were being charged. Let’s take a look at these three verses and see what God is trying to tell us today.

A. Please notice the recipients implicated in the charge. v. 1

The recipients are none other than God’s children who have decided to not act like God’s children. If this sounds paradoxical, it may just be. Yet, throughout America today we find thousands of people who profess to know and follow Jesus Christ, but their actions and behavior negate what verbal testimony they might give. This is what the Bible calls hypocrisy and it is absolutely hated by God. If you don’t believe this, read the account of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts Chapter Five. These two members of the early church made vows to give a certain percentage of their money to God from the sale of some land, but they lied to God and before the people. God killed them instantaneously. So, we need to recognize

that any of us as God's children can get so far out of God's will that we try to live a lie and be a hypocrite. But, we must remember that God doesn't tolerate this very long. It was proven to the early church and it will be proven to us as well in some way.

B. Secondly, please notice the rebellion indicted in the charge. v. 2

Folks, can I tell you something? God hates rebellion! He has always hated it and He still does. He hated it in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve rebelled against His command. He also hated it I Samuel 15, when Samuel told King Saul that rebellion was nothing more or less than idolatry and witchcraft. He hated it in II Chronicles 36:16, when Zedekiah, the puppet king of Babylon rebelled against God "until there was no remedy". The result of this man's sin brought about the killing of Zedekiah's sons and then the putting out of his eyes by the Babylonian king who led the third attack against Jerusalem. The entire city of Jerusalem was ransacked and razed to the ground because of this king's rebellion. Rebellion will always bring the judgment of God, and this was what Isaiah warned Israel of, but they fail to repent.

The sad thing about rebellion that is brought out in verse two is the fact that when we rebel against God as His children, we do so against his wonderful love and blessings to us. God told Israel, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." We can't possibly understand the heartbreak of God when His children rebel against Him, but we can't at least relate to it when our hearts have been broken by our rebellious kids.

God has been so good to America, but we have willfully and with insolence rebelled against His love and goodness. We cannot deny it, and neither can we stop the judgment of God which may be coming unless we fall on our faces in brokenness and repent of our sins.

C. Please notice the rejection illuminated in the charge. v. 3

Verse three in this text is one of the most incriminating verses in the entire Bible. In this verse God tells Israel through Isaiah the prophet that a dumb ox (cow) knows his owner and appreciates him for feeding him more so than does a child of God who forgets that God is his source of life and provides all he needs. This verse also accuses the people of Israel of being less conscience of God's goodness and provision than does a donkey. The donkey knows for sure where to go to find the feed because he knows where his owner feeds him. Thus for this donkey to rebel and go somewhere else would be extremely foolish. So it is with the child of God who rebels against his loving heavenly Father.

II. PLEASE NOTICE THE CONDITIONS THAT INSPIRED THE APPEAL.

vs. 4-15

Why would God destroy a nation that He had built and blessed so mightily? Why would He bring an enemy army into the capitol and take away the people and their children and completely destroy their homes and the place of worship? I am going to show you from these verses why God did following Isaiah's stern warning, and why He will do it again unless America repents. Reading these causes in Isaiah's day is like reading the newspapers in America at this very moment. Don't ever believe that we couldn't follow in the footsteps of Israel for one minute. If God did it to His own chosen nation, we must know that we will not be the exception. By the way, God has brought judgment on every nation down through the years since the days of Isaiah as we can read in the

history of every civilization. Let's now take a good look at these next verses and see what caused Israel's fall and probably will cause the fall of America soon if we don't turn back to God.

A. Israel was a nation filled with sinfulness. v. 4

Verse four in our text is one of the most solemn verses I have read in the Bible. God tells His people through the prophet that their country has been so filled with sinfulness and iniquity that their leaders, their parents, and even their children are so bad that they are rotten to the core. Their sins had become so bad that everyone was oppressed by the heavy burden they bore.

Sin is a terrible taskmaster, and America right now is under the oppression of sin in our political leaders, our church leaders, and in the homes and families of those who sit in our pews. And the sad thing is that like Israel, we are provoking God's anger toward this great country. Why? Because we have turned our backs on God, asked God to leave us alone, and we have been resolute on doing life our own way. Therefore, how dare we act shocked when catastrophic events take place which we can't define or describe. Think of the huge storms we have been having. Consider the hurricanes, the floods, the wild fires, the sunamis, the unbelievable snow storms, etc. I assure you these have not happened because of global warming, but they have come our way because God has unleashed the angels of judgment on our land. And folks, if we don't repent and turn back to God, we haven't seen anything yet.

Just think about the eleven million illegal aliens who have come across our borders from other countries and have come in to take over our country without even applying for citizenship. Does this not sound like Babylon taking over Israel in the days of Israel? Could it be that in fact we are imploding within as Joel Rosenberg says in his new book, "Implosion"? I think we are seeing the judgment of God measured out to America because of our wicked tolerance of sin and our cesspool of immorality.

B. Israel was a nation fermenting with sickness. vs. 5-6

In point B, I have used the word fermenting to depict the process of wine turning to alcohol and it becoming more destructive and lethal as the process continues. And so it is with sin which continues to get worse and worse and when it goes unrestrained and unconfessed in any society, tragedy will come. The implication in verse 5 is that the people of Israel's sin was getting worse and worse, and that every part of their bodies was sick because of their sins. And, because of the sins that are listed in these next few verses, I am inclined to believe that their sickness was the result of their sins. Plus, their sins were so serious that their hearts or very beings were wicked and corrupt. This is true for any person who rebels against God. Whatever comes out in a person's life is definitely in his or her heart. So, we must always remember what Jeremiah said in Chapter 17:9-10, where he tells us that our hearts are desperately wicked, and only God knows the contents of our hearts. So, I believe that we could say that Isaiah was declaring that Israel was sick in body, in mind, and in spirit.

In verse six Isaiah goes on to expand his description of the sickness in Israel. He stated they were sick from the soles of their feet all the way to the top of their heads. They had bruises everywhere, and their putrifying sores were running profusely and contaminating others. These sores were wide open sores. They were sores that had not been treated and they were getting worse by the hour and by the day. Obviously, the people of God had thrown all restraint to the wind and were living like immoral perverts.

C. Israel was a nation flooded with sadness. vs 7-9

Folks, let's just read these three verses and see the depths of Israel's sins.

Isaiah 1:7-9- "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: you land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." I hope the truth of this passage has sunk in for you. Just get a picture of what was happening in Jerusalem and the land of Israel and you can see a vivid picture of what is going on in our own land today.

Isaiah said in these verses that Jerusalem would be very temporary just like a little shack in a grape vineyard and a cottage in a cucumber garden where guards sleep in these little buildings to watch over the crops. When the harvest time is over these cottages and shacks were then torn down. So, because of the sins of God's people, judgment was coming just like it did for Sodom and Gomorrah. And as Isaiah states in verse ten, God warned the people of Jerusalem because they were acting like Sodom and Gomorrah. Just try to imagine what was going on in God's own city by the wicked citizens and strangers who lived there. God's patience had just about worn out.

D. Israel was a nation fevered with sexuality. v. 10

Having just mentioned this verse, the only other thing I will say is that sexual sin of every nature was rampant in Jerusalem, and God was about to close the curtain on the city because of its wickedness. Every kind of perversion and debauchery was present there, and so is it in America today. God admonished the people to repent and return to God's Word, but they rebelled, mock His Word and His prophet, and because of their sin, God eventually brought in the enemy and killed thousands of people, and carried the rest into Babylonian Captivity. I just want to say that there is always a payday someday for the sins we commit.

America may be coasting right now thinking that as we become more secular and humanistic like Europe, we will one day reach perfection by our own efforts. We will be fair and treat everyone with tolerance, and we will overlook and support every kind of sexual perversion known to men. But I assure you that God is keeping the records, and He will have the last say in this matter.

E. Israel was a nation formalized in spirituality. vs. 11-15

Have you visited many churches lately? My wife and I have, and we are appalled by the two extremes. On the left we have found wild emotionalism trying to work up the Holy Spirit and on the other side there is dead ritualistic orthodoxy. Israel was in the same condition.

In verses 11-15, God gives a lengthy dissertation on the type of worship that was going on in Jerusalem, and how God rejected their worship because it came from sinful empty hearts. They were going through rituals and trying to impress God, but God would not accept their ritualism. Truthfully, God was just sick of the people's empty worship then, and I believe He is today. God even told the people that they were raising their hands to Him in prayer, but that He could not answer their prayers because their hands were full of blood. What was happening was that in idol worship thousands of babies were being offered to the pagan god Moloch. They would take these precious little babies and lay

them in the burning fiery belly of Moloch as an act of worship. Because of this senseless killing of babies, God said enough was enough. Doesn't this sound like what is happening in America? Since 1973, over 55 million babies have been butchered on the altar of choice and convenience by abortion. Our hands in America are dripping with the blood of these innocent kids while their selfish moms and money hungry doctors brutalize these children with seemingly no conscience at all. I suppose that they believe that they are smarter than God and that they will never have to answer for their sins, but we know that they will. God can and will forgive, but there has to be repentance and going in another direction. Isaiah preached the Word of God and warned the people, but they rejected the message and ultimately received the judgment of God.

III. PLEASE NOTICE THE CURE THAT WAS INCLUDED IN THE APPEAL. vs. 16-20

It is very sad for me to write about, but we must remember that the people of Israel did not repent of their sins and God brought judgment upon them just like He had predicted through His servant. The people could have repented and saved their land if they would have only turned back to God. They were very obstinate in their wills, but Isaiah had given them a cure for their sins had they listened and responded to His appeal to repent.

So, today I want us to take a look at the cure that God through Isaiah gave Israel, and hopefully we will not make the same mistake that Israel made. The cure for sin is always repentance and confession of sin, but if we fail to listen and obey, we will pay the price for our rebellion. Now, let's see what God is trying to say to us and our country.

A. Notice the requirements for the cure. vs. 16-18

1. First, there must be an attitude of repentance. v. 16

This verse could change the world if God's people would apply it. In this verse we are told to make ourselves clean by genuine repentance and putting away the evil from our lives. This repentance must start with an attitude of brokenness and recognition of the wrong we have done. There will never be repentance in action until there is repentance in our hearts because God has been wronged. So much of our repentance in America is because the guilty got caught, but true repentance is not just sad remorse, but it is an acknowledgement that God has been offended and we must get right with Him.

2. Secondly, there must be actions of righteousness. v. 17

I love this verse. In this verse we are admonished to put our words into action. If we have really repented and gotten right with God, then we must show it by our actions and ministry to others. Instead of selfish self-centered behavior, if we repent there will be ministry to orphans and widows in order to alleviate their suffering. In other words, from a life of self-centered conduct, we will now have a life that demonstrates that we have on our hearts what Jesus has on His, and we will share His love and ministry with these hurting people. Righteous living will produce righteous conduct and action on the behalf of others.

3. There must be an appropriation of redemption. v. 18

In this verse God is calling the guilty sinners to come and sit down for a reasonable discussion about their sins. God promises them if they come to Him in repentance, He will wash away their sins and redeem their souls. If this verse was adhered to in America, we could save our land from impending doom. I appeal to all of you to join me in coming to God on behalf of our country and beg God to redeem this land from its bondage of sin. May God help us to really get serious about this matter.

B. Notice the rewards for the cure. vs. 19-20

Our Lord is an awesome God! He never requires us to give up anything but where with He also rewards us for repentance and the action we take. In these last two verses in our study for this time, God promises to Israel and I believe to us as well that He will reward us if we will repent and turn back to Him. I am totally convinced that this is for us as individuals, and also for us as a nation collectively as well. Let's look at the rewards He has promised to us.

A. There will be national prosperity. v. 19

In this short verse, God just simply tells Israel through Isaiah the prophet that if they would repent and obey His Word, He would pour out His blessings and prosperity on the land. God made this great promise to Israel, but they rejected His love and promise. Instead they wanted to go on doing it their way, and as a result they lost every thing and their homeland was destroyed. I pray this doesn't have to happen to us as a nation. If we want national prosperity, we must turn back to the one Who alone can provide this prosperity.

B. There will be national preservation. v. 20

As I look at the news every day here in our land, I am very much prone to believe that we as a nation are hanging over a precipice dangling by a thin thread waiting for the thread to break. I sincerely mean this because of the way our leaders are leading us, and because of wickedness in the hearts and lives of our people. It seems that our very existence as a nation is in jeopardy. Have we sinned away our day of grace like Israel did? I surely pray not, but if there is any hope for the preservation of our land as a prosperous nation, then we must get on our knees and plead with God for repentance and beg Him to forgive our sins and heal our land. If we don't do this, we may soon be found to house the rubble of a blessed past. It would only take one or two dirty bombs detonated by terrorists to bring us to our knees. Let's not wait until this has to happen, but let's pray for God to forgive our sins and preserve our nation. Our children's and our grand children's future hangs in the balance. Will you join me and my family and help us pray for national revival? I beg you to do so.

Conclusion:

Has God made His final appeal to America? I am not sure, but it seems that He is truly trying to get our attention as He did during the days of Isaiah the prophet. What we do with His Divine message to us through His Word and preachers will determine the outcome of our land. We can have a new land with the

healing of God, or we can lose our land to some wicked terrorist group or rogue nation like North Korea or Iran. For too many years we have sat back and fiddled while Rome is burning. Don't you think it is time for us to stop the fiddling and fall on our knees in repentance? Then, once we have gotten right with God, we need to jump to our feet and cry out that enough is enough and take back this country from the perverse homosexuals, the debauched and corrupt national leaders, the left wing liberals in Hollywood and Washington who cram their sins down our throats, and expect us to cower down to them in fear. The time has come for us to take back our land with old fashion sin killing, hell shaking, devil defeating revival and true spiritual awakening. The Satanic army that opposes us is not able to stand against us if we stand in the power and authority of Jesus Christ and His Word.

