

# The Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Introduction and Isaiah 1

2717

# Isaiah (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:4-8**

- The “Holy one of *Israel*” refers to the old sense of the God of ancient *Israel*
- This prophecy could be focused on the state of *Jerusalem* at the time *Israel* joins *Syria* in attacking *Judah* or later during the reign of *Ahaz*
- Regardless the theme is that God has punished and chastised them with the hope that they would repent
- Even though there remains a few in number, they still refuse to repent \*

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:9-10**

- Remember that *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were totally destroyed
- So *Isaiah* is implying that if the people of *Israel* and *Judah* do not repent, more chastisement will be coming until they are totally wiped out \*

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1: 11**

- The theme of “the multitude of your sacrifices” can also be seen in **Amos 5:21-24; Hosea 6:6; and 1 Sam 15:22-23; Ps 50**
- This does not mean that *Isaiah* is telling them to ignore the sacrificial requirement of *Leviticus*
  - The Book of Leviticus is catechetical, intended to teach the people
  - In this instance the people are treating God like a heavenly slot machine which is the pagan concept of sacrifice

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Leviticus** was a catechetical book intended to teach the people
- At the time of *Isaiah* the people were offering sacrifices as if Yahweh was just another pagan god
- Sacrifices do not change the immutable God, they are designed to change the person making the sacrifice
- God is telling them to stop offering sacrifices in that manner because it is a waste of time \*

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:12-13**

- Again, this does not mean that God does not want them to offer incense
- Incense was a symbol of prayer
- In **Ps 141:2** we can see *David's* prayers arising at the hour of incense to God
- In *Daniel's* prayer and the Book of **Revelation** we find incense being offered to God as the prayers of the faithful
- Because incense was expensive it was considered a sacrifice

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- But what good is incense as a sacrifice if the heart of the one offering it is not committed to it?
- If someone owns thousands of fat bulls, it costs him little to offer a few to God
- Jesus makes a point of what a sacrifice is all about when he points to the poor widow who gives a few pennies to the temple treasury (**Mk 12:41-43**)
- Again, God does not need the widow's money, but she needs God

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- We need to sacrifice because offering a sacrifice changes us
- The people in *Isaiah's* time are offering incense as though it was part of a “heavenly slot machine”
- They believed that if they throw stuff at God he would bless them
- So *Isaiah* is telling them that they were wasting their time if that was their understanding of sacrifice \*



# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:14-17**

- The people at that time raised their hands to heaven when they prayed
- As discussed, God told *Saul* through *Samuel* that he desired people to follow His words not offer sacrifices
- God seeks righteousness
- Sacrifice is intended to change the person so that they can learn to “walk in His ways” \*

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:18-20**

- *Isaiah* is saying that if they repent they will become as white as snow
- To “eat the good of the land” means that some people will be left behind (a remnant)
- If, on the other hand, they rebel, they will be taken from the land
- To be “left behind” (in this context) means salvation
- To be removed from the land implies that you are wicked and will be punished

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- This is just the opposite of modern Protestantism “left behind” theology
- Salvation is not to be taken away from what God created, it is the restoration of what He created
- This is the restoration of the Garden of Eden
- At the second coming we will experience our resurrected bodies in the Garden of Eden with God
- This is a theme from the **Book of Revelation** \*

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:21-26**

- In this instance “Israel” is being used in a broad sense, as the Northern Kingdom is beginning to disappear
- *Samaria* is becoming the title for the Northern Kingdom, even though *Israel* continues to appear as well \*

# Isaiah 1 (Cont)

- **Isaiah 1:27-31**

- He uses a framing device
  - Is 1:21 **the faithful city** has become a harlot
  - Is 1:26 they shall become the city of righteousness, **the faithful city** again – restoration
- Again, he contrasts the themes of:
  - Wickedness – destruction, removal, elimination
  - Righteousness – preservation, remaining

# Transition

- **We will continue by looking at Isaiah 2**