

Sermon Notes – September 26, 2021

Introduction to Isaiah

- Isaiah was a spokesman for God about 2,750 years ago, around the year 740 B.C. He served during a time of great change and political upheaval when the nation was overseen by four very different kings. Things were not going well – and it was about to get worse.
- Isaiah's name means, "The Lord is Salvation," and it is like the names Joshua, Elisha, and Jesus.
- Assyria to the east was the main world power, but Babylon was on the rise.
- The nation of Israel was divided in 931 B.C., north vs. south. The southern part where Isaiah prophesied was called "Judah," and the northern part was called "Israel."
- What we call "the book of Isaiah" is a collection of his writings and sermons. It is quoted in the NT more than any other prophet – at least sixty-five times. Only the book of Psalms is quoted more in the NT.
- The term, "The Holy One of Israel" is used in the OT thirty-one times. Twenty-five of these are in Isaiah.
- _____ and _____ are two of the major themes. Judgment is about to come, but Isaiah looks ahead to the coming Messiah and to future restoration.

Today's text: READ Isaiah 1:1-20

Isaiah 1 is a fitting introduction to the book. We meet the major participants: 1) God's sinful-but-religious people; 2) God, the merciful and righteous judge; and 3) God's spokesman, Isaiah the prophet. He has a difficult assignment – look ahead to 6:8-12.

God Is A Righteous Judge: He Sees What Sin Produces (1-9)

- ⇒ Four times in Deuteronomy, God calls "heaven & earth" as _____ of His promises to His people. The scene is like a courtroom with the accused, the Judge, & witnesses.
- ⇒ God's people are making their _____ look smart (3).

A Man Sent From God Named Isaiah
Isaiah 1:1-31
Pastor Jay Mosser

- ⇒ Rebellion against God does not produce good & lasting fruit (5-9). The picture is of festering wounds, national disaster, and utter desolation.
- ⇒ This text addresses a nation, but the same pattern plays out on the individual level. Rebellion against God does not bear _____.

God Hates Meaningless Worship (10-15)

- ⇒ The references to Sodom & Gomorrah (9,10) are powerful. These cities are _____ for blatant sin, and the people of Isaiah's day would have proudly said, "We're not as bad as that." God sees otherwise.
- ⇒ Look carefully at the question in verse 12: "Whose idea was this pattern of worship?" How would God have answered that?
- ⇒ The people of Judah & Jerusalem were meticulous keepers of _____ rules, but their hearts were far from God. Rather than fighting against sin and asking God for His mercy and help, they were shamelessly giving in.

God Pleads With His People To Repent And Return To Him (16-20)

- ⇒ This section contains one of the most famous calls to repentance in all of Scripture. In staccato-like form, God describes what true repentance looks like in a person and in a nation, beginning with a _____. Cf. Ps 51.
- ⇒ "Let us reason together" is not a call to _____ with God or meet Him in the middle; it is an appeal to accept God's verdict and turn to Him.
- ⇒ The promise? True cleansing from the _____ of sin! TV commercials are full of promises of an even better laundry detergent. We long for good cleaning for our toughest stains, but it takes more than Tide to cleanse us from sin! The Apostle John would one day say, "...the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

Responding to God's Word (1:21-31)

- ⇒ "If you are willing and obedient..." (19), then "I will restore..." (26) – God's promise is still good today! Will you come to Him?
- ⇒ Do you see the gospel? Think of the courtroom setting. We stand before God the righteous Judge, accused of rebellion and sin. The verdict is sure. How must we plead? "*Guilty, vile, and helpless, we; spotless Lamb of God was He.*" We, the guilty who trust God's provision of a Savior, are covered by the righteousness of Another. "*Full atonement, can it be? Hallelujah! What a Savior!*" ... "*For God the Just is satisfied to look on Him and pardon me.*"

Community Group Notes

Getting Started

Community Groups are back! How good to be together in this setting again. If you haven't done so yet, take time to catch up on what's happened in your lives over the summer. Meet the new people in your group! Share an update about your kids, your goldfish, or your summer adventures.

Talking It Through

1. Review the sermon from Sunday: READ Isaiah 1:1-20 and remember the main points from Sunday. In summary form, what was this week's sermon about?
2. Think for a few minutes about Isaiah as a spokesman for God during times of great upheaval and change. Did you hear anything about Isaiah (the person) that you found remarkable? What did you hear Sunday in the introduction to Isaiah that sounds a bit like OUR generation?
3. We saw on Sunday that Isaiah 1 presents itself kind of like a courtroom setting. What specific parts of the text point us in this direction? How would you feel if YOU were the "accused" and God was the judge? (Think about both justice and mercy!) What do you think of the accused in this text?
4. One of the major features of the "indictment" is the tendency of people to use organized religion as a "cover" for sinful actions and a rebellious heart. Why do you think we're like that? And another big deal – What is the difference between a sinful person who hides behind religion, and a person who struggles against sin and approaches God with genuine faith in Christ?

5. We saw on Sunday that God hates meaningless (or hypocritical) worship. Are we ever guilty of the same thing? What can we do to keep from committing this same sin?

Thinking Deeper & Taking It Home

READ the texts below & briefly comment on how they support Isaiah 1:

- Isaiah 55:6-7
- James 4:6-10
- I Peter 5:6-11

Time to PRAY

(Or do this at the beginning of your group time)

Take time to share prayer requests that relate to the people in your group, and then pray for those needs. Here's a place to list specific prayer needs:

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Worship Next Sunday: October 3, 2021

"Why We Embrace Hope"

(Isaiah 2:1-22) Pastor Jay Mosser