

**The Courtroom of Heaven  
or  
God's Controversy with Israel**

**Isaiah 1:2-9**

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Intro - Chapters 1-5 form the first section of this book.

Alec Motyer refers to the first five chapters as the preface to Isaiah - where we find -

The Diagnosis and Prognosis of Judah's problems.

We do not know the exact context of these chapters and therefore that is unimportant.

As Motyer notes -

Their significance does not arise from their historical setting but from their searching exposure of Sin and its consequences in the people of God.

In chapter one we have the state of their sin in every aspect of society.

- 1 - Nationally - verses 2-9
- 2 - Religiously - verses 10-20
- 3 - Politically - verses 21-23
- 4 - The Lord's Response - 24-31 (In Judgment and Salvation)

**Intro to 1:2-9**

In these verses we have the imagery of the court of law.

God himself is the one engaged in the prosecution.

Israel is on trial and being examined thoroughly. Weighed in the balance and found wanting.

We will also see the imagery of The Hospital Ward.

And the condition of the nation as a whole.

1 - The Witnesses Called - and the reason they should pay attention.

Isa 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken,

Who are the witnesses?

Answer - All Creation! Heaven and Earth.

Why should they give heed to the evidence?

Answer - Because God is the one giving testimony.

Motyer -

Here the heavens and earth are called in to underline the dignity of the voice which commands the attention of all creation

**for the LORD hath spoken,**

It is the "Thus Saith the Lord" that matters!

Do we give ear this morning?

Do we hear the voice of God in his word?

Or are we deaf to his voice and words?

If we do hear we can rejoice in the words of the Lord Jesus -

Mat 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

Witnesses remind us of the day of judgment -

Every idle word etc.

## 2 - The Indictment (Charge)

I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

Isa 1:3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

It is two-fold

I - The Rebellion (of children)

II - Ignorance of their God

These Rebels are biting the hand that feeds them.

Rebellion is always wicked - it is especially evil when it is perpetrated by children who have been loved.

Also -

Their ignorance is a wilful ignorance. (to borrow the words of Peter)

We will not have this God to reign over us!

Consider -

Animals do not treat their parents wickedly as often as humans do their parents and especially as humans treat their God.

### 3 - The Root of the Problem Diagnosed

So, what is the root of the problem?

**Isa 1:4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters:**

Sin, Iniquity and Corruption is at the Root of the Problem.

Four nouns describe Privilege

Four Adjectives describe the Perversion of such privilege.

Note -

I - It is a nation of sinners.

Does this not speak to our nation now? What sin, as a nation, are we not guilty of?

II - A People laden with iniquity

And yet they were unaware of it - in contrast, Christian in Pilgrims Progress. (those who remained in the city of destruction had the same weight but did not know it)

Are you aware of the weight of your sin? - Thank God if you are!

David - my sin is ever before me.

How heavy is sin? Sin is so heavy that it will sink us all the way to hell.

III - A Seed of Evildoers

Now the prophet goes inward - right into their very nature.

They were by nature - children of wrath.

That's what we were! But glory to God for his grace.

IV - Children that are corrupters

Their relationship to God only served to exacerbate the guilt of their sin.

#### 4 - The Consequence (4b)

they have forsaken the LORD,

they have provoked **the Holy One of Israel** unto anger, (comp. Isa 6) 30 times in scripture  
25 of them in Isaiah

they are gone away backward.

Consider - The reason we sin is because we are sinners by nature (Eph 2)

Illus - someone might say, when they have done something wrong, 'Oh what got into me'

Ans - Nothing got into you - Sin came out of you!

#### 5 - The Depth of the Problem Described

Isa 1:5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Isa 1:6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

Note - The imagery now moves from the courtroom to the hospital ward.

The sickness is complete.

They are beyond hope in themselves.

Even punishment is pointless!

## 6 - The Breadth of such Depravity

Isa 1:7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

Isa 1:8 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.

Now the imagery is political \ national \ social

They are nationally \ universally corrupt and hopeless.

Alec Motyer -

None of the Kings under whom Isaiah ministered were fools politically, economically or militarily. It is not, however, these factors which make for National well-being or security. For all their worldly wisdom, the country sickened unto death under them.

## 7 - The Only Comfort, Consolation and Hope

Isa 1:9 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.

Their hope is not internal - but external.

Note - the problem is so radical that only the Almighty can help and intervene!

And our hope is not in ourselves but in him alone!

Isa 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

The Lord bless His Word to our souls this day.

Amen.