

ISAIAH 5:20-24

A CALL TO REPENTANCE, COMMITMENT & PRAYER
EBC - May 13, 2012

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Prophet of Isaiah - Between the years 740-700 B.C., Isaiah the son Amoz - served as a Prophet of God to Judah and Jerusalem.
2. Hear & Consider the Opening Words of Isaiah
 - a. **Isa 1:2-3** - Lord speaks of the sinfulness of Judah's rebellion
 - b. **Isa 1:5-6** - Lord describes Judah's condition
 - c. **Isa 1:18-20** - Lord graciously prescribes the remedy & soberly warns of the alternative
3. Couple of Matters to Remember & Understand
 - a. We must not lose sight of the fact that Isaiah was a prophet to God's covenant people - Israel
 - 1) God's relationship with Israel was singular - Unlike any other relationship with any other nation including the USA
 - 2) We are not Israel
 - 3) The Old Covenant with Israel has been replaced with a new & better covenant (Heb 12 speaks)

Hebrews 8:13 (ESV) — ¹³ In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

- b. Should remember
 - 1) All Scripture is profitable - **Romans 15:4 - For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.**
 - 2) God deals with sin consistently - **Psalm 9:17 (AV) — ¹⁷ The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.**
4. As We Read Isaiah's Description of Judah
 - a. Sounds much like our day & nation **Isa 1:21-23**
 - b. Early judgements resembles the plight of America **Isa 3:1-9**
 - c. 6 WOES of Isa 5 - remind us of 7 woes of Matthew 23 & should be heeded
 - 1) **vs 8 - WOE to those who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land.**
 - 2) **vs 11 - WOE to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them!**
 - 3) **vs 18 - WOE to those who draw iniquity with cords of falsehood, who draw sin as with cart ropes,**
 - 4) **vs 20 - WOE to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!**
 - 5) **vs 21 - WOE to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!**
 - 6) **vs 22-23 - WOE to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink, which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!**

5. Two Points I'm Drawn To

- a. FIRST - Reality that men are so familiar & blinded with sin - they fail to distinguish the difference between
 - 1) Dark & Light
 - 2) Arrogance & Wisdom
 - 3) Sin & Righteousness

HOW RELEVANT THIS IS TO US - OUR DAY

- b. SECOND - That the sins listed are BUT symptoms - problem is rejection of God's word & authority - thus God Himself

B. CRISIS IN OUR NATION

1. This Past Week - Family Came Under Assault Once Again.

- a. On Wednesday - President Obama endorsed same-sex marriages
- b. President said,

At a certain point, I've just concluded that for me personally, it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married,

- c. Although the President's words were personal - having no legal ramifications - as the figurehead of our nation - his words have great moral & social impact

2. Al Mohler (President of Southern Seminary in Louisville KY) Responded

His [i.e., President's] call for the legalization of same-sex marriage yesterday is an historic and tragic milestone. An incumbent President of the United States has now called for a transformation of civilization's central institution . . . A conversation about "homosexual marriage" is only possible if the concept of marriage is completely redefined and severed from its historic roots and organic meaning.

- a. In an earlier blog - Thursday, January 15, 2004 - Mohler wrote

A conversation about "homosexual marriage" is only possible if the concept of marriage is completely redefined and severed from its historic roots and organic meaning . . . Civilization requires the regulation of human sexuality and relationships. No society—ancient or modern—has survived by advocating a laissez faire approach to sex and sexual relationships.

- b. In that blog Mohler quotes Pitirim Sorokin, the founder of sociology at Harvard University, who said
 - 1) Weakening of marriage was a first sign of civilizational collapse
 - 2) AND that civilization requires men to take responsibility for their offspring
 - 3) AND once individuals--especially males--are freed for sexual behavior outside of marriage, civilizational collapse becomes an inevitability.
 - 4) The weakening of marriage--even on heterosexual terms--has already brought a harvest of disaster to mothers and children abandoned in the name of sexual liberation.

3. Let's Be Clear

- a. Marriage is not just an institution of man
 - 1) It is a God-ordained institution
 - 2) Designed for the happiness & well-being of people
 - 3) Necessary for the dignity & survival of a any society
 - b. President's endorsement of homosexual marriage
 - 1) Rejection of what God has ordained
 - 2) AND should be enthusiastically & unequivocally rejected
 - c. Any nation which rejects God's laws will perish
4. But Much More Has Been Happening - Matters Which Reveal the Collapse of Our Nation & the Relevancy of Isaiah to Our Situation
- a. Federal Judge Michael Urbanski - suggested the solution to a suit concerning displaying the 10 Commandments in a High School in Virginia was to cut off the 1st four.
 - 1) Judge said

If indeed this issue is not about God, why wouldn't it make sense for Giles County to say, 'Let's go back and just post the bottom six? But if it's really about God, then they wouldn't be willing to do that.

- 2) Reasoning is - 1st 4 commandments are religious & the last 6 commandments are secular
- b. Dan Savage - who verbally assaulted High School Christians Students at a conference who were expecting him to talk about bullying
 - 1) Instead he went on a rant about birth control, sex, and the Bible.
 - 2) In part he said

We can learn to ignore the \$%&% in the Bible about gay people — the same way we have learned to ignore the *%^*!@ in the Bible about shellfish, about slavery, about dinner, about farming, about menstration about virginity . . . We ignore *#!&\$ in the Bible about all sorts of things.*

- c. Which brings us back to Isa & the point
 - 1) Behind these matters is God - the word of God
 - 2) All of these people - President - Judge - Savage - ALL REJECT AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD
 - 3) **SEE ISAIAH 5:24**

5. Real Issue

- a. Early article in paper was about Family

In a recent survey, LifeWay researchers solicited responses as to the "Top 10 Issues Facing Today's Family." More than 2,000 people from around the country were part of this project. What are these top 10 issues facing today's family? Here are the results:

*Anti-Christian culture
Divorce
Busyness
Absent father figure
Lack of discipline*

*Financial pressures
Lack of communication
Negative media influences
Balance of work and family
Materialism*

- b. I wrote

This is a practical list which includes genuine concerns for most families in Wayne County, however, it is too general and blame shifting in nature. If you have a sore shoulder and go to the doctor it is understood that the soreness is not the problem but a symptom . . . In similar fashion, I would suggest the top ten list of issues facing the family does not identify the problem, but symptoms. Is it the fault of culture or media that Christian marriages and homes are failing? . . . A foundational problem is ignorance and rejection of Biblical teaching concerning marriage and the family. As Yahweh said through the prophet Hosea, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." (4:6) The solution is to return to the Biblical foundation for marriage, home and family . . . What is missing is understanding and commitment to the Biblical instruction concerning the family. . . Rather than blaming symptoms for our marriage and family troubles, let us seek to rediscover the biblical teaching on marriage and the family and commit ourselves to live by these standards.

- c. Bottom line - we can give sociological reasons BUT at the bottom IS rejection of God's word
- d. In an address delivered by the late Dr. Schaeffer in 1982 at the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Fort Lauderdale, Florida he said,

Christians, in the last 80 years or so, have only been seeing things as bits and pieces which have gradually begun to trouble them and others, instead of understanding that they are the natural outcome of a change from a Christian World View to a Humanistic one; things such as overpermissiveness, pornography, the problem of the public schools, the breakdown of the family, abortion, infanticide (the killing of newborn babies), increased emphasis upon the euthanasia of the old and many, many other things. All of these things and many more are only the results. We may

be troubled with the individual thing, but in reality we are missing the whole thing if we do not see each of these things and many more as only symptoms of the deeper problem . . . I want to say to you, those of you who are Christians or even if you are not a Christian and you are troubled about the direction that our society is going in, that we must not concentrate merely on the bits and pieces. But we must understand that all of these dilemmas come on the basis of moving from the Judeo-Christian world view -- that the final reality is an infinite creator God . . .

6. Problem Now & In Isaiah's Day Is

- a. Rejection of God's word - of the authority of God
- b. Men set their own standards - dismissed God's law - become upset when pointed out
- c. Such dismissal has & will >> destruction of a nation - church - family - individual

C. APPLICATION

1. Such National Conditions SPEAK LOUDLY ABOUT CONDITION OF CHURCH & CHRISTIANS - Salt & Light

2. What Will You Do? What Can You Do?

- a. Joshua said - **Joshua 24:15** **And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**
- b. Paul avowed to press on - **Philippians 3:8** **⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ . . . ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**
- c. Each of us needs to consider our belief in and commitment to the Word of God

3. So What Should We Do?

- a. Isaiah 40-66 - contain many Gospel promises & invitations
 - 1) **40** - Behold Your God
 - 2) **41** - Lord promises deliverance to those who in faith call upon Him
 - 3) **42** - About the Lord's Chosen Servant who will not break a bruised reed or extinguish a flickering candle . . .

ALL OF THESE TO INVITE & ENCOURAGE US

b. So what to do? - three things

- 1) REPENT - **Isaiah 6:5** - **⁵ And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"**
- 2) COMMIT - **Isaiah 6:8** - **⁸ And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."**
- 3) PRAY SEE Isa 64