

**FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**

**July 18, 2010**

**God's Complaint Against His People**

**Focal Passage:**

**Isaiah 1**

Cross References: 2 Peter 2:4-12

**Central Idea:** God complained that His people had rebelled against Him and would be punished, but offered hope for reconciliation if they would repent.

**Lesson Idea:** We should examine our lives and worship to make sure we are not displeasing to God in any way. We should repent of any rebellion we have against Him.

**Background:** Isaiah wrote and prophesied to Judah before, during and after the destruction of the northern tribes of Israel in 722 BC by the Assyrians. Vs 1 says that he ministered during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

Isaiah comes to realize the seriousness of sin, especially the sins of pride and unbelief. Sin is rebellion against God and carries drastic consequences to all people and to the land. God used Isaiah to warn of impending judgment on God's people for their sins.

But Isaiah also shares a strong message of hope for forgiveness and restoration. That forgiveness would be grounded ultimately in God's "suffering Servant" (see Isaiah 52:13-53:12). He will save the remnant of faithful Israel but will also "fulfill Israel's destiny of taking light to the nations (42:6; 49:6; 52:14-15)." (*Expositors*)

**Bible in a Year Daily Readings**

**July 11-18, 2010**

Jul 11 Ecclesiastes 5 - 8  
Jul 12 Ecclesiastes 9 - 12  
Jul 13 Song of Songs 1 - 4  
Jul 14 Song of Songs 5 - 8  
Jul 15 Isaiah 1 - 3  
Jul 16 Isaiah 4 - 8  
Jul 17 Isaiah 9 - 11  
Jul 18 Isaiah 12 - 14

**Highlights of the Week:**

Eccl 5-12: Seeking the meaning of life

*Eccl 12:13 Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man.*

*14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.*

Song of Songs: Love poems which celebrate marriage. Some see them also as allegorical to Israel's relationship with God in the Old Testament and Jesus' relationship with the Church as His bride.

Isaiah 1: God's Charge against His People

Isaiah 5: Condemnation of Judah's sin

Isaiah 6: Vision of God's Holiness

Isaiah 7: The sign of Immanuel  
Isaiah 9: "For to us a child is born"  
Isaiah 11: Kingdom of the Messiah

**Isaiah 1:1-9**

**The Rebellion of God's People**

1 *The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.*

2 *Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the LORD has spoken:*

*"I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me.*

3 *The ox knows his master,  
the donkey his owner's manger,  
but Israel does not know,  
my people do not understand."*

4 *Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers,  
children given to corruption!  
They have forsaken the LORD;  
they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.*

5 *Why should you be beaten anymore?  
Why do you persist in rebellion?  
Your whole head is injured,  
your whole heart afflicted.*

6 *From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness-- only wounds and welts  
and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil.*

7 *Your country is desolate,  
your cities burned with fire;  
your fields are being stripped by foreigners right before you, laid waste as when overthrown by strangers.*

8 *The Daughter of Zion is left  
like a shelter in a vineyard,  
like a hut in a field of melons,  
like a city under siege.*

9 *Unless the LORD Almighty  
had left us some survivors,  
we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.*

**DISCUSSION:**

- In vs 2 what is the nature of the relationship God claims to have with His people?
- What does vs 3 emphasize about the nature of Israel's rebellion?
- How does ignorance influence rebellion today?
- Explain the phrases in vs 4 that God uses to describe His people.
- How can these phrases describe God's people of today?
- According to vs 5-8 what is the outcome of rebellion against God?
- What does vs 9 teach about God's mercy?

**Isaiah 1:10-17**

**The Rejection of Empty Worship**

10 *Hear the word of the LORD,*

*you rulers of Sodom;  
listen to the law of our God,  
you people of Gomorrah!*

11 *"The multitude of your sacrifices-- what are they to me?" says the LORD.*

*"I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals;  
I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.*

12 *When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you,  
this trampling of my courts?*

13 *Stop bringing meaningless offerings!*

*Your incense is detestable to me.*

*New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations--*

*I cannot bear your evil assemblies.*

14 *Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates.*

*They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.*

15 *When you spread out your hands in prayer,*

*I will hide my eyes from you;*

*even if you offer many prayers,*

*I will not listen.*

*Your hands are full of blood;*

16 *wash and make yourselves clean.*

*Take your evil deeds out of my sight!*

*Stop doing wrong,*

17 *learn to do right!*

*Seek justice,*

*encourage the oppressed.*

*Defend the cause of the fatherless,*

*plead the case of the widow.*

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- Why does the LORD refer to His people as "Sodom" and "Gomorrah?" (see Genesis 13:13; 18-19; 2 Peter 2:6-9)
- If God prescribed the sacrificial system, why does He seem disgusted by it in this passage?
- What would God say about our times of worship together?
- What would God say about your attitude in worship?
- In vs 15 why did God say He would not listen to their prayers?
- What eight commands does God give His people in v 16-17?
- How would those commands apply to your life today?

#### **Isaiah 1:18-20** **The Reasoning Together**

18 *"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD.*

*"Though your sins are like scarlet,*

*they shall be as white as snow;*

*though they are red as crimson,*

*they shall be like wool.*

19 *If you are willing and obedient,  
you will eat the best from the land;*  
20 *but if you resist and rebel,  
you will be devoured by the sword."*  
*For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

**DISCUSSION:**

- How amazing is it that even though God was the One who was offended, He is also the One who graciously calls His people to 'reason together' with Him?
- What does it mean to "reason together?"
- What does God promise about their sins?
- What conditions does God require of His people in vs 19 and what reward does He promise?
- According to vs 20 what awaits those who continue to "resist and rebel?"
- What does the phrase "For the mouth of the LORD has spoken" emphasize?

**Isaiah 1:21-31**  
**The Results**

21 *See how the faithful city  
has become a harlot!*  
*She once was full of justice;  
righteousness used to dwell in her-- but now murderers!*  
22 *Your silver has become dross,  
your choice wine is diluted with water.*  
23 *Your rulers are rebels,  
companions of thieves;  
they all love bribes  
and chase after gifts.*  
*They do not defend the cause of the fatherless;  
the widow's case does not come before them.*  
24 *Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares:*  
*"Ah, I will get relief from my foes  
and avenge myself on my enemies.*  
25 *I will turn my hand against you;*  
*I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities.*  
26 *I will restore your judges as in days of old, your counselors as at the beginning.*  
*Afterward you will be called  
the City of Righteousness,  
the Faithful City."*  
27 *Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness.*  
28 *But rebels and sinners will both be broken, and those who forsake the LORD will perish.*  
29 *"You will be ashamed because of the sacred oaks in which you have delighted;  
you will be disgraced because of the gardens that you have chosen.*  
30 *You will be like an oak with fading leaves,  
like a garden without water.*  
31 *The mighty man will become tinder and his work a spark;*

*both will burn together,  
with no one to quench the fire."*

**DISCUSSION:**

- What do v 21-23 say had happened to Jerusalem and the people of Israel because of their rebellion?
- What does the LORD say He will do about their wickedness in v 24-25?
- How will God change things according to v 26-27?
- According to vs 28 what will happen to those who forsake the LORD? Compare this verse with 2 Peter 2:4-12.
- The "sacred oaks" and "gardens" were places that people went to practice idolatry by worshipping false gods. What are some things or places that people turn to instead of God today?
- What do v 30-31 say will happen when people base their lives and allegiance on anything besides God?

**APPLICATION:**

If God called you to "reason together" with Him about your life, what would He say to you?

How would you respond?

What needs to happen in your life for you to be able to be unashamed if He calls you to "reason together" with Him?

**Note:** *The scriptures printed in this lesson come from the New American Standard Bible (NASB)* La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1986.

**CALL TO PRAYER**

Please pray for these immediate needs in our church:

- Pray for the Nominating Ministry Team as they seek teachers and leaders for the coming church year. Ask the Lord to reveal where He wants you to serve this year and let the office know how God calls you.
- Pray for the finances of our church. As people have traveled this summer, our offerings have been lower. Please pray that we will receive what is needed to fulfill our God-given ministry and be a faithful steward of His resources.
- Pray for the mission team that will head to Cheyenne, Wyoming for the Frontier Days Mission from July 23rd-31<sup>st</sup>.