

v21 “When commitment to the Lord goes, the breach of the ‘first table of the Law’ (harlotry), breach of the ‘second table’ (murder) inevitably follows. Godly social values depend on commitment to God” (Motyer 1993: 49).

v24 “Any facile statement that God always hates the sin but loves the sinner needs to be countered by Isaiah’s insistence that those who transgress are *my foes* and *my enemies*. They have made themselves the adversaries of the helpless (23), *therefore* the sovereign Lord holds them as his enemies” (Motyer 1993: 49).

vv25-26 “The very corruption of the rulers fueled the fires of longing for a king who would one day rule in righteousness and peace” (Oswalt 1986: 107-8).

“1:26 is a veritable seed-thought” (Motyer 1993: 50).

vv29-30 “What this means is that it is not possible to forsake the Lord and turn to nothing else. One leaves a commitment to him only for a commitment to other gods. The suggestion that one can abandon God and thus be free is as much a lie today as it was in Eden” (Oswalt 1986: 110).

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Does the image of God as a spurned father have any practical relevance for you?

If God were to write a chapter about your life, would he speak of an external façade devoid of true spirituality?

What are the characteristics of those whom restores?

SOURCES CITED

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J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 1993.
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ISAIAH 1: A GUILTY NATION

OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 1-12

- I. Judah is Guilty and Will Be Judged (1:1-5:30)
 - A. **A Guilty Nation Will Be Destroyed (1:1-31)**
 - B. Jerusalem Will One Day Be a Light to the Nations (2:1-5)
 - C. The Judgment on Judah Will Be Devastating (2:6-4:1)
 - D. Judah Will Be Purified and Protected (4:2-6)
 - E. Judah Has Proven Worthless and Will Be Exiled (5:1-30)
- II. Isaiah is Commissioned by a Holy God to Harden Hearts (6:1-13)
 - A. God is Absolutely Holy (6:1-4)
 - B. Isaiah’s Sin Is Recognized and Removed (6:5-7)
 - C. Isaiah Is Sent to Preach to Bring About the Exile (6:8-13)
- III. A Great Davidic Ruler Will Arise from the Exile (7:1-12:6)
 - A. Ahaz’s Unbelief Brings Assyria (7:1-8:10)
 - B. Faith through the Darkness Will See a Righteous Ruler on David’s Throne (8:11-9:7)
 - C. The Northern Kingdom Will Be Judged (9:8-10:4)
 - D. Assyria is God’s Tool of Judgment (10:5-34)
 - E. The Root of Jesse Will Bring the Righteous Kingdom and Restore the Remnant to It (11:1-12:6)

OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 1

- I. The Lord’s declaration of Israel’s guilt (1-9)
- II. The Lord’s case against Israel (10-20)
- III. The Lord’s restoration of Israel (21-27)
- IV. The Lord’s judgment of the unrepentant (28-31)

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH

1. All of Isaiah's ministry was to the southern kingdom (1:1), though at least one prophecy was directed to the northern kingdom (28:1-6).
2. The meaning of Isaiah's name is appropriate to his message, "The Lord is salvation."
3. Isaiah was married and had two children, both of whom figure in his prophetic work (7:3; 8:3).
4. His ministry began no later than the year of Uzziah's death in 740 BC, and ended not earlier than the death of Sennacherib in 681 BC (6:1; 37:38).
5. According to *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*, Isaiah was placed between two boards and sawn in two by King Manasseh. This may have been referenced by the writer of Hebrews (11:37).
6. "For sheer grandeur and majesty probably no book in the Hebrew Bible can be compared with Isaiah" (Longman and Dillard 2006: 301).

KEY VERSES OF THE BOOK

Isaiah 1:27-28 — Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness. But rebels and sinners will both be broken, and those who forsake the LORD will perish.

NOTES

Most of the major themes in the book of Isaiah are introduced in this chapter, including guilt, judgment, hope, future rulers, and the restoration of Zion.

vv2-3 "Isaiah fortifies his depiction of the unnatural character of sin by reference to the animals. Neither the ox nor the ass was considered very intelligent in the ancient Near East yet even these animals knew who cared for them. Israel could surely do better than they. But no, Israel does not know that much" (Oswalt 1986: 86).

vv7-9 "If it were possible for us to find happiness and satisfaction in the creation, and if that happiness prevented us from realizing that ultimate happiness is to be found in God alone, that would not be a good thing. We would not call a blessing that which gave short-term pleasure while depriving us of an eternal relation with our Maker. On the contrary, when our attempts to find ultimate joy in the temporal continue to meet with disaster and frustration, and when that disaster and frustration drive us to the ultimate Source of joy, the curse is not an evil but a good one" (Oswalt 1986: 91).

vv10-20 "At any rate, the language, like that of vv. 4-9, is intensely bitter. Isaiah's contempt for hypocritical cult is boundless. Like the other prophetic announcements on the subject, his words are laden with sarcasm" (Oswalt 1986: 94).

v10 "Isaiah is saying that the instruction which God gave Moses did not have chiefly to do with cultic prescription and legalistic righteousness. Rather, God's *tora* has to do with character and attitudes and relationships, all of which may be symbolized in the ceremonies but which are not to be replaced by the ceremonies" (Oswalt 1986: 96).

v18 "Snow and wool exemplify what is naturally white. The Lord's promise is not only to deal with the stain of sin but with the nature from which it springs" (Motyer 1993: 48).