

## Isaiah Lesson – 1: Crisis of Identity

### Memory Verse

**Isaiah 1:18** (NKJV) “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”

### Introduction

**Isaiah** (i-za'-yah) = Salvation of the LORD;

**Amoz** (a'-moz) = Strong; strength; brass; (root = to be firm; strong).

This time frame directs us to the accounts of 2 Kings 15–20 and 2 Chronicles 26–32.

Isaiah's ministry extended about 47 years, from 760 to 713 b.c.

Tradition (*Talmud*) represents him as having been sawn asunder by Manasseh for having said that he had seen Jehovah. [Hebrews 11:37].

Isaiah, was a contemporary of Jonah, Amos, Hosea, in Israel, but younger than they; and of Micah, in Judah.

He was married and his wife is called a *prophetess* [Isa 8:3].

- The oldest copy of Isaiah came from the Dead Sea Scrolls and is dated somewhere between BC 300 – 150. It contained the entire book with minor sections damaged. It is virtually identical to the modern versions. This is amazing because one of the most exact and specific prophecies identifying Jesus as Messiah is found in Isaiah 53. We know with certainty this was written before the event happened.
- Isaiah recorded God's message to Cyrus king of Persia before Cyrus was born and before Persia became a great power (Isaiah 44:28, 45:1-6).
- Isaiah presents oracles against eleven nations: Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Syria, Ethiopia, Egypt, Edom, Arabia, Judah, Tyre.
- Most of Isaiah's prophecies are written as poetry.
- Isaiah's prophecies and oracles frequently express hope in the coming Messiah and the message he will bring. Isaiah foretold the suffering and sacrifice of Christ, and his victory (Isaiah 53).
- Isaiah is quoted more than fifty times in the New Testament.
- Isaiah 66 chapters (25,608 words), Jeremiah 52 Chapters (33,002 words)

### Hear, O Heavens!

**Isaiah 1:1–2** (NKJV) *The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.* <sup>2</sup> **Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth!**

*For the Lord has spoken: “I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me;*

**Deuteronomy 30:19** *I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;*

**Deuteronomy 31:28** (NKJV) *Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them.*

**Micah 1:2** (ESV) *Hear, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it, and let the Lord God be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.*

**Isaiah 1:3–9** *The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider.”* <sup>4</sup> *Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward.* <sup>5</sup> *Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints.* <sup>6</sup> *From the sole of the foot even to the head, There is no soundness in it, But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.* <sup>7</sup> *Your country is desolate, Your cities are burned with fire; Strangers devour your land in your presence; And it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.* <sup>8</sup> *So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, As a hut in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city.* <sup>9</sup> *Unless the Lord of hosts Had left to us a very small remnant, We would have become like Sodom, We would have been made like Gomorrah.*

### Rotten Ritualism

**Isaiah 1:10–14** (NKJV) *Hear the word of the Lord, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the law of our God, You people of Gomorrah:* <sup>11</sup> *“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?” Says the Lord. “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats.* <sup>12</sup> *“When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts? <sup>13</sup> Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies— I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. <sup>14</sup> Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them.*

**Amos 5:21–22** (ESV) *“I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings*

and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them.

**Amos 5:24** (ESV) *But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

**Isaiah 1:15-17** *When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.<sup>16</sup> “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,<sup>17</sup> Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.*

**Psalm 66:18** (NKJV) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.*

**Matthew 23:14** (NKJV) *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.*

**Isaiah 58:4** (NKJV) *Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high.*

**Matthew 23:23-26** (NKJV) *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.<sup>24</sup> Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!<sup>25</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.<sup>26</sup> Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.*

### The Argument of Forgiveness

**Isaiah 1:18** (NKJV) *“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.*

(NRSV) says *“Come now, let us argue it out”*

Why sins as scarlet? **Isaiah 1:15** *Your hands are full of blood.*

White, by contrast, is the color of purity,

**Revelation 3:18** (NKJV) *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed;*

**Isaiah 44:22** (NKJV) *I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”*

### To Eat or Be Eaten

**Isaiah 1:19-31** *If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land;<sup>20</sup> But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword”; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.<sup>21</sup> How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.<sup>22</sup> Your silver has become dross, Your wine mixed with water.<sup>23</sup> Your princes are rebellious, And companions of thieves; Everyone loves bribes, And follows after rewards. They do not defend the fatherless, Nor does the cause of the widow come before them.<sup>24</sup> Therefore the Lord says, The Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, “Ah, I will rid Myself of My adversaries, And take vengeance on My enemies. I will turn My hand against you, And thoroughly purge away your dross, And take away all your alloy.<sup>26</sup> I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.” Zion shall be redeemed with justice, And her penitents with righteousness. The destruction of transgressors and of sinners shall be together, And those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed. For they shall be ashamed of the terebinth trees Which you have desired; And you shall be embarrassed because of the gardens Which you have chosen. For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades, And as a garden that has no water.<sup>31</sup> The strong shall be as tinder, And the work of it as a spark; Both will burn together, And no one shall quench them.*

### Ominous Love Song

**Isaiah 5:1-7** (NKJV) *Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill.<sup>2</sup> He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes.<sup>3</sup> “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.<sup>4</sup> What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes?<sup>5</sup> And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.<sup>6</sup> I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it.”<sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.*