

*“Conviction of sin is the Holy Spirit being kind to us by confronting us with the light we don't want to see and the truth we're afraid to admit and the guilt we prefer to ignore. Conviction of sin is the severe love of God overruling our compulsive dis-honesty, our willful blindness, our favorite excuses. Conviction of sin is the violent sweetness of God opposing the sins lying comfortably undisturbed in our lives. Conviction of sin is the merciful God declaring war on the false peace we settle for.... Conviction of sin, with the forgiveness of Jesus pouring over our wounds, is life.”* Ray Ortlund, Jr.

C. The Promise of God (1:26b-27)

#### **FOCUS TEXT - Isaiah 1:9**

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

#### **LIVE THE STORY**

*We must not only love the Gospel Story, we must begin to live the Gospel Story, indeed, to have the Central Character live in us.*

- Why might we say that Isaiah was a man ahead of his times?
- What were the economic conditions like at the beginning of Isaiah's ministry? Can you see any similarities to our own?
- How is Isaiah 1:9 a statement of God's mercy? What does it say of Israel's ability to save themselves? And, if that is true of Israel, what does it say of our ability to save ourselves?
- Recall the story of the daughter of the former “extremely pro-communist” who became anti-communist. Why did hearing screams change him? What did Jerry mean when he said, “God heard screams” in Israel? (see 1:15c-17)
- How had Israel failed to see the purpose of sacrifices in their worship? How did they fail to pursue the purpose of the law?
- What do we see of the heart of God revealed in this chapter?
- Read and discuss the quote by Ray Ortlund, Jr. regarding conviction. How does this description of conviction strike you?

## **Isaiah: The Gospel Foretold God Saves Those Unable to Save Themselves**

Jerry Cisar — January 16, 2011

Text: Isaiah 1

### **Introduction: The Gospel Foretold**

B. *The Vision*

i. 1 Peter 1:10-12

a) Isaiah 29:11

b) Acts 8:27-35

C. *“... during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.”*

- i. 6:1 “In the year that king Uzziah died...”
- ii. 60 years of peace and prosperity

D. Isaiah: “Yahweh Saves”

### **I. The Guilt of Our Rebellion**

A. vs. 2: *Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth!*

i. Deuteronomy 32:1

a) Creation itself is a witness.

b) Creation isn't swayed by a rebellious heart!

- ii. The ox and the donkey, considered stubborn and stupid, are smarter than rebellious people.

#### B. How fallen is fallen man?

- i. 1:9 Implication: *You are as evil as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah! And apart from mercy, the outcome would be the same.*

Mark Webb: “You’re visualizing that God is standing at the door of heaven, and men are thronging to get in the door, and God is saying to various ones, ‘Yes, you may come, but not you, and you, but you, etc.’ The situation is hardly this. Rather, God stands at the door of heaven with His arms outstretched, inviting all to come. Yet all men without exception are running in the opposite direction toward hell as hard as they can go. So God, in election, graciously reaches out and stops this one, and that one, and this one over here, and that one over there, and effectually draws them to Himself by changing their hearts, making them willing to come. Election keeps no one out of heaven who would otherwise have been there, but it keeps a whole multitude of sinners out of hell who otherwise would have been there. Were it not for election, heaven would be an empty place, and hell would be bursting at the seams.... If you perish in hell, blame yourself, as it is entirely your fault. But if you should make it to heaven, credit God, for that is entirely His work! To Him alone belong all praise and glory, for salvation is all of grace, from start to finish.”

## II. The Guilt of Our Religion

A. Even their efforts in God-given worship are sin. (1:11-15)

i. Isaiah 64:6 *“all our righteous acts are like filthy rags...”*

ii. 1:15c-17 Hands full of blood...

B. Does God hear screams?

C. Real religion, true religion, is about love of God and love of neighbor. Man's religion is about love of self.

i. John 16:8

## III. The Grief of God

A. A grieving lament from God for his people.

i. vs. 2 “I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me.”

ii. vs. 4 “Ah, sinful nation...”

iii. The appeal of vs. 5, “Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion?”

iv. vs. 8 “the Daughter of Zion.”

v. vs. 21 “See how the faithful city has become a harlot!”

B. The Appeal of God (1:18-20)

Oswalt: *“If you are disposed to be willing and so obey... If you are disposed to resist and so rebel...”*