

## Isaiah 9:8-10:4: The Lord's Word Against Israel

### Attention

- 1) The LORD sent Isaiah to proclaim His word to Judah in the latter years of the northern kingdom of Israel.
  - a. Though sent to the southern kingdom, Isaiah was also given messages to others nations, including Israel.
  - b. Israel was an opponent of Judah, and God would punish and destroy the northern kingdom for its sin.
- 2) In the passage before us, God addresses the northern kingdom of Israel, sending His word through Isaiah.
  - a. The word that came to them was not a word of comfort, hope, or grace; it was a word of condemnation.
  - b. God's message to them helps us to see sin's effects on a nation and to confront the reality of His judgment.

### **I. What Sin Does to a Nation (9:8-10:4)**

#### ***A. It Deceives (9:8-12)***

- i. Israel was under the condemnation of God's wrath for their sin, but they did not fear His judgment.
  - a) Their pride had deluded them into thinking they could handle any trouble that came upon them.
  - b) In their arrogance they believed they were capable of rebuilding after any calamity.
  - c) God sent His word to the northern kingdom; they knew it, but they scoffed at doomsday preaching.
- ii. Sin deceives with false assurances: "Things aren't as bad as the preacher says; I'm handling things fine."
  - a) Satan doesn't want us to take sin, its consequences, or God's word as seriously as each deserve.
  - b) But sin is serious; time doesn't change sin; you can't outlast God's wrath; it will consume you.
- iii. Ignoring our errors doesn't change them; thinking we are okay while in sin is foolish and arrogant.
  - a) The only solution to sin is true contrition, confession, and consecration to God's will.
  - b) Sin makes us think we are stronger, wiser, and more capable than we really are; it deceives us.

#### ***B. It Disorients (9:13-17)***

- i. Israel's leadership had misled them from the nation's inception; king, priest, and prophet all lied.
  - a) Jeroboam instituted calf worship which no king of Israel even attempted to overthrow.
  - b) The priesthood established by Jeroboam was a violation of God's law; they did not know the LORD.
  - c) Later kings introduced false gods and with them came pagan priests and false prophets.
  - d) The northern kingdom never had faithful leadership, so God promised to destroy both head and tail
- ii. Sin not only deceives us into a false sense of security, it so confuses that we cannot find the right way.
  - a) Once a nation begins heading in the wrong direction, it is hard to turn things around.
  - b) Even the great religious reforms in Judah were never permanent; men persist in pursuing evil.
- iii. We must recognize the fallacy of directing our own lives and of relying on others to guide us spiritually.
  - a) If we cannot direct ourselves and if others cannot be trusted to do so, where can we go for guidance?
  - b) The only trustworthy guide is God; His word is the only compass we can rely on to point north.

#### ***C. It Destroys (9:18-21)***

- i. Israel's wickedness burned like a raging fire, and the fire would eventually consume them.
  - a) The people would be fuel for the fire, and the Lord's wrath would add heat to the blaze.
  - b) Men would turn on each another; they would slash and tear like mad men and never be satisfied.
  - c) Bitter enemies would only find common ground in their common hatred and persecution of another.
- ii. Sin is self-destructive; it sickens the souls of men and creates strife and hatred with self and with others.
  - a) God's law is for our good, always, but sin is contrary to our good, always, without exception.
  - b) Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly; sin and Satan bring only death and pain.
- iii. Unfortunately many never realize the destructiveness of their sin until it is almost too late.
  - a) When sin has destroyed so much in our lives, even repentance may not recover all that was lost.
  - b) Nevertheless, the promise of restoration is our hope; God can restore the joy once lost through sin.

#### ***D. It Deprives (10:1-4)***

- i. Despite God's warnings through His prophets, the people of Israel persisted in their sin.
  - a) Those in authority who should have been a refuge for the poor instead greedily oppressed them.
  - b) They used power for personal gain. denying justice and others' rights and preying on the powerless.
- ii. Israel had not repented despite God's discipline, leaving them to desolation, displacement, and death.
  - a) The wealth and glories stored up by the greedy would be of no benefit in captivity or the grave.
  - b) In emphasizing the complete destitution their sin brought them to, God asked Israel three questions.

## II. What God Asks Sinful People (10:3)

### A. What Will You Do in the Day of Judgment?

- i. Sinful men are full of plans, but there is no plan to deal with the day of God's judgment when it arrives.
  - a) These people planned to rebuild, to lead, to win, and to become rich, but it was all for nothing.
  - b) Wicked men are usually full of plans and confidence, but they will be helpless standing before God.
- ii. There will be no mitigation on Judgment Day, no loophole to exploit, no official to influence, no friends.
  - a) Protests will be pointless on Judgment Day; God's decision will be fair and final. (cf. Mt. 7:21-23)
  - b) There is only one hope on Judgment Day, one plan with any merit at all: the pardon of Jesus Christ.
  - c) But if you do not seek His pardon and fellowship now, it will not be available to you then.

### B. Where Will You Flee in the Day of Judgment?

- i. The Bible describes wicked men pleading for mountains to fall on them to hide them from God's wrath.
  - a) Jonah thought he could run away from the presence of the LORD and his duty, but God found him.
  - b) There is no escaping your appearance on Judgment Day; no one will fail to appear in that court.
- ii. Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, and every soul will give account of himself to God.
  - a) I won't be able to hide behind my parents, my spouse, or my church; I will stand alone.
  - b) I will answer for every deed done in the body, whether good or bad, every idle word I said.
  - c) The only salvation from the wickedness of my past is the pardon of God I find in the present.

### C. Where Will Your Glory Be in the Day of Judgment?

- i. The glory referred to here seems to be all the earthly things that evil men work so hard to obtain.
  - a) Riches, power, fame, pleasure – none of these things will go with the bearer into Judgment.
  - b) Where will all the things we worked so hard for be on that day? Burned up, never to be seen again.
- ii. What has a man accomplished if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?
  - a) The soul is man's most precious possession; its eternal glory is the only glory worth working for.
  - b) Yet even Christians neglect the needs of their soul to satisfy the wants of their temporal bodies.
  - c) How foolish we can be! Where will our glory be on that day? It will be in Christ, or nowhere at all.

### Action

- 1) We must recognize the damage sin *will* cause and the impotence of all human plans for salvation.
  - a. Sin deceives us, it disorients us, it destroys us, and it will deprive us of all that is good, including Heaven.
  - b. The only plan for Judgment Day is the plan given to us by God through His Son, Jesus the Christ.
    - (i) You must believe in Jesus, being convicted by the evidence that He is the Son of God.  
(cf. Jn. 8:24; 10:37-38; 14:6)
    - (ii) You must repent of your sins, mourning the evil you've done and turning away from it toward God.  
(cf. 2Co. 7:9-11; Jas. 4:7-10)
    - (iii) You must be willing to confess your faith in Christ and live openly and boldly submitting to His will.  
(cf. Mt. 10:32-33; Ro. 10:9-10)
    - (iv) You must be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, dying to sin and self and being raised to live for God.  
(cf. Ac. 2:38; Ro. 6:3-4; Co. 2:11-12)
- 2) Will you come to your senses, realize the danger of your sin, and flee to Christ for safety?
