

Character Study: Isaiah
Part 1 – A Prophet in a Rebellious Land
Isaiah 1:1-31

What's happening?

- Isaiah was a prophet of God who served during the reign of four different kings in Judah. He was married with two sons (1:1; 7:3; 8:3).
- Isaiah lived at a time when there was great rebellion occurring in Judah. Chapter 1 breaks down the key issues:

- The people's rebellion was resulting in their land being ruined and destroyed (1:2-9).
- Their sinfulness rendered their acts of worship and prayer unacceptable to God (1:10-15).
- Only those who would turn from their wicked ways would find the Lord's forgiveness and blessing (1:16-20).
- God would purify the land, but it would be through only a small remnant that would turn to Him (1:21-31).

- Isaiah was calling the people of Judah to drastically turn back to God. His audience would be tough and his message would not be popular.

What's God doing?

- > Facing the consequences for their sin, the people tried to please God and find His favor through acts of "worship." Knowing their hypocrisy, God rejected their worship as meaningless.
- > God offered forgiveness and cleansing to those who would acknowledge their sin and turn to Him. He promised: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (1:18).

What's to learn?

→ Jesus referred to the book of Isaiah when He warned people of His day against hypocrisy: "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:8; Is. 29:13). Does hypocrisy ever characterize you? Does your Sunday morning worship experience ever feel "fake" because of the way you lived your previous week? The only path to genuine worship is through confessing and turning from sin.

→ The salvation Isaiah mentioned results in an inward purifying and cleansing. Only through faith in the work of Christ can we experience such a significant change in our hearts (Titus 3:5-8)!