

A A crisis of identity. Isaiah 1:1-9.

- ❖ By the end of Uzziah's reign, God proclaimed something (v. 2-4): Israel had forgotten who their Lord was, and they had lost their identity.
- ❖ As a result of their separation from God, they were suffering serious losses (v. 5-8). However, a remnant still remained faithful (v. 9).
 - What were they doing? Forsaking the Lord; provoking the Holy One; depravity; wickedness and sin; not knowing; not understanding the Lord; rebelling against God.
 - What was going on with them? Physical wounds; a destroyed country; burning cities; sacked by their enemies.
 - What was God doing? Keeping Zion standing; keeping a remnant.

B A form of godliness. Isaiah 1:10-17.

- ❖ How could something that God had ordered become sin (iniquity)?
- ❖ They were offering sacrifices and praying to God with lifted hands, but they were only keeping up appearances. Their hands were bloodstained (v. 16) because they were violent and unfair to the weak (v. 17).
- ❖ Their rites were void of repentance. God considered them sin because they were shallow.
- ❖ The people of God repeated the same mistakes several times (Matthew 23:23-28). We should be aware of repeating the same mistake ourselves.

C An offer of forgiveness. Isaiah 1:18.

- ❖ God wants to turn the blood red on the hands of the Israelites into the white of His purity. He wants to forgive our sins and to purify our hearts.
- ❖ He asks us to just come to Him with the intention of settling accounts with Him (repentance).
- ❖ Our heart changes when we truly accept forgiveness (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Once we acknowledge our need for forgiveness, we're ready to accept everything God has for us.

D An opportunity to choose. Isaiah 1:19-31.

- ❖ God brings a solution, but the choice is ours (Deuteronomy 30:19).
- ❖ No matter how much we've sinned or how far we're from God. God's grace has no limits. He's always willing to forgive us.

E A point of no return. Isaiah 5:1-7.

- ❖ God's forgiveness is boundless, but we might reject it to a point of no return: the sin against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31-32; Hebrews 6:4-6).
- ❖ It's extremely hard to get to the point of not hearing the plea of the Holy Spirit. God's patience is relentless (2 Peter 3:9). His call is unceasing. God will do everything possible to persuade us to accept Him before we reach that point.
- ❖ Our souls can "be laid wasted" (v. 6) only if we stubbornly decide not to listen to Him.