

Isaiah and His Two Big “Eyes!”

We often forget the value of the Old Testament, but Paul reminds us in Romans 15:4 that it is of great value to our perseverance and encouragement. The O.T. prophets give us great insight into what is necessary for a nation to please to, and thus blessed by, God.

Isaiah is a prime example. Besides being the most Messianic of the prophets, Isaiah has two big “eyes” to see the two big “I’s” of Israel’s problems: Idolatry and Immorality. These two have always gone hand in hand when nations leave Jehovah God. Even a cursory reading of Isaiah will clearly reveal both God’s will for nations and, sadly, Israel’s failure to understand and follow the paths to blessings.

In Isaiah chapter five we see a very basic challenge to any family, church culture or nation: deciding what is truly valuable and what is not! He who manages to place value (or lack of it) on the things of life will ultimately determine the direction of that family, church, etc. Exquisitely stated in verses 20-22 is the reality of the value of properly labeling good and evil:

- ²⁰Woe to those who call evil good
and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!
- ²¹Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,
and shrewd in their own sight!
- ²²Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine,
and valiant men in mixing strong drink,
- ²³who acquit the guilty for a bribe,
and deprive the innocent of his right!

In verse 20 the root cause of much of the rampant evil that tore their nation apart was the reversal of what is good and what is bad; what is light and what is darkness. The two big “I’s” of Idolatry and Immorality had been labeled as bad by God, but good by the nations of Israel. Because it was never corrected, Israel (the ten northern tribes) were conquered and taken into captivity by the Assyrian army in 722 B.C. Those tribes never returned and are called, “the lost tribes of Israel” to this day. Ten of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob (renamed “Israel” by God in Genesis 35:10) went into oblivion simply because the people had lost the discernment to recognize and properly label good and bad, darkness and light.

For the 2700 years since then, we see nation after nation going down the same path to perdition for the same reason. *We, as God’s children, must do our best to help others see which things are genuinely good and genuinely bad, then help our nation do the same, lest we suffer the same fate as others.*

-Ray Wallace