

Isaiah' Greatest Prophecy

By

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Isaiah 9:1-7

The headline read: ***Singing the Blues Helps Troubled Students.*** Bruce Smith of the Associated Press wrote, "Troubled teens are getting a new outlook on life by a program that teaches literally that you have to pay your dues if you want to sing the blues."

Blending music with motivation is the concept behind the blues in the schools. "Before the blues I didn't feel like doing anything," said Velvet Ruytz, 14, who was an eighth-grader at DuBose Middle School in Summerville, S. C. "After school, I would just slip by."

Velvet made complete F's" on her report Card before she began singing the blues but afterward she made B's and became a cheerleader.

The idea is simple. Give students a new, interesting activity, but require that they perform as well in their schoolwork as in their music. About 140 children took part. Students have to maintain a "c" average to stay in the program.

The songs speak of the students' own special worries and fears -- teen-age pregnancy, violence and drugs: "***Mother got pregnant 'cause she's on welfare, Waiting, waiting another year. This is called the ballad of the Charleston blues, don't you realize this could happen to you?***"

Singing the blues may help some middle school students cope with their worries, fears and anxiety but for the rest of us "singing the blues" is a catch phrase men say when they go through tribulation.

The headline of the November 28 issue of ***Time*** is ***New Orleans Blues.*** The statement beneath the headline

states: It's worse than you think three months after Katrina, the city still suffers.

Isaiah gave the greatest prophecy when he gave Israel this word... **¹But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make *it* glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.**

**² The people who walk in darkness
Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.**

⁶ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

**⁷ There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
From then on and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9: 1-2, 6 7)**

Isaiah prophesied to a nation deep in sin that had been stricken and afflicted under God's providential hand. In order to understand this ninth chapter of Isaiah you have to read the earlier chapters. We get the sinful condition of Israel in the opening verses of chapter 1:

**² Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth;
For the LORD speaks,
"Sons I have reared and brought up,
But they have revolted against Me.**

³ "An ox knows its owner,

**And a donkey its master's manger,
But Israel does not know,
My people do not understand."**

- 4 Alas, sinful nation,
People weighed down with iniquity,
Offspring of evildoers,
Sons who act corruptly!
They have abandoned the LORD,
They have despised the Holy One of Israel,
They have turned away from Him.**
- 5 Where will you be stricken again,
As you continue in *your* rebellion?
The whole head is sick
And the whole heart is faint.**
- 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head
There is nothing sound in it,
Only bruises, welts and raw wounds,
Not pressed out or bandaged,
Nor softened with oil.**
- 7 Your land is desolate,
Your cities are burned with fire,
Your fields—strangers are devouring them in
your presence;
It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers.**
- 8 The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a
vineyard, Like a watchman's hut in a
cucumber field, like a besieged city.**
- 9 Unless the LORD of hosts
Had left us a few survivors,
We would be like Sodom,
We would be like Gomorrah. Isaiah 1:2-9**

But even as God tells of the sinful condition of Israel and the disasters that he has sent upon them he offers to reason with them to forsake their sin and return to him. In verses 18-20 he says, **"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though**

**your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white
as snow; Though they are red like crimson,
They will be like wool.**

¹⁹ **“If you consent and obey,
You will eat the best of the land;**

²⁰ **“But if you refuse and rebel,
You will be devoured by the sword.”
Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken.**

This prophecy was not only for Israel. His words are applicable to all individuals and nations who persist in unbelief and sinful conduct. God is a God of loving kindness and mercy to all who will seek him and accept his offer of mercy. Whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Israel is set before us as an example of persistent and perpetual unbelief. She had become so hardened in her sin that she became blind and deaf to the Word of God. The situation was indeed bleak and desperate.

Matthew Henry observed, "God tries what less judgments will do with a people before he brings greater; but if a light affliction will not do its work with us, to humble and reform us, we must expect to be afflicted more grievously, for when God judges He will overcome."

But praise God in the midst of their very grave condition God gave a word of hope. Even though God's chastening judgments upon them were so horrific that all hope seemed gone, there would be a remnant that would be willing to hear and heed the Word of the Lord.

America has been sorely afflicted with both natural and man-made disasters. In the November 26 issue of *World* Marvin Olasky wrote an article enumerating America's disasters in recent years. He titles the article: ***Disasters R Us.***

Beginning with the disaster relief act passed by congress in 1950 when Dwight Eisenhower was president the country averaged 13 declared disasters per year.

Since that time it has steadily increased until now under President George W. Bush we are averaging 136 disasters per year. This means that we now have a declared disaster every 2.7 days.

Could it be that God is speaking to us as he did to Israel in the days of Isaiah about our need to seek him and turn from our sinful ways or else experience the kind of judgment Israel received from Assyria? Or are all of these calamities and disasters merely accidental acts of a blind, precarious mother nature?

In chapter 8 God told Isaiah that Assyria was going to overrun Israel like a flood. Except for a remnant Israel was doomed. Their sin was like the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. Partial judgments of various sorts did not bring about repentance. They went right on in their wicked, sinful ways.

But in the midst of all this comes the promise of a Messiah who will be born and usher in an era of unprecedented peace. Under his righteous reign there would be light and gladness and rejoicing.

We now know that the light foretold by Isaiah is none other than Jesus Christ, Emmanuel – God with us -- the Son of God and the son of the Virgin Mary, whose virgin birth was foretold in chapter 7:14.

Jesus Christ is the One foretold by God in Genesis 3 after our first parents disobeyed God in eating of the forbidden tree. God promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. Jesus Christ is that seed. He is the overcoming God man who saves his people from their sins. By him the burden-some yoke of sin is broken and the bondage to Satan is flung aside. He came to set the prisoners free, to loose the bonds of wickedness, to bring reconciliation between God and man. He ushers in a new covenant that takes the place of the preceding economy of the Mosaic ceremonial law with its shadows and types of Him who was to come.

In chapter 53 Isaiah tells how the Messiah would be the suffering Servant, **He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

- ⁴ Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.
- ⁵ But He was pierced through for our
transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon
Him, And by His scourging we are healed.
- ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him. Isa. 53:3-6
- ¹⁰ But the LORD was pleased To crush Him,
putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself
as a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring,
He will prolong *His* days,
And the good pleasure of the LORD will
prosper in His hand.
- ¹¹ As a result of the anguish of His soul,
He will see *it and* be satisfied;
By His knowledge the Righteous One,
My Servant, will justify the many,
As He will bear their iniquities.
- ¹² Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the
great, And He will divide the booty with the
strong; Because He poured out Himself to
death, And was numbered with the
transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin
of many, And interceded for the
transgressors.) Isaiah 3:3-6, 10-12

There is enough in the passage we have read for a dozen messages. But I want you to think in closing about the government he establishes.

Government precedes peace. Before there can be peace authority must be established and then quietude will follow; for tranquility is the child of order; this is what must happen in Iraq before there can be a cessation of violence in that war torn country.

Christ sets up his government that He may establish peace. We do not see this peace in the world for the simple reason that most men reject him as their Governor and King.

His is a righteous government. To all who are in Christ's kingdom there is pardon for sin and a new order set up in the heart.

After John the Baptist had been taken into custody, **Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:14-15**

Jesus taught that not all men are in this kingdom. When he taught the parable of the sower in response to his disciples asking for an explanation of the parable: **He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, ¹²so that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN." Mark 4:11-12**

Our Lord was quoting from the 6th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah given upon the occasion of Isaiah's call to be a prophet. It is sad but true that not all men will hear and heed the gospel message. It is a message of salvation. It is a message of hope for this world and the promise of eternal life with God himself in heaven. It is a message of peace with God and peace of soul when the

heart is sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water of the Word of God.

In the heart of every believer there is born a new order. By His Spirit Christ reigns in our hearts. A righteous King now reigns in righteousness. He saves us from our sins. His Word is our Law by which he governs us. By His perfect Priesthood he hears and heeds our prayers. He supports us all the day long. He promises to never leave us or forsake us.

We who know Jesus Christ as our Savior and King don't need to sing the blues, either to pacify our feelings or to use a catch phrase about singing the blues when tribulation comes because we have a new song. It is the song of redemption. It is a song of forgiveness of sins, a song of victory over Satan. It is a song of unending life and perfect love. It is not a blues song; it is a song of joy and overcoming victory.

Let me ask you this morning, is Jesus Christ your personal Savior and Lord? God's Word says, **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**

⁴⁰**"For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." John 3:16; 6:40**

Whosoever will may come and receive the water of life and the bread of life that is found only in the crucified, risen from the dead, ascended back to heaven Savior.

Be sure this Christmas season you have the gift he freely gives to all who receive him as their Savior and Lord. Let our closing hymn be your prayer.

Hymn 196 "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"