

Why America Must Adopt the Battle Cry of Isaiah

A battle cry is used to summon armies to war. A loud, unified shout could intimidate the strongest of enemies.

Confidence in battle often tilts the scale toward victory, whereas timidity, fear and cowardliness will surely lead to defeat.

In these dreadful times, don't be shamed into silence. Follow Isaiah's lead and raise your voice like a trumpet—awake and arise (Isa. 58:1; 60:1).

Can We Handle the Truth?

America today is a lot like Israel in Isaiah's time. He painted a very vivid picture of Israel's depravity: "You sons of the sorceress, you offspring of the adulterer and the harlot" (Isa. 57:3).

The love of the occult, magic and divination has never been greater, nor has sexual perversion. The stench has surely reached the nostrils of God.

Isaiah lamented that they inflamed themselves "with gods under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks" (Isa. 57:5).

They slaughtered their children on the altar of pleasure. Sound familiar? Did you know that rape or the loss of life of the mother is not the driving force behind abortion? The main driving force is failure to take responsibility for sexual sin.

Blatant Sin Demands a Strong Rebuke

Many today would no doubt chide Isaiah for his apparent lack

of grace and love. But God showed tremendous grace, mercy and love while dealing with Israel. Even today, He is patient and long-suffering with us.

Although many of the prophetic books are not always in chronological order, we find in Isaiah 55 that everyone who thirsts could come to the waters and drink freely, and that those who seek the Lord will find Him. What an incredible promise!

In Isaiah 56, we are encouraged to seek righteousness. He then switches gears and talks about blind watchmen who cannot bark and warn the people. God loved His people so much that he would send prophetic voices to warn them. Are you listening today?

Mocking the Messenger

Sadly, instead of repenting, the people of Israel would often mock God through disobedience. *Like America today, they crossed a very dangerous line—their blatant sin demanded a strong rebuke.* This is why I often say that the silent pulpit is not God's pulpit.

Pastors, are you fulfilling your calling to warn and rebuke when warranted? If not, what is your reason from a biblical perspective?

Isaiah challenged their futility: "When you cry, let your idols deliver you" (Isa. 57:13). Today we would say, "Cry out to your political party to save you. Count on your 401k to deliver you. Ask your popularity to set you free." As we all know, this would be futile.

What's in a Name?

It's in this setting that we find one of the most powerful Scriptures in all of the Old Testament: "For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy"

(Isa. 57:15). Of all the attributes of God, holiness is mentioned above them all. His name is holy. He is set apart. He is awesome. He is indescribable. He's unparalleled. When God speaks, we must listen.

As S.M. Lockridge once preached: "He's the loftiest idea in literature. He's the highest personality in philosophy. He's the fundamental doctrine of true theology. He's the highway of holiness. He's the gateway of glory. He's the master of the mighty."

Are you seeking holiness or has apathy overrun your life? A battle cry encouraging holiness must be voiced again!

God says that He dwells "with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa. 57:15-19).

The power of humility to alter the course of history is clear in Scripture.

The Heart Cry Must Proceed the Battle Cry

Before there is a battle cry there must be a heart cry. Before we fight, we must repent. Sadly, many Christians are angry but still arrogant, wound-up but not worshippers, haughty but not holy. What's it going to take to finally break us? More perversion? More violence? More depravity? Wake up church!

Like Isaiah, preachers and pastors must again warn the people, "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression" (Isa. 58:1). Then, and only then, will our healing come.

Although many agree that chapter 60 of Isaiah has future application, the current application is crystal clear: "Once we've been cleansed, renewed and revived, we are to arise and shine when our light has come" (Isa. 60:1).

Repent of apathy and prayerlessness. Consider fasting as you

truly seek the heart of God. Remove everything that is distracting you and pulling you away from God. Although it is God who fills us, we must yield. He empowers but we must surrender. He awakens but we must repent. Let Isaiah's battle cry become your battle cry and watch what God does *in* and *through* you—arise and shine. {eo}

Author's Note: For extra encouragement, watch the sermon, The Battle Cry of Isaiah—Awake and Arise!

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