OUT OF TOUCH

**DATE: 5/11/2016 Wed**

**TEXT: Isaiah 1:1-10**

**INTRODUCTION**

Opinions vary, but it appears that **Chapter 1** of Isaiah is written near the end of his ministry and is placed at the start of the book as both an introduction and a summary

This introduction is also a motivational attempt to convince Isaiah’s readers to acknowledge what God says and repent so that their sins can be forgiven

Possibly, this chapter is written sometime after the attack by the Assyrians

The Key verse is **1:18 –** ***“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool”***

**Quote:** J. Vernon McGee wrote – *“Chapter 1 is God’s solemn call to the universe to come into the courtroom to hear God’s charge against the nation Israel”*

Although Isaiah is identified as a prophet in **v. 1**

God is the source of the message

Note how we see God speaking throughout this chapter

-- **v. 2 - *“… for the LORD hath spoken”***

-- **v .10 - *“Hear the Word of the Lord”***

-- **v. 11 – *“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD”***

-- **v. 18 –** ***“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD”***

-- **v. 20 - *“…the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it”***

-- **v. 24 – *“Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel”***

The warning is to all Generations to Heed the Word of God

What does it mean to be **“Out of Touch?”**

It means to no longer be in communication with someone

That is what has happened to Israel and God

Because of things going on in their life, they Lost Touch with God

And if we are not careful, that is exactly what will happen to us!

Therefore let us stand to read out Text and then pray

I’d like to think on that thought

**“Out of Touch with God”**

Let’s read **vs. 1-10** together

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. THE “REIGN” OF FOUR KINGS – v. 1**

***“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah”***

Isaiah's ministry to Judah was during the reigns of these 4 Kings

Who were these guys? What were they like?

**A. Uzziah – II Chronicles 26**

He was a Good King, also known by the name Azzariah

The Bible is always quick to distinguish the Good from the Bad

He became king when he was 16 years-old

Just a teenager and he reigned 52 years

Uzziah sought the Lord in the days of Zechariah

In Jerusalem he made machines designed by skillful men for use on the towers and on the corner defenses to shoot arrows and hurl large stones

Many believe these to be catapults

His fame spread far and wide, for he was greatly helped until he became powerful,

But then, His pride led to his downfall

**Proverbs 16:18 *– “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall”***

He was unfaithful to the Lord, and entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense

I don’t know what advantage he thought that would get him

**II Chronicles 26:15, 16 *– “And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong” “But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense”***

Only the priests were to offer incense to the Lord

For his disobedience, he was afflicted with leprosy until he died

**B. Jotham – II Chronicles 27**

This was Uzziah's son

He too, was a Good King as the Bible says - ***“ordered his ways before the Lord”***

He became the king at the age of 25

According to the short account of Jotham's 16-year reign, the king did just about everything right,

Rebuilding the Temple walls and many towns, forts, and towers

Militarily, he defeated the Ammonites in battle and was credited for conquering them

**C. Ahaz – II Kings 16**

He became king at the age of 20

This was Jotham's son and he was a bad king

He worshiped idols

He is said to have given himself up to a life of wickedness, introducing many pagan and idolatrous customs

Perhaps his wickedest deed was sacrificing his own son

He also added an idolatrous altar into the Temple

He ignored the warnings of the prophets

**D. Hezekiah – II Kings 18-20; II Chronicles 29 -32**

This was the son of Ahaz and was one of the best kings in Jerusalem, removing idols from the land

He became king at the age of 25

He destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had made,

…because it had become an idol

The northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria in his reign, but Hezekiah's prayers saved Judah

While Hezekiah was dying, God answered his prayers for healing

The Lord granted him 15 more years of life

The visions that Isaiah received from the Lord took place during the reigns of these four men

**THE “REIGN” OF FOUR KINGS**

Next, let’s look at …

**II. THE “REBELLION” OF GOD’S PEOPLE – vs. 2-4 …**

Many Pastors get discouraged because they feel that they are not doing any good in helping other people

They feel that folks don't listen to what they are preaching

They need to realize that Isaiah was a godly man and many people did not listen to him either,

Yet, Isaiah kept on preaching

The spiritual conditions in Israel were so bad that the people *flat-out* rebelled against God in spite of the care God provided

Rebellion is an Effective weapon in Satan's arsenal and will cause you to lose your fellowship with God

Isaiah states in **v. 2** that God ***“nourished and brought up children”***

That word ***“nourished”*** means *to make important or great, to magnify or cause to prosper and grow*

God magnified His people and made them great

But for all the blessings that the Lord had given Israel …

They were still ungrateful and rebelled

In fact, Ungratefulness and Rebellion walk hand-in-hand

Their rebellion spawned a number of negative traits

Let’s look at them

The first Negative trait is …

**A. ‘Ignorance’ – v.3**

***“The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider”***

**Ignorance –** *lack of understanding*

I’ve found that most people are *willingly ignorant*

That is, when they could know or understand, they choose not to

Isaiah stated that oxen and donkeys had more sense than God's people did

These animals knew their masters and who provided for them,

But the nation of Israel had no comprehension of God's care for them

They would not acknowledge God's authority over their lives

That's what happens when we become rebellious

When we will not let Christ be Lord of our life or acknowledge His blessings and what He has done for us

Rebels tend to be ignorant and ungrateful for what people or for what God has done for them

Why? They are usually focused upon themselves, their plans, their achievements, and not anyone else

Rebels do not consider or comprehend the difference between those who truly care for them, and those who take advantage of them

For example, rebellious young people will reject their parent's love for the attention of peers

Peers who will dump them the second they don’t get from them what they want

The prodigal son could tell you a thing or two about these kinds of friends and how fickle they are

He could also tell you the lack of common sense …

…that rebellion creates when he forsook the love and fellowship of his father

God continued to be patient in caring for His foolish, sinful people, even though they did not, or would not, recognize Him in their lives

Eventually, the discipline would come …

Why? Because rebellion creates a thirst for that which is wild and wicked (Which God will correct)

**Jeremiah 4:22 *– “For My people is foolish, they have not known Me; they are sottish (stupid) children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge”***

Thank God for His mercy and patience with us when we get hardhearted and ungrateful

If you want to stay in Touch with God, then learn to count the blessings that come each day

**Lamentations 3:22, 23 –** ***“It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” “They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness”***

**Psalm 68:19 –*“Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation”***

The next Negative trait is …

**B. ‘Iniquity’ – v. 4a**

***“Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers …”***

Another way to Lose Touch with the Lord is to sin

So many Christians are backslidden and away from Christ because they have become gripped by sinful addictions (strongholds)

They have robbed them of their joy and hurt their testimonies for Christ

Beloved, Christian people are not to be setting an example of worldliness

We talk like the world, we Dress like the world, we do all the things the world does!

(Besides the drunkenness, drug addiction, debauchery, immorality, and filthy talk)

God's people are not to be living that way at all!

Stay away from that kind of stuff!

No wonder unsaved people think believers are a bunch of phonies and hypocrites

Most of so-called Christianity does exactly what the rest of the world does

If Christ is your Saviour then you are an ambassador for Christ

Be careful how you live!

Israel's rebellious spirit led to carnal, wicked, ungodly living

Isaiah calls them …

**1. *“sinful”***

Notice that he calls the entire Nation that

He says – ***“a sinful Nation”***

The word ***“Ah”*** can be also translated as ***“Woe”***

This word was used in funeral laments and carried the connotation of death

In a highly dramatic fashion, Isaiah acts out Israel's funeral in advance,

Emphasizing that their demise is inevitable if they do not repent soon

Then he calls them …

**2.** “***a people laden with iniquity”***

This word ***“laden”*** means *massive, heavy, hardened, very oppressive or abundant*

The people of this nation were bogged-down with wickedness and corruption

That is exactly what is going on in America today

And the 3rd thing he says they are, is …

**3.** “***a seed of evildoers”***

The word ***“seed”*** denotes the next generation

The filth that existed in the families influenced their descendants

The picture was pretty bleak

How did God's people get so far away from the Lord?

The answer is that they were out of Touch with God

If we are not careful, we will follow the same pattern and reap the same consequences

Our children and grandchildren will be affected by our decisions and influence

(Some of us are already reaping what we have sown)

God help us to have a good testimony for Christ!

**Poem:** By an unknown author – “*My life shall touch a dozen lives before this day is done; Leave countless marks for good or ill, ere sets the evening sun” “This is the wish I always wish, the prayer I always pray:” “Lord, may my life help other lives it touches by the way”*

The 3rd negative trait Isaiah mentions is that they were -

**C. ‘Influencer’ – v. 4b**

But their influence was in a wrong way

***“… children that are corrupters …”***

Another by-product of rebellion is the effect that your own rebellion has upon other people

Rebels don't like to sin all by themselves

They feel more comfortable if others join them in their rebellion and carnality

This is why they will use their influence to corrupt other people

This is what happened in Israel in Isaiah's day

God's people had become so perverse that they corrupted others with their vices

It is for this reason you should use wisdom in picking your friends

If you run around with rebels, sooner or later, you will be just like them

If you Don't Compromise with what they are doing, they won’t want you around

That is why they pressure you to *give-in* to what they are doing

Paul warned all of us about the influence of the wrong crowd when he said in **I Corinthians 15:33 –**

***“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners”***

The 4th Negative trait is …

**D. ‘Indifference’ – v. 4c**

***“… they have forsaken the LORD …”***

Rebellion leads to an attitude of Indifference toward God

Rebels don't usually want to have anything to do with God, His Word, the Bible, church, or other Christians

Why? Because these things remind them of the errors of their ways

Their attitude is - *I don't want to hear it! Get out of my face! I’ll do as I please when I please and nobody is going to tell me what to do!*

Those attitudes pretty well sum up their thinking

Isaiah stated that Israel Forsook the LORD

It was another step of digression

They were caught up in sin, and because of that …

They did not want to have anything to do with God

In King Jereboam's day, Ahijah the prophet delivered God's message to the king in **I Kings 14:9**

He said – ***“But (thou) hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke Me to anger, and hast cast Me behind thy back”***

**Ezekiel 23:35 says *– “Therefore thus saith the LORD God; Because thou hast forgotten Me, and cast Me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms”***

Israel had forsaken the LORD

The word ***“forsaken”*** means *to depart from, to leave behind, to abandon or neglect*

God's people willingly turned their backs on God and wanted nothing to do with Him

God did not leave them … They left the Lord

God did not move … They moved away from Him

How in the world did this happen?

They were Out of Touch with God

Many believers have nothing to do with the Lord today because they have Lost Touch with God

What are some other reasons why folks forsake the Lord?

The Bible gives the answer

**1.** Reproach **– Matthew 26:55, 56** …

The Reproach and Fear of the World

**2.** Resistance – **John 6:64-66 …**

Resistance toward God

**3.** Riches - **Matthew 19:21, 22 …**

The Riches of the World

**4.** Relationship – **II Timothy 4:10 …**

The Relationship & Romance with worldliness

And the last thing they did was …

**E. ‘Infuriate’ – v. 4d**

They Infuriated God

***“… they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger,”***

The rebellion of God's people got so bad that it led to the provocation of the LORD

Isaiah states that they *provoke* the Lord to anger

This word ***“provoked”*** means they *spurned, despised, or abhorred* the Lord

It is the same word for ***“anger”*** in this verse

That is what rebellion will do in a person's heart

It causes people to hate those who have helped them,

To sneer and abhor at those who have authority

To go against the very ones who have their best in mind

Now … their ungrateful attitudes and actions moved God to a point of anger

How did it get to this point?

How did they get so far from God?

They Lost Touch with God!

This brings us to some good questions

**1.** *Does the Lord get angry at Christians because of the way they live?*

**2.** *Does the Lord discipline rebellious believers?*

The answer to both questions is *Yes*

God does correct us when we are rebellious

If we persist in sinful living, He may even call us home to Heaven

**Proverbs 3:11 – *“My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction:”***

**I Corinthians 11:29, 30 - *“... For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body” “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep”***

The word ***“sleep”*** in this verse is a term for death

Rebellion is not a good thing

We have examined two areas so far …

**THE “REIGN” OF FOUR KINGS**

**THE “REBELLION” OF GOD’S PEOPLE**

Next let’s look at …

**III. THE “REVOLT AND RUIN” OF A NATION – vs. 5, 6**

**Ill.** The Johnstown Flood, locally known as the Great Flood of 1889 occurred on May 31, 1889, after the [catastrophic failure](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catastrophic_failure) of the [South Fork Dam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Fork_Dam) on the [Little Conemaugh River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Conemaugh_River) 14 miles upstream of the town of [Johnstown, Pennsylvania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johnstown,_Pennsylvania). The dam broke after several days of extremely heavy rainfall, unleashing 20 million tons of water from the reservoir known as [Lake Conemaugh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Conemaugh). With a flow rate that temporarily equaled that of the [Mississippi River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi_River), and a flood crest of over 30 ft. the flood killed 2,209 people and caused $17 million of damage (about $450 million in 2015 dollars). Prior to the collapse, John Parke, an engineer for the South Fork Club, twice, rode on horseback to the nearby town of South Fork to the telegraph office to send warnings to Johnstown explaining the critical nature of the eroding dam. But the warnings were not passed to the authorities in town, as there had been many false alarms in the past of the South Fork Dam not holding against flooding. The warnings went unheeded!

Folks perished because they would not heed the warnings of others

The nation of Israel was facing the same mind-set and eventual destruction

Isaiah asks Israel a question

***“Why should you be stricken any more?”***

Why, as God's people, are you insisting on being battered, and inviting more punishment into your lives by continuing your rebellion

He was more or less asking, *What are you people thinking?*

His question is a reminder of the fact that when people are determined to live wickedly,

They lose their rationality and common sense

They are consumed or obsessed with their sins

Describing the condition of the nation by comparing it to a body …

(Israel's head was wounded, its heart was weak or faint, and wounds and sores covered its body)

God's people had become gluttons for punishment

That's why he was asking why they wanted to be beaten even more

People today who will not repent, who will not obey the Lord, who persist to rebel against God and His Word, they too, are gluttons for punishment

They reap the consequences of their sinfulness, but will not stop what they are doing

Their problems persist and get more severe, but they will not repent

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah all dealt with the same attitudes in their days

**Jeremiah 5:3 *– “O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return”***

**Ezekiel 3:7 –*“But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto Me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted”***

**Zechariah 7:11, 12 – *“But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear” “Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the Words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in His spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts”***

Friend, when you lose Touch with the Lord, you lose your common sense and make choices that end up harming your life and Christian testimony

Listen to God's Word and heed what the Bible says about doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong

**THE “REIGN” OF FOUR KINGS**

**THE “REBELLION” OF GOD’S PEOPLE**

**THE “REVOLT AND RUIN” OF A NATION**

Lastly, let’s look at …

**IV. THE “RESULTS” OF LOSING TOUCH – vs. 7 -10**

There is a Price for Losing Touch with God

The result is Ruin, Destruction, or Devastation

God's people Israel, paid a high price for their indifference and rebellion toward God

-- The land was in ruins

-- The cities were in flames

-- Foreign invaders plundered the crops and towns

-- Jerusalem was abandoned like a hut in a vineyard or shelter in a garden of cucumbers

(I’m not sure of the reference to the cucumbers)

The only historical situation this description fits is that of the invasion of 701 B.C. when Sennacherib destroyed 46 walled-cities in Judah and taking over 200,000 prisoners

The same type of damage can occurs in our own personal life when we Lose Touch with the Lord

Not only is your own life affected, but your family is affected, too

Many marriages have ended up on the ash-heap of divorce because one or both Lost Touch with God

Families have been left in ruins

When the parents don't follow the Lord, the tendency of the children is to not follow Him either

But there is …

**A. A Remnant of Hope – v. 9**

***“Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah”***

God in His grace and mercy spared a small remnant of the people so that they were not totally wiped out like Sodom and Gomorrah was

**B. The Regard and Respect for the Lord – v. 10**

***“Hear the Word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah”***

If you have Lost Touch with the Lord, what should you do?

Isaiah gives the answer here

We are to listen to what God says in His Word

That is step number one

Our ears are a miracle

Listen to what they are capable of

They are capable of catching 73,700 vibrations per second

Whether it is the rumble of the distant thunder, the buzzing of a bee or mosquito, or the soft whisper of a sleeping baby's breathing

Of all the organs in the body, the inner ear demands the most bodily energy

Attentive listening can be a draining experience, so God made sure the ears got all the necessary power to carry out this important task

If we are going to present our bodies to God,

Then we need to be willing to listen to Him first

If we have been deaf toward the Lord, we need change and start having a listening attitude

Listening is so important that the ear is the first organ to function in the womb and the last to quit functioning at death

Face it, most of the problems we create for ourselves stem from the fact that we have failed to listen to wisdom or warnings

Listening carefully is essential in effective communication

Married couples with problems struggle in this area because as they argue and debate,

They tend to think on what they will say next instead of listening to what their spouse is saying

Communication breakdown is the number one reason for divorce in the nation

God urges us to be good listeners

Repeatedly, we are instructed to listen to what God has to say

[**James 1:19**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jas+1%3A19) ***– “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:”***

[**Psalm 85:8**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+85%3A8) **– “*I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly”***

[**Jeremiah 23:22**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jer+23%3A22) ***– “But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused my people to hear My words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings”***

**Quote:** A nationally known pastor once found himself with too many commitments in too few days. He got nervous and tense about it. Here is what he shared: *“I was snapping at my wife and children, choking down my food at mealtimes, and feeling irritated at all those unexpected interruptions through the day,” “Before long, things around our home started reflecting the pattern of my hurry-up style. It was becoming unbearable. I distinctly remember after supper one evening, the words of our younger daughter. She wanted to tell me something important that had happened to her at school that day. She began hurriedly, “Daddy, I wanna tell you somethin' and I'll tell you really fast.” “Suddenly realizing her frustration, I answered, “Honey, you can tell me—and you don't have to tell me really fast. Say it slowly.' I never forget her answer: “Then listen slowly.”*

You and I also need to learn to listen slowly to the Lord and what He is trying to say to us

The psalmist put it this way in **Psalm 46:10a – *“Be still, and know that I am God”***

Why We Struggle to Listen to the Lord

We struggle to listen and hear the Lord for several reasons

**1.** Distraction

[**II Timothy 4:4**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ti+4%3A4) **– *“And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”***

Distracted by things that are unimportant and not necessarily true

**2.** Discouragement & Doubt

We question if God's way will work

Or we are weaken in our faith

When this happens, we tend to not pay attention to the Lord

**3.** Disillusioned with the Messenger

Some folks will not listen to God's messenger,

Whether a parent, pastor, or teacher

Why? Because they become bitter toward the messenger

Or make excuses because of the weaknesses of the messenger

What the messenger does, speaks louder than his words

Thus, the focus is on the messenger and not the message

Poor listeners, as a result, seldom hear a good sermon

**4.** Disobedience

[**Matthew 7:26**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+7%3A26) **- *“And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:”***

[**Ezekiel 12:2**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eze+12%3A2) **– *“Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house”***

Listening involves hearing and doing what is said

It involves putting into practice what is heard

This is the meaning of the words ***“give ear unto the law of our God”*** found in **v. 10**

We are to put God's Word into practice

Listening well and obeying the Lord can make all the difference in our lives

[**I Samuel 15:22**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+15%3A22) **- *“And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”***

**CONCLUSION**

Let’s Not Lose Touch with God!

**THE “REIGN” OF FOUR KINGS**

**THE “REBELLION” OF GOD’S PEOPLE**

**THE “REVOLT AND RUIN” OF A NATION**

**THE “RESULTS” OF LOSING TOUCH**