

I Give Nothing and I Will Take All !!

I am more powerful than the combined armies of the world.
I have destroyed more men than all the wars of the nation.
I have caused millions of accidents and wrecked more
homes than all the floods, tornadoes and hurricanes put together.
I am the world's slickest thief.
I steal billions of dollars each year.
I find victims among the rich and the poor alike, the young
and the old, the strong and the weak.
I loom up to such proportions that I cast a shadow over every field of labor.
I am relentless, insidious and unpredictable.
I am everywhere - in the home, on the street, in the factory,
in the office, on the sea and in the air.
I bring nothing and take all;
I am your worst enemy:
I am alcohol and I am drugs....Author unknown

Isaiah 1:1-20

1. The name Isaiah means "**The Lord Saves.**" -- The Prophet of Salvation. God commissioned Isaiah and he was allowed to see coming events in God's plan of salvation. He received visions from God inspired by the Holy Spirit.
2. God used the prophet Isaiah to confront His people with their backsliding ways and God used Isaiah to comfort His people when they were facing a painful and destructive future without Him. God did not want to condemn or destroy His people. He offered full forgiveness and pardon if they would only repent and obey.
3. When Isaiah confronted the people of Judah about their sins they chose to hide in their denial, they chose not to admit they had sinned against God.
4. Just as with the people of Judah we too were in denial about our rebellious lifestyle and behavior. We were worshipping idols and then wondering why our lives were such a mess.
5. We refused to admit the power and control the sin of active addiction and its lifestyle had over our lives and because of our denial we suffered in ways that we otherwise would never have had to. *Drugs and alcohol are relentless, insidious and unpredictable.*
6. The way we managed our lives brought us to the end of our rope. The pain we were suffering was the direct result of reaping the destructive consequences of our rebellion. *A rebellion that has destroyed more men than all the wars of the nation.*
7. **Isa 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.**
8. Even though Judah and Israel had received God's covenant and His many precious promises, just as with us they chose to live a rebellious lifestyle. They chose to disregard that covenant. They chose not to trust in God and acknowledge Him as being their sole deliverer, protector and provider.

Isa 1:5-6 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. 6From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

1. Active addiction has taken its toll on us physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We are at the mercy of our worst enemy and it has been destroying our lives, our jobs, our finances, our health, and our walk with God, our marriages and our families.
2. The effects on our physical health are obvious. The wounds, the bruises, the needle marks and their sores. The hangovers. The insomnia. No thoughts of personal hygiene. Nutrition becomes secondary to actively using and we experience rapid weight loss as our body fat and muscles begin to wither away, etc.
3. Not so obvious to the naked eye are the health issues of: High-blood pressure, killing brain cells and neuron transmitters in the brain, heart issues, liver problems, and vital organs are slowly deteriorating and the mind is becoming less functional, etc. Some end up in emergency rooms, mental hospitals and even on the coroner's report.*Death is a strong word but it can be the final destination.*
4. Alcohol and drugs also create emotional stress, which threatens our mental health. We may feel anxiety, fear, worry, depression and frustration over our lack of self-control. Our thinking is clouded and we have no soundness of mind. These are powerful emotions that can paralyze our mind and immobilize our body.
5. There may have been times when we thought for certain we were going crazy. We may have attempted or contemplated suicide just to *escape the grips of Satan and this insidious and relentless enemy.*

6. The addiction we once “*thought*” worked for us have instead cut us off from God’s blessings and protection. If we choose “*not to obey*” He will allow our land to be plundered by foreigners and we will be destroyed.
7. The sin of active addiction “*gives nothing and takes all.*” It no longer gives us the old pleasures or those feelings of escape and euphoria. The one thing we thought worked for us has now “*turned on us.*”
8. ***Isa 1:7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.***

Isa 1:18-20 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. 19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

1. As previously stated God did not want to condemn nor destroy the people of Judah who were accused of being as evil as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. *Isa 1:9 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.*
2. Alcoholism, drug abuse and its dysfunctional lifestyle have *destroyed more men than all the wars of the nation.* It finds its victims from every walk of life and just as with the people of Judah God desires not to see any of us fall prey to where we will reap its devastating consequences and separation from God.
3. God offered Judah full forgiveness and pardon if they would only put away their evil ways, confess their sins, repent and accept God’s cleansing through the blood of Jesus Christ. If they would only strive to do what was right, obey His Word and in doing so He would make them “*as clean as freshly fallen snow.*”
4. Those who refuse God’s mercy and choose instead to cling rebelliously to their old ways will be devoured. *20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword*
5. Often in our daily walk God will send us both signs and warnings and because of freedom of choice we can either ignore them or listen and obey.
6. God may even allow a catastrophe to occur in our life in His attempt to get us back on track and again we can ignore this attempt and continue on in our addiction or we can listen and obey. ***Choice is always ours.***
7. God is telling us to listen and to take heed before it is too late. *Quit fooling yourself... If you continue to put off salvation and recovery until tomorrow, one day that tomorrow will not come!*

Jer 29:11-14 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. 12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. 13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. 14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

1. What a comfort these verses bring to those drowning in sorrow and despair. What a comfort to those individuals who have been carried away captive by their worst enemy who, “*takes all and gives nothing.*”
2. God hears our cries. God listens to our prayers and it is His desire to provide us with all we need to live a happy, fruitful and functional life. *God rescues us free of charge; it is His gift.*
3. Remember: God is not looking for people who are perfect or who *pretend* to be perfect. Instead, He is looking for those of us who are willing to turn our past failures and life over to Him. By doing so, our self-destructive past will not stand in the way of His plans to give us a future and a hope.
4. Hopefully, we won’t wait until our life is in total devastation before tuning to Him. He is always there waiting and the sooner we admit that our worst enemy; “*active addiction*” and it’s “*insane lifestyle*” has taken all and given nothing the sooner we can ask God to rescue us from it’s relentless hand....

He is our Redeemer and our Faithful Defender.

*The first steps to recovery include admitting
That we are powerless over our problems
and God is “all power.”*

*If we trust in the promises He has given us in His Word
There is no logical reason to give in to the power of the enemy.*