

Text: Good News Translation Isaiah 3.4-5

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Everyone will take advantage of everyone else. Young people will not respect their elders and worthless people will not respect their superiors.

Subject: Prognosis: Selective Amnesia and Moral Anemicy

The Prophet Isaiah Message

I TOLD YOU THE BAD NEWS BUT HEAVEN HAS GOOD NEWS. Bad News of God's Judgment and the Good News of God's Love.

The Third Chapter of Isaiah prophesizes what will happen to a people, who either by default or selective amnesia forget about the God of their salvation.

Isaiah utters God's judgment and message to His people before the Exile

A People recipient of a **Promise - Land**

A people protected by fire at night and guided by escort cloud by day

A people who were fed manna from heaven by day and drank pure water
bursting from the rocks.

He brought them from Egypt to Canaan.

Many of Israel's people had rejected the Lord by worshipping other gods and sacrificing to idols of wood and stone. Israel's leaders made peace treaties with foreign powers and paid taxes to them.

They did not trust in God alone to save them.

They had rejected the law that God had given Moses and the people.

They easily forgot, that it was the Lord who saved them from slavery in Egypt.

A people who knew slavery for 400 years.

A people emancipated from the yoke of slavery by deliberate 'acts of God'. A

People who had experienced death passing over them.

Judgment Day

Because they had turned their backs on the Lord, disobeyed Him, the people of Jerusalem and Judah were punished. The punishment took the form of defeat at the hands of their enemies. In addition, I will:

Take away your *supplies of food* and all *supplies of water*.

Take away you're your communities – heroes, judges. Prophets, elder's models – skilled craftsmen and leaders

Take away your resources for living – bread and water

Take away your soldiers – street law – no protectors

THEN

I will make boys your officials; mere children will govern them

People will oppress each other – man against man, neighbor against neighbor, the young will rise up against the old, the base against the honorable.

Professor James Washington was prophetic – Soul Murder

Culture, Language and Promise (Dream)

We Too like Israel better heed to a Prophetic Warning Given to Israel

James Weldon Johnson penned our Covenant and Warning years ago in

Lift Every Voice and Sing

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God where we met Thee.
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.

Let Us Examine of the Black Church and Community

In a Post-Civil Rights

Historical Analysis

Otis Moss III articulates it succinctly:

Black America and the Black Church - Post-Soul Generation

The term Post-Soul, coined by *Village Voice* writer Nelson George, best describes the present cultural position of black America.

By Post-Soul, we mean that no longer are we based within a soul tradition that is implicitly and explicitly bound to the black southern religious tradition defined by the institute we call the black church.

Everything in the black community once came through the church. Our educators, political leaders, even what came to be known as “soul music” artists came through the church. However, the black church is now in a Post-Soul era.

Contemporary Analysis

- 1. There has been Paradigm Shift in Black America**
- 2. There is a counter Black Culture who's Roots cannot be traced to the Black Church. It's the Hip Hop Culture.**
- 3. It was birth Outside of the Faith Community.**
- 4. It has its own heroes, language, ethics, identity, morality and music.**
- 5. It has turned the traditional black social order upside down.**

6. **It is a black cultural expression connected to the black oral-blues based music tradition**
7. **It uses language and technology to entertain and define their world.**
8. **It has an unbelievable sway on our youth.**

Blacks progress was rooted spiritually, socially and politically in the black church where ordinary people had a vehicle to voice their concerns, frustrations and dreams of a new society.

The Black Church historically served as mid-wife to upward mobility, political leaders, artist, poetry, education, schools, equal right in voting, transportation and the pursuit of justice.

However, the **Black Church and the Black Middle Class** has lost touch with the urban masses whose dreams were deferred with integration and upward mobility.

The Million Man March was a prime example of the *impotence, lack of power*, of traditional leadership. In 1995 without the blessings of these institutions, Minister Farrakhan galvanized a million black men to reexamine themselves, their families and communities.

Farrakhan's leadership galvanized the **ghetto-centric , pain-filled men** who expressed themselves in the **lyrics of Hip Hop** and the **anxiety-filled middle-class men** who are uncomfortable with their escape from old neighborhoods.

The Black Church, NAACP and the Urban League did not Support the March. Two black Americas. One pursuing the Impossible Dream and the other Dream deferred.

The Black Church use to set the Moral thermostat in local communities among young people. Therefore affecting their ethics, character, and community relationships. That day is over.

Black Communities are plagued with crime where Gang Leaders force respectable citizens to take cover for their lives.

Integration ushered in a "symbolic representation. This is a belief that if an African American receives a position, appointment of jobs in white structures such as government, media and corporations, that the black community, through osmosis, is somehow empowered. It has not filtered down to the inner-cities. Therefore alienating large segments of the black community who are not a part of the middle class dream.

The hard fought battles of the Civil Rights Era Have Paid for many who moved up in the Middle Class. The sad reality, they left the urban-landscape in the inner- cities and rural outpost only with *deferred dreams.*

- Few Financial Resources
- Low paying jobs
- Inadequate transportation
- Dilapidated housing
- Over-crowded schools
- Over-priced retail outlets for food and clothing

Role Models
Support Systems
High Crime rates
Fear of young gangs and shooting
Hopelessness

The Hip Hop Generation Culture Evolved in the 70s

To express their pain and anguish
To fill a hopeless vacuum in their lives
To fill a dream

Hip Hop is the new Post-Soul – Post Civil Rights -

- Hip Hop was constructed within a black urban landscape
- Hip-Hop Culture provided them an escape valve
- It does not know or recognize our black heroes heroes of the struggle.
- Hip-hop between nihilism and its own set of values, morality.
- It redefines black identity.
- It is inner-city blues that strikes fear and revulsion in the hearts of white America.
- It finds itself being condemned by middle-class black leadership and the black church.
- It conveys its message as to the absurdity of urban existence and suffering.
- It witnesses soul murder daily in its community in their community.
- It uses language to entertain.
- It acts as a cultural critique.
- It defines their world.
- It has also been hijacked by capitalism to peddle the negative.

**The Dark Side of the Hip Hop Generation is Similar to Isaiah's
Judgment of Judah**

1. High rates of suicide and imprisonment
2. Police brutality, the generational gap, and permissive vulgar language in the public square
3. Black selling Black self-hatred as entertainment
4. The effects of the ever-looming war on drugs
5. The escalating tensions between young Black men and women
6. The educational crisis in urban schools
7. The new economic growth industry – jails

**Boys Traced From the Cradle to Prison Are Ruling
They Have Chosen Selective Slavery**

Daddy is in prison, Sons and their Moms At Home

- Satan knows the best way to destroy a black family – black man
1/3rd of all black men are in the penal system

The Church Is Stuck in the Old Safe Paradigm – Black Men

- Females in the Black Church outnumber the males with all their hang-up with the preacher
- The number of males in Mosques represents the same proportion of women in the Christian Church.
- Christian men go to prison and return as Black Muslims because of the False teaching and masculine image in suits and ties
- Muslims allege to be In touch with African roots

- Christianity is a weak, feminine and Western European religion
- Who can worship a white Jesus with blue eyes

MY GOD KNOWS HOW TO SHIFT PARADIGMS

**Go on the Offensive – Shift the Paradigm Back to the Church
Speak Historical Truth to Power Stop the Brainwashing of our Boys and Men**

BLACK CHURCH - suffers from amnesia – OLD PARADIGM

BLACK COMMUNITY - suffers from Moral Anemicy

**BLACK CHURCH –Distortions perpetrated about Christianity
Being a White Man’s Religion**

Christianity a White Religion

Oldest black church is in Ethiopia –where the Eunuch went home to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ.

From 200 to 500A.D. greatest minds, theologians were from Africa.

1. Saint Augustine laid the foundation for Catholicism – greatest mind since Paul
2. Tertullian of Carthage – first one to coin the phrase TRINITY
3. Clement of Alexandria –
4. Afranacious, a black man, the Bishop of Carthage on Easter Sunday morning 367 A.D. who gave the final word on the NT

We conclude that Mathew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans the Epistles and the Book of revelations will make up he New Testament.

I. BLACK CHURCH must not dilute/alter its theology to

- Accommodate *Prosperity Theology* of Individualism -
- Abandoned Social Gospel –Gospel of spiritual and social – it must remain the liberating voice of the people
- Praise substituting for a liberating agenda.

II. BLACK CHURCH Must Infiltrate –Educate And Convert

The Hip Hop Generation To Christ Jesus

1. Remove prejudices
2. Learn it language
3. Interpret it message from Rap Music and send the message of Christ.
4. Discern its Needs
5. Use all modern tools available in the commercial world to reach their ears
6. Target young black boys and men with the Truth of Slavery and disenfranchisement

III. BLACK CHURCH must be Prophetic

– Don’t substitute Social Services

For a Call to Moral Decency and Character as found in

Christ Jesus.

-Don't allow your souls be traded for a few dollars from the government till.

Isaiah Gave the Bad News-He gave the Good News – 9th Chapter

For unto us a child is born

For unto us a son is given

And his name shall be called Wonderful, the Counselor, the Mighty God, and The Prince of Peace

BLACK CHURCH – Promise – Struggle - Liberation

- Must tell them the story about our God who brought us out of slavery
- Must tell them about a God who brought us 'Middle Passage' to a foreign land
- God who allowed us to survive cotton fields, slave blocks, lynching, nightriders.
- Tell them about a God who kept hope alive through 244 years of slavery in this country
- Tell them about a God who gave us a North Star at night and patrons of the Underground Railroad to freedom.
- Tell them about a God who guided our people through sharecropping robbery to ownership of farms throughout the South.
- Tell them about a God - Jim Crow - Segregation
- Tell them about a God that brought us through the Depression under Herbert Hoover, EPA of Franklin Roosevelt, Desegregation of the Armed Forces under Truman, The Watergate of Nixon, the Weakness of Jimmy Carter, The hostility of a Ronald Reagan, a Supreme Court – Clarence Thomas under Bush, a Lawinski Circus under Clinton and now through Incompetence Incorporated under George Bush.

Tell them Hip Hop cannot rescue Teach Them

Amazing Grace,

His Eye is on the Sparrow

He promised never to leave us alone - Never

Rev. Dr. Charles H. Smith

7/20/06

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Illustrate

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We Must Shift Back

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Civil
Rights
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