

Isaiah Chapter 3

Verses 3:1 – 4:1 The Lord's indictment against and judgment of Jerusalem and Judah continued.

In verses 3:1-8

The prophet denounces the private sins of the affluent upper class of Judah by warning them that God will take away their leaders and replace them with incompetent ones.

Stay and staff are two genders of the same noun and serve as a Hebrew idiom for "all kinds of things".

He then lists the kinds of leaders who will fail, beginning with the mighty man (gibor, heroic leader).

In place of these national leaders God warns that He will give them children ... and babes to rule over them.

This prophecy was literally fulfilled when Manasseh (at age 12), began his long and wicked reign, which eventually led to Judah's final downfall.

"Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen" is stated in the prophetic perfect as if this future event were already a fact.

Isaiah 3:1 "For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water."

"The Lord, the LORD of hosts":

Emphasizing His ultimate authority, God refers to Himself by the title Adonai ("the LORD"), the sovereign Lord of all, and by the mighty and warlike "God of hosts".

The Lord has always provided the needs of His people of Judah from Jerusalem.

This is just saying that, this will no longer be.

God will remove His help from the mighty of Jerusalem.

The Bread and Water are both symbolic of Jesus.

Whether this is a spiritual blessing being taken away or a physical blessing, I cannot say.

Perhaps it is both.

From (verses 1-3), God's judgment was to include a removal of the people's leadership.

Isaiah 3:2 "The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,"

These are all people who had been held in high esteem.

The mighty man of war would probably be of great service in the battle to come.

This is probably, speaking of the Babylonian captivity, but also is speaking of the end of the age.

The judge and the prophet had great power with the king and the people.

In these days that Isaiah lived in, there was really no separation of church and state.

Isaiah 3:3 "The captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator."

Again, these were people of authority in their land.

God will bring them low, and they will be ruled by children.

All those of skill were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar.

The orator, in the verse above, was really an enchanter.

Isaiah 3:4 "And I will give children [to be] their princes, and babes shall rule over them."

This came true very soon after this was said, because the rulers of Judah were all under 25 years of age after the reign of Hezekiah.

Manasseh was 12, and Josiah was 8, when they began to reign.

Babes (in verse 4), means those who act in a child-like manner.

Isaiah 3:5 "And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable."

One of the reasons the youth would act proudly against the aged, is the fact that youth were ruling the land.

It seems all respect for those in authority was wiped out, as well.

This society Isaiah spoke of, would not be practicing the golden rule to love thy neighbor as thyself.

They would be against their neighbors.

Verses 6-7: "This ruin ... ruler of the people":

Conditions of anarchy were to be so bad that no one would accept a position of authority over the people.

Isaiah 3:6 "When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, [saying], Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and [let] this ruin [be] under thy hand:"

No one wanted to be responsible for their brothers.

Each was seeking to take care of himself.

If one of them seemed to have more, they would try to get him to lead them, so they could share in his goods.

Isaiah 3:7 "In that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be a healer; for in my house [is] neither bread nor clothing; make me not a ruler of the people."

The rulers of households were expected to take care of their servants, as well as their own families.

Isaiah is saying, there will be so little, no one wants to be the one to care for all of them.

How can he feed the servants, if he does not even have enough to feed his own family?

The shortages will be so great that even the meager provisions, such as bread and clothing, will not be available.

Isaiah 3:8 "For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings [are] against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory."

The fall of Jerusalem (in 586 B.C.), was only a partial fulfillment of the prophecy.

The final fulfillment awaits the times just prior to Christ's second coming.

"Against the LORD":

The root of Zion's problem surfaces: overt rebellion against the LORD.

The people sinned shamelessly; they made no effort to conceal it (3:9).

We can easily see the reason for the judgment of God against Jerusalem.

They have sinned against the LORD.

Notice, their speech had been opposed to the LORD and their deeds, as well.

We will read in other lessons where God's fury has come up in His face.

(In Romans 10:9), we know that confession of the LORD is the very means to receive salvation.

This is speaking of God's people renouncing Him with their mouths.

This would bring about the wrath of God, not salvation.

Verses 9-15:

“The show of their countenance” means “the look of their faces.”

Their guilty faces clearly revealed their sinful hearts.

“Children are their oppressors, and women rule over them”, indicates the utter failure of male leadership in their society (verse 12).

"Isaiah 3:9 The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide [it] not.

Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves."

The sin of Sodom was the practice of homosexuality.

Those, who are habitual sinners, have a hard look in their faces.

Not only, have their hearts been hardened to sin, but it shows in their faces.

This is speaking also, of proclaiming their sins as an alternate life style.

God calls this type of sin an abomination.

He gives them over to a reprobate mind.

Sin of this kind, in our days, can bring the plague of A.I.D.S. on you.

The sad thing, in the verse above, is they do not even have a repentant heart.

They are proud of their sins.

Isaiah 3:10 "Say ye to the righteous, that [it shall be] well [with him]: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings."

The best way to explain this is with another Scripture.

Galatians 6:7 "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

This Scripture of the righteous is in direct contrast to those who commit these terrible sins (of verse 9).

The righteous are those who have placed their faith in the LORD, and are made righteous by that faith.

Abraham's faith was counted unto him as righteousness.

Christians take on the righteousness of Christ, when they receive Him as their Savior.

There will be tremendous rewards awaiting those who put their faith in the LORD.

Isaiah 3:11 "Woe unto the wicked! [it shall be] ill [with him]: for the reward of his hands shall be given him."

Those who plant the seed of sin will reap sin.

The wicked will be judged, by the Judge of all the world, not fit for heaven and eternal life with Him.

In fact, they will have their place in the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:15 "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

There are only two places to go, heaven, or hell (the lake of fire).

It is our choice while we are still alive, but on judgment day, it will be up to the LORD.

Isaiah 3:12 "[As for] my people, children [are] their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause [thee] to err, and destroy the way of thy paths."

"Children ... women". Children and women were considered ill-suited for governmental leadership so they figuratively depicted the incompetent rulers.

This is not speaking in a factual sense, but is saying the rulers will behave as children and will be effeminate.

These rulers did not have the characteristics of strong rulers, but acted as women and children.

The blind leading the blind is what has gotten them into trouble.

In our day, the Scripture above could be taken literally.

Women should not rule over their husbands in the flesh; in their homes.

The father should be the head of the house.

Children should not be able to oppress their parents either, but both things are happening in our society.

Isaiah 3:13 "The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people."

The LORD has always stood up for the oppressed.

In the verse above, it perhaps means that those in authority have over-stepped their bounds and are ruling harshly those of lesser wealth.

Isaiah 3:14 "The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor [is] in your houses."

The spoiling of the vineyard by the leaders amounts to their inequities in ruling the nation.

Isaiah gave a more detailed comparison of God's people to a vineyard (in 5:1-7).

The LORD, back in Leviticus, had told them never to pick the entire crop, but to leave the edges to the poor and oppressed.

It seems here, their greed has overcome them, and they have left nothing for the poor.

The part of the crop that belonged to the poor had been gathered and carried into their houses.

Isaiah 3:15 "What mean ye [that] ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts."

The LORD always helped the poor, who could not help themselves.

It seems the poor had been mistreated by God's people.

Verses 16-26

The arrogant and fashionable women of Jerusalem are condemned by the prophet for being more interested in the latest fads of fashion than the spiritual well-being of the nation.

They are described as haughty, proud and wanton (suggestive).

They walk with heads held high and with mincing steps, tinkling the bangles on their feet; they have flashing, seductive veils.

Suits of apparel, or festal robes.

Mantles, or tunic.

Wimples, or cloaks. Glasses, or mirrors.

Thus, the prophet predicts that the women of Judah will cease to delight in these feminine accessories and will perish with the men of Judah.

Isaiah 3:16 "Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing [as] they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:"

When women cultivate beauty for beauty's sake, they thereby reflect the moral decay of the nations and detract from the glory of God.

Rather than emphasizing outward apparel and activities (verses 16-24), ladies should cultivate the beauty of the inner person.

Mincing steps.

Ornamental chains about the ankles necessitated shorter steps and produced tinkling sounds to attract attention.

Isaiah 3:17 "Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts."

We are now looking at the sins of the women.

In the spiritual sense, this could also be speaking of the sins in the church.

Zion many times is speaking of the church.

In any case, this is speaking of lust of the eyes and the flesh.

Their "stretched forth necks" mean that they are puffed up with pride.

The wanton eyes mean they are flirting and desire the men.

This type of sin causes a woman to lose her beauty.

This says, the LORD will bring baldness to them and sores on their body. Their secret part I believe to be their hearts. God sees their heart and knows it is stayed on evil.

Isaiah 3:18-23

"In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of [their] tinkling ornaments [about their feet], and [their] cauls, and [their] round tires like the moon,"

"The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,"

"The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,"

"The rings, and nose jewels,"

"The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,"

"The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils."

All of these things are outward adornment which they are trying to appeal to the men with.

God looks on the inward man, not on the outward.

All of the things above are earthly things which will pass away.

1 Peter 3:3-4 "Whose adorning let it not be that outward [adorning] of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;"

"But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Isaiah 3:24 "And it shall come to pass, [that] instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; [and] burning instead of beauty."

This is an explanation of exactly what comes from being a loose woman.

Notice, the punishment from God fits the sin.

God is righteous.

Isaiah 3:25 "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war."

This is speaking of the coming war, when Jerusalem is overcome by the enemy.

When God does not stand up for the Hebrews, they fall to their enemies.

Isaiah 3:26 "And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she [being] desolate shall sit upon the ground."

Captivity is not a pretty thing.

The city was plundered.

It is too late to lament and mourn.

It is done.

The "sitting upon the ground" indicates that everything is gone.

They have no chairs to sit on.

Isaiah Chapter 3

1. In verse 1, what has the LORD of hosts taken away from Jerusalem?
2. What is "Lord, the LORD of hosts" speaking of?
3. What does Lord mean in verse 1?
4. What does LORD in verse 1 mean?
5. What are the Bread and Water symbolic of?
6. Who are the mighty men in verse 2?
7. What captivity is this probably speaking of?
8. What other time is it probably speaking of?
9. Who are the eloquent orator, counselor, and honorable man speaking of in verse 3?
10. Who will be their princes?
11. What is "babes", in verse 4, really speaking of?
12. Why were the youth acting proudly against the ancient?
13. Who were they trying to choose to rule them?
14. What was the reason not to want to be a leader?

15. For _____ is ruined, and _____ is fallen.
16. What was the reason for the judgment of God against them?
17. What city's sin was theirs compared to?
18. What was the evil city's sin?
19. What is the saddest thing of all about verse 9?
20. Who are the righteous?
21. What do those who put their faith in the Lord have awaiting them?
22. What chapter and verse, in Revelation, tells us about the lake of fire being for those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life?
23. What is verse 12 speaking of really?
24. Who should be the head of the home?
25. Who has always stood up for the oppressed?
26. In Leviticus what instruction had been given to God's people about the poor, pertaining to their crops?
27. How are the daughters of Zion described in verse 16?
28. Verse 16 and 17 are speaking of the sins of whom?
29. What do the "stretched forth necks" show?
30. What are all the things in verses 18 through 23?
31. What comes of being a loose woman?
32. What happens to the Hebrews, when God does not stand up for them?
33. What does "sit upon the ground", in verse 26, show us?