

Is. 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,

Is. 3:2 The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,

Is. 3:3 The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.

“the LORD of hosts” = the supreme leader of all heaven’s armies

Again Isaiah emphasizes that the Lord is the LORD of hosts; He has great armies at His command. He is going to take away from Jerusalem and Judah His support, sustenance and protection. They will no longer have enough food and water. They will be lacking brave warriors, capable governors, prophets, the prudent (diviners, soothsayers), the ancient (the elderly), those who have ability to lead, men worthy of esteem and respect, men able to give wise counsel, people of special skill and knowledge, and men able to communicate with skill and understanding. In other words, I am going to take away everything that you have been depending on instead of Me (the Lord).

Is. 3:4 And I will give children *to be* their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

Into the void of capable men, the Lord will give them children as their rulers—those lacking experience and qualifications. The word for *babes* includes the idea of tyrants, which would be a natural outcome of too much power in the hands of one without wisdom, experience and skill.

I can’t help but think that America is experiencing similar judgment today for the same reasons.

Is. 3:5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

This verse continues to comment on the consequences of the resulting leadership. The people will be oppressed (tyrannized, harassed, overtaxed) not only by those in leadership, but also by other men, including their own friends and family. This basically sounds like survival of the fittest in a jungle. Children, servants and young men will have no respect for the elderly or anyone else deserving of respect and honor. (Sad to say this is again sounding more and more like the attitudes of our own day and age.)

Is. 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:

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

The times will become so bad that no one will want to take positions of leadership and authority; it will just make them a target. No one will want responsibility. Their excuse will be, "I have enough troubles of my own. I'm not getting involved." (Again, this is beginning to sound more and more like attitudes in America today.)

Is. 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.

Is. 3:9 The shew 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.

Jerusalem and Judah have fallen into desperate condition because they have both spoken out against and acted in disobedience to YHWH.

Provoke – marah - make bitter, rebel, disobey

Eyes – ayin – outward appearance, countenance, face, presence, resemblance

Glory – kabowd, kabod – weighted or rich in splendor, excellency

As I look at the meanings of these words, I see a statement regarding the rebellion of the people in the face of God. I also see that the people who have been identified before the world as God's chosen people are giving a very poor reflection of who He is before the rest of the world. This is something that is a continual matter of prayer in my own life and regarding those I love as well as my church--that we will rightly represent Jesus to those around us. I pray often that God will protect His name as reflected in me, my church and those I love that claim His name.

The people of Judah were to the point that they flaunted their sin in public. They were no longer ashamed of their sin before the Lord. They had no concern as to how this reflected on YHWH before the nations. Again, they are compared to the people of Sodom, those whose lifestyle had become so wicked that God decided to destroy the city from off the face of the earth. *Woe* is a cry of sorrow and lamentation. The word for *soul* references "breathing creatures." Isaiah is basically saying that the people have brought judgment upon themselves because of their wickedness before God.

Our society doesn't want to take personal responsibility for the bad things that happen to us. Inevitably, when something terrible happens, especially to those who seem to be innocent victims, you start hearing the question, "Why would a loving God allow that to happen?" No one ever considers that it is the sin of man that has resulted in those actions. God gave us a will; He didn't make us robots. Sin has consequences. The rain falls on the just and the unjust. God doesn't withhold good things from the "evil" people in the world. Neither does He prevent bad things from happening to "good" people. These events are actually another opportunity to recognize our sinfulness and wickedness and our need for the Savior.

I always take comfort in John 6:37: *ALL that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

No one dies without Jesus who would have chosen to turn to Him if they had just lived a little longer. That's part of the righteousness and awesomeness of God. He knows all and has known all from the very beginning. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He is not willing that any should perish.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

2Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The difference is that for the child of God, we can rest in His promise.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

If something that seems to be bad is allowed to happen to the child of God, we can know that it is intended for our good and His glory. At death, the child of God goes home to Jesus; that's wonderful, not terrible. We are just strangers here on this earth anyway. Our goal is to lay up treasures in heaven.

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

Isaiah is actually confirming the truth of Romans 8:28 with this verse. The righteous will earn a reward for their obedience to and faith in God. God doesn't reward evil for good. We just don't always see things from God's point of view, but one day we will.

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

Reward – gmuwl – recompense (Webster: to return an equivalent for, to give in return, to pay back.)

This verse is just stating the opposite side of the coin from the verse above. Just as God will reward the righteous with good, He will *reward* the wicked with evil/adversity/affliction/misery.

I am reminded again of the law of sowing and reaping so clearly stated by Paul in his letter to the Galatians.

Galatians 6:7–8 “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Is. 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.*

God’s chosen people were being *ruled* by children and women. Mothers, wives, and lovers can have a powerful influence on sons, husbands and lovers. This also goes against God’s established hierarchy. It is often an indication of unqualified leadership and lack of sufficient wisdom and experience resulting in oppression and tyranny. Their leaders are causing them to stray from God’s established laws; they are destroying established customs and laws to suit their own purposes.

Is. 3:13 *The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.*

Is. 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.*

Verse 13:

Up – natsab – station, appoint, erect, establish, rear up

Plead – riyb – grapple, wrangle, defend, contend, debate, rebuke, strive

Judge – diyb – sail direct, come with a straight course

YHWH has positioned Himself in a posture to actively endeavor with earnestness to get His people to follow the straight course of His leadership and guidance. He cares about His people.

YHWH is holding the elders of society and the princes (those in leadership, those who should be setting the example) responsible for the spiritual and physical condition of His people. They have taken advantage of those they rule and lead for selfish motives to accrue personal wealth.

Is. 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.*

Adonai YHWH, the GOD of hosts (His heavenly armies) is questioning the elders and rulers of His people. Why are you beating my people and crushing their spirits? The word for grind is thought provoking:

Tachan - to grind meal; hence, to be a concubine (that being their employment):—grind(-er).

This seems to add the idea of being forced into undesirable activity that results in a resigned and defeated spirit. I wonder if it also references an encouragement of idol worship through spiritual adultery.

Is. 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:

As I read through the rest of this chapter, I continue to get a picture of a society in Jerusalem that has totally departed from the protective guidelines that had been established by God. The women have now become brazen instead of submissive. The men are also responsible for this attitude since this could only happen as the men have allowed it to happen by abdicating their God-ordained positions of leadership and responsibility.

Is. 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.

Is. 3:18 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,

Is. 3:19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

Is. 3:20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

Is. 3:21 The rings, and nose jewels,

Is. 3:22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

Is. 3:23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

“discover” = uncover

These verses tell me that there is a time of judgment and accountability coming. When that judgment comes, the women will no longer have the clothes and ornaments used to seduce the men; they will be humbled.

Is. 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.

The time is coming that instead of the smell of sweet perfumes, there will be the smell of stink and sweat. Instead of figure flattering belts, they will wear the ropes of bondage. Instead of a healthy head of hair, they will lose their hair. Instead of fancy holiday outfits, they will be reduced to wearing sackcloth (material used to store animal feed). They will experience scars and the brands of servitude instead of enjoying the privilege of enhancing their natural beauty.

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

Their men and warriors are destined to die in the fight for their life and land.

Is. 3:26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she *being* desolate shall sit upon the ground.

I think this verse is a reference to Jerusalem after judgment has come upon her inhabitants. Her gates will be said to lament and mourn because of her

emptiness. She will be desolate and bare after being cleansed of those who are wicked.