

January 28, 2018

“The Lord Enters Into Judgment”

Focal Passage: Isaiah 3:1-26 (NASB)

Cross References: Deuteronomy 28; Ecclesiastes 10:16-17; Micah 7:3-6; Deuteronomy 28; Job 4:8; Psalm 1; Proverbs 11:18; 22:8; Jeremiah 17:10; Hosea 8:7; 10:12-13; Matthew 7:11; Galatians 6:7-9; Ezekiel 34:1-10; James 3:1

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

Jan 21 Exodus 10-12	Jan 22 Exodus 13-15
Jan 23 Exodus 16-18	Jan 24 Exodus 19-21
Jan 25 Exodus 22-24	Jan 26 Exodus 25-27
Jan 27 Exodus 28-29	Jan 28 Exodus 30-32

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF THE PASSAGE:

- We stumble and fall when we rebel against the Lord.
- We reap what we sow – it goes well with the righteous, but woe to the wicked. (v 10)
- The Lord will judge the sins of His people.
- God holds the leaders of His people to higher standards.

Lesson Idea: Since God’s judgment comes upon the wickedness of His people, we need to repent of our sin and seek the righteousness of God.

Isaiah 3:1-12

1 For behold, the Lord God of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah Both supply and support, the whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water;
2 The mighty man and the warrior, The judge and the prophet, The diviner and the elder,
3 The captain of fifty and the honorable man, The counselor and the expert artisan, And the skillful enchanter.
4 And I will make mere lads their princes, And capricious children will rule over them,
5 And the people will be oppressed, Each one by another, and each one by his neighbor; The youth will storm against the elder And the inferior against the honorable.
6 When a man lays hold of his brother in his father’s house, saying, “You have a cloak, you shall be our ruler, And these ruins will be under your charge,”

7 He will protest on that day, saying, “I will not be your healer, for in my house there is neither bread nor cloak; You should not appoint me ruler of the people.”

8 For Jerusalem has stumbled and Judah has fallen, Because their speech and their actions are against the Lord, To rebel against His glorious presence.

9 The expression of their faces bears witness against them, and they display their sin like Sodom; They do not even conceal it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves.

10 Say to the righteous that it will go well with them, For they will eat the fruit of their actions.

11 Woe to the wicked! It will go badly with him, For what he deserves will be done to him.

12 O My people! Their oppressors are children, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who guide you lead you astray and confuse the direction of your paths.

DISCUSSION:

- v 1-3. What was God going to remove from His people? Why?
- V 4-7. What did God say would happen to the government of His people when His judgment came? Why do the immature rise to power when true leadership is absent? (see Ecclesiastes 10:16-17; Micah 7:3-6)
- V 8. Why was God going to bring this punishment upon His people?
- V 9. How does our society resemble the condemnations in this verse?
- V 10-11. How do these verses emphasize that people reap what they sow? (see Deuteronomy 28; Job 4:8; Psalm 1; Proverbs 11:18; 22:8; Jeremiah 17:10; Hosea 8:7; 10:12-13; Matthew 7:11; Galatians 6:7-9)
- V 12. How do things turn upside down when people embrace wickedness instead of righteousness?

Isaiah 3:13-15

God Will Judge

¹³ The Lord arises to contend, And stands to judge the people. ¹⁴ The Lord enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people, “It is you who have devoured the vineyard; The plunder of the poor is in your houses.

¹⁵ “What do you mean by crushing My people and

grinding the face of the poor?" Declares the Lord God of hosts.

DISCUSSION:

- V 13. What does it mean for the Lord to "arise" and contend with His people?
- V 14-15. Why do the leaders of the people come under stricter judgment? (see Ezekiel 34:1-10; James 3:1) How did the leaders harm the people in Isaiah's day?

Isaiah 3:16-26

Judah's Women Denounced

¹⁶ *Moreover, the Lord said, "Because the daughters of Zion are proud and walk with heads held high and seductive eyes, and go along with mincing steps And tinkle the bangles on their feet,*

¹⁷ *Therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion with scabs, And the Lord will make their foreheads bare."*

¹⁸ *In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, headbands, crescent ornaments, ¹⁹ dangling earrings, bracelets, veils, ²⁰ headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, perfume boxes, amulets, ²¹ finger rings, nose rings, ²² festal robes, outer tunics, cloaks, money purses, ²³ hand mirrors, undergarments, turbans and veils.*

²⁴ *Now it will come about that instead of sweet perfume there will be putrefaction; Instead of a belt, a rope; Instead of well-set hair, a plucked-out scalp; Instead of fine clothes, a donning of sackcloth; And branding instead of beauty.*

²⁵ *Your men will fall by the sword. And your mighty ones in battle.*

²⁶ *And her gates will lament and mourn, And deserted she will sit on the ground.*

DISCUSSION:

- V 16. During this time of wickedness, how had it affected even the women? How is the behavior of women often a gauge of the moral compass of a society?
- V 17-24. What did Isaiah say that the Lord would do to punish the wicked women?
- V 18-24. What do these verses indicate had become the women's priority? How is this reflected in our society today?
- V 25-26. What would be the result of God's judgment?

APPLICATION:

- ✓ Is your life heading towards righteousness or judgment? Why?
- ✓ What things will you seek this week?

Lesson by Bro Stan

NOTES from David Guzik, *Isaiah*

V 1. Isaiah 3:1 is a good example of the way two Hebrew words, each translated Lord may be used. In this verse, the first time Lord is used, it translates the Hebrew word *adonai*, which means "master, owner, sovereign." It is a broad word that can be applied to a human master as well as the Lord God, the ultimate Master. The second time Lord is used, and is printed in small capitals, it translates the Hebrew word Yahweh, which is the sacred name of the Triune God. So, it may be that the Hebrew Bible could use the phrase *adonai Yahweh*, which could be translated into English as *Lord Lord*, but actually means "*Master Yahweh*." That phrase appears more than 300 times in the Old Testament. Most of the time, the phrase is translated *Lord God* in the New King James Version.

The specific phrase here – *the Lord, the Lord of hosts* – is used more than 15 times in the Old Testament, and often by Isaiah (Isaiah 1:24, 3:1, 3:15, 10:23-24, 10:33, 19:4, 22:5, 22:12, 22:14-15, and 28:22). It emphasizes the majesty and power of God, because the idea behind Lord of hosts is that God is "Commander in Chief" of heaven's armies.

So when it is "*The Master of All, Yahweh of Heaven's Armies*" (*the Lord, the Lord of hosts*) who has taken food and water from Jerusalem and from Judah, they do well to repent and get right with Him

V 4. The judgment is worse than just taking away food and water. God also brought judgment on Jerusalem and Judah by depriving them of godly, competent leaders on every level.

The eventual fulfillment of this prophecy is found in 2 Kings 24:14: *Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land.*

But this principle of God's judgment endures to this day. One way God may bring judgment on a nation is to curse them with incompetent, ungodly leaders. Often, this is the simplest avenue of judgment: giving people what their wicked hearts desire. This crisis of leadership can happen even in economically prosperous times (Isaiah 2:7 is part of this same prophecy).

V 8. *Jerusalem and Judah have sinned in what they say and in what they do*: their tongues and their doings are against the Lord. In fact, what they say and what they do provoke the eyes of His glory. It is much easier to think that what we do is offensive to God, than to think that what we say can provoke the eyes of His glory. But we are commanded to glorify God by what we say just as much as by what we do. Jesus said, *For every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.* (Matthew 12:36-37)

V 9. *The look on their countenance witnesses against them*: The very look on their faces is evidence of their guilt. Either they have smirk of the reprobate, or the downcast gaze of those under conviction.

And they declare their sin as Sodom; they do not hide it: Their sin is openly displayed, and there have no sense of shame. The cultural dynamic in Isaiah's day was probably much the same as in our time. In the name of "frankness" and "honesty" and "let's not be hypocrites," all kinds of sin are approved, and no one is "allowed" to proclaim a standard unless they live up to it perfectly. . . Ephesians 5:12 matters here: *For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

V 10. *Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings*: even in the midst of judgment, God knows how to bless and protect His people. Sometimes this is only seen in the perspective of eternity, but God assures us that the righteous will never share the same fate as the wicked. Abraham knew this principle well when he said to the Lord, *"Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* (Genesis 18:25)

They shall eat the fruit of their doings . . . for the reward of his hands shall be given him: God will give both the righteous and the wicked the reward they deserve. For the righteous, this is a comfort, for the wicked, it is a curse.

V 16. *The daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks*: The women of Judah were proud. They were taken with themselves, and loved to consider themselves better than others (are haughty). This proud heart was the basis for the rest of the sin among the daughters of Zion.

V 18-24. *Walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet*: The women of Judah were obsessed with finery, luxury, and "accessories." They devoted far too much of their lives to their appearance and their image. For emphasis, the prophet declares a list of the "accessories" and luxury items the women of Judah longed for and devoted too much of their lives to. . .

In contrast, women of God are commanded: *Do not let your adornment be merely outward; arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel; rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.* (1 Peter 3:3-4)

Their obsession with their appearance, their love of luxury, and their promiscuity made the daughters of Zion ripe for judgment: *Therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will uncover their secret parts.* Their "crown" will be a scab, and instead of being beautifully adorned, they will be exposed and humiliated. Also, the Lord will take away the finery. In Isaiah's time, these judgments were connected with the coming invasions. Because of scarcity and disease, the haughty daughters of Zion would be sick and diseased. They would be raped and humiliated. And all their wonderful "accessories" would be taken away

NOTES from Trent C. Butler, *Isaiah in the Holman Old Testament Commentary*

The central message of the text is clear. *One of the consequences of failure to worship God wholeheartedly will be a leadership vacuum.* For leaders who simply seduced and swallowed God's people (v. 12), God had a remedy: Assyrian exile. Isaiah described this exile in some detail. The leaders of every area of the country's life—religious, political, legal, military—would be snatched from their homeland and sprinkled over the far reaches of the Assyrian Empire. This would leave the land at the mercy of foreign governors. Experienced local leadership would not exist.

3:1–3. Amid Judah's pride in her prosperity, the prophet described her imminent fate. Siege warfare would remove all their food supplies. Then exile would remove the leadership.

3:4–7. Inexperienced leadership would lead to anarchy. Society would be turned upside down. The only

qualification for the highest position in the land would be possession of life's necessities. But the nominee would lie and connive to avoid election.

3:8–9. All this would happen because God's people had acted like little children, defiantly disobeying God even when his glory was clear. So brazen and proud were they that they flaunted their sin openly. Sodom offered the only possible comparison (Gen. 13-14; 18). In face of such pride and flagrant rebellion, the divine response is especially noteworthy. God entered into mourning for his people, taking up the woe of the funeral lamentation for them.

3:10–12. Still, God offered assurances of hope for the righteous remnant. They had no reason to worry. Then God resumed his mourning tones to announce the judgment of the wicked. Payback time was approaching. Lack of leadership was both the cause and result of their situation. This brought divine judgment and a real sense of loss in the heart of God. He could cry mournfully, O my people, as he described their hopeless situation.

3:18–23. Then God would remove all their feminine finery, not because it was evil in itself but because it was contributing to their false pride. Here Isaiah used a vocabulary that is not seen in other biblical books, so the translation remains uncertain at many points. The student of the Bible should compare several translations.

3:24–26. New clothing would be laid out. These clothes should be suitable for a pilgrimage into exile rather than a pilgrimage to the temple. Such a pilgrimage would be lonely, because the men would die in battle. Funeral rites would be the only social activity.