

Judah and Jerusalem on Trial
Isaiah 1.18-20

*“Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord:
though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.
If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;
but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword;
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”*

The Point: God judges by the standard of his holiness and gives grace to those who love him as LORD through the same holiness.

The Question: Didn't God know we would rebel?

God's Holiness and the Vision

The Trial and Charges

The sinful nation 1.2-9

Corrupt Worship 1.10-17

An ultimatum given 1.18-20

Purification of a nation 1.21-31

The Mountain of the LORD 2.1-5

Seven hundred and forty years before Jesus is born, Isaiah is the prophet of the Living God. God gives him a vision we call Isaiah. *The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.* It is a vision that spans from king Uzziah to the creation of the new heaven and earth. The vision includes the suffering servant and his victory over sin and death. Sixty-six chapters of judgment and grace. In which camp do you want to be?

The vision begins with God convening a trial against Judah and Jerusalem; he is King and judge and lays out his case in the sight of angelic and human witnesses. *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken:* The everlasting self-existing God has spoken.

God's holiness has two undeniable parts: wrath for sin and love for Adam's and Eve's children.

God brings two indictments. First, spiritual disease. The whole nation is sick from head to toe—they stink! God compares them to Sodom and Gomorrah; they rot from the inside out. Second, he indicates them for corrupt worship. They do not love their neighbor, and they neglect the widow and orphan – how can we honor God with worship if we are unjust to the “least of these?” True to their name, they strive with God!

God does not barter for their love; he lays down an ultimatum. 1.18-20 Obedience brings life and rebellion, death—eat or be eaten! Grace, take it or leave it.

The LORD will purify through his mercy and grace

*1.27 Zion shall be redeemed by justice,
and those in her who repent, by righteousness.*

All nations will stream to Mt. Zion, the city formerly known as Jerusalem. In the new creation, we will dwell with Him forever. God does not force a choice; he offers one – choose for eternity's sake.