

We Are Fellowship Bible Study



Book: Isaiah

Chapter 3: "Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem"

v:1 For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stock and the store, the whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water; (Reference to 2 Kin 25:3; Is 5:13; Jer 37:21; Lev 26:26)

This verse refers to 2 Kings 25:3 **"By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine had become so severe I the city that there was no food for the people of the land."** The timing of this

verse is important. 2 Kings takes place in the 11th year of King Zedekiah which was 586 BC. This was more than 100 years after Isaiah saw the vision spoken of in this verse. Keep in mind Isaiah was active 740-681 BC. Jerusalem was besieged during the 9th year of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon's reign and continued through the 11th year of King Zedekiah, King of Judah. The two kings referenced solidify the time period.

v:2 The mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, and the diviner and the elder; (Reference to 2 Kin 24:14; Is 9:14, 15; Ezek 17:12, 13)

Again, as a prophesy fulfilled 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.**" As I read through 2 Kings 24 and 25, all that was permitted to remain and survive were the vinedressers and the farmers. They were referred to as the poorest in the land, yet they kept their lives (or were restored to), their jobs, and their homes. This is another instance where we see a remnant. This calls to mind chapter 2 when it was discussed that weapons would be turned into pruning hooks and plowshares. That was all that was left in Jerusalem after the war. Vinedressers and farmers are highlighted to me. The mighty man did not stand. The man of war did not remain. The exalted judge had no position of authority. The prophets were silenced. The diviners had no magic left. The elders had no seniority. In verse 2, the stock, store, and supply for bread are gone, but what is left is a remnant to bring back life. Food

(farming for), our physical sustenance, creates a foundation for thriving. It is what allows other professions to return. It's almost like starting over.

v:3 The captain of fifty and the honorable man, the counselor and the skillful artisan, and the expert enchanter.

This verse continues to let the readers know that every profession, other than the farmers and vinedressers was cut down. Every high and haughty person brought low in their escape to flee or brought to their death. 'A captain of fifty and the honorable man', these are mentioned as positions of trust and authority. In other words, those whom people used to seek out for directions, for guidance and orders, will no longer be available to give their counsel. What this says to me is that our focus will be removed from the temporary stand-ins. God is looking to restore order back to His people. He is the head. He is in the place of Honor, He is the wise counselor, He is the skillful artisan (who created all things). There is no need for mischief or enchanter, nor place for it.

v:4 "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. (Reference to Eccl 10:16)

This verse refers to Ecclesiastes 10:16, "**Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, and your princes feast in the morning!**" Ecclesiastes is a book of wisdom. A place of royalty given to a child. Inexperienced. Untested. They need counsel yet they are given authority over those with experience. This is a sad, vulnerable, and embarrassing way for a kingdom to be. They feast

in the morning, before they know what is to become of the day. Another translation says, "they throw parties in the daytime". One version says, "and the effeminate shall rule over them."

v:5 The people will be oppressed, every one by another and every one by his neighbor; the child will be insolent toward the elder and the base toward the honorable."

The Hebrew word for oppressed used in this verse has a translation of, "to tax, harass, tyrannize, distress, or a taskmaster. God did not create us to be in debt to one another. He created this earth to be bountiful. To be fruitful. This verse, in conjunction with the previous, creates an image of chaos and disarray. It shows a lack of structure. God is very detailed and ordered, but here, the base, or un-honorable, oppress the honored. Another translation says, "The young will rise up against the old, the nobody against the honored." Reading this, I'm reminded of old gangster movies where business owners are bullied into paying mobs "for protection". Every person harassing everyone and domestic terrorism are seen in the news or social media quite often today.

v:6 When a man takes hold of his brother in the house of his father, saying, "you have clothing; you be our ruler, and let these ruins be under your power,"

The people are so abused and desolate that an article of clothing was enough to qualify someone for a position of royalty. This also says that people were looking for a leader even amongst siblings, to lead mere ruins.

v7: In that day he will protest, saying, "I cannot cure your ills, for in my house is neither food nor clothing; do not make me a ruler of the people."

When given the position of authority, it is not desired. What was once an exalted position is now detestable. Even if the sibling took the position of ruler, he did not even have food for his own house. This reminds me of the golden calf that the Israelites fashioned out of their jewelry. The people are still looking for anything and anyone to be their leader, still forsaking the Lord. The brother could not cure ills, but God can. The brother had neither food nor clothing, but God provides all to those who seek Him.

v8: For Jerusalem stumbled, and Judah is fallen, because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory. (Reference to 2 Chr 36:16, 17; Mic 3:12)

This verse reminds the reader why Jerusalem and Judah are receiving judgement. They are not blameless. And because God is a just God, judgement is a consequence of sin. 2 Chronicles 36 is referenced here. In verse 15 it says, "**And the Lord God of their fathers' sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place.**"¹⁶ **But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people till there was no remedy. Therefore, He brought against them**

the king of the Chaldeans who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on the young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand." When Nineveh received a word from the Lord, they repented. Jerusalem and Judah did not. Warnings were given and ignored.

v:9 The look on their countenance witnesses against them and they declare their sin as Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves.

(Reference to Gen 13:13; Is 1:10-15)

Their sin was obvious and proudly paraded around without shame. The reference to Genesis 13:13 says, **"But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord."** Their own temple was a testimony to the wickedness within them. They boasted of it. This fallen world continues in those practices, encouraging people to do/try/be things that go against God's design, plan, and instruction over our lives.

v:10 "Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. (Reference to Deut 28:1-14; Eccl 8:12; Is 54:17; Ps 128:2)

A glimmer of hope is breathed for those who are righteous as the righteous are comforted by the prophet here.

v:11 "Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him, For the reward of his hands shall be given him. (Reference to Ps 11:6; Eccl 8:12,13)

For the righteous it was well, for the wicked, it is ill. Separating what is going to be poured out, the consequences of goodness vs. wickedness. Reference to Psalms 11:6 is given, **"Upon the wicked He will rain coals; fire and brimstone and a burning wind shall be the portion of their cup."** Many references explain this as God's poured out judgment. **A wine fully mixed, red, and poured out** (Psalms 75:8) **surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down.** Judah and Jerusalem shall drink the cup of the fruits of their works. Dregs of wine is the settlement at the bottom of a cup. After doing some light research, wine dregs are leftover, or dead, yeast. While they are sometimes referred to as diamonds, or flavor enhancers, keep in mind that the dregs are clearly a separation from the intended wine. As they are enhancers to the flavor, of the wine, I am reminded of negative encounters that made me stronger for the experience, more seasoned and appreciative that I didn't stay in the past, like old yeast that did not evolve into wine. This is what the wicked consumes.

v:12 As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths."

(Reference to Is 9:16)

The untrained and ignorant youth govern God's chosen people as a result of their sin. "Women rule over them" – Keep in mind that a man was designed to be a woman's covering and her protection. She is precious. So, to have someone precious,

uncovered and unprotected as your ruler, speaks of the vulnerability of the people. This prophecy is repeated in Ch 9:16.

Oppression and Luxury Condemned

v:13 The Lord stands up to plead, and stands to judge the people. (Reference to Is 66:16; Hos 4:1; Mic 6:2)

The thought of the Lord standing up is both awesome and terrifying. This verse references Micha 6:2 where God pleads with Israel and says, "**Hear, O you mountains, the Lord's complaint, and you strong foundations of the earth; for the Lord has a complaint against His people, and He will contend with Israel.**" This is a good reminder that the Lord does not just pass down judgment and punishment on His people. He provides instruction, He sends His messengers, He pleads with His people before He must provide judgment. He gives us opportunities to repent and to be reconciled.

v:14 The Lord will enter into judgment with elders of His people and His princes: For you have eaten up the vineyard; The plunder of the poor is in your houses. (Reference to Matt 21:33)

God's judgment begins with the elders and rulers. 'The plunder of the poor is in your houses' speaks on how Judah and Jerusalem have taken from those that have nothing to give, not enough for themselves to sustain. This is part of their sin. Imagine having enough and still robbing the poor, and having pride in that sin.

The vineyard is eaten up, there is nothing left to produce a new fruit.

v:15 What do you mean by crushing My people and grinding the faces of the poor?" Says the Lord God of hosts. (Reference to Mic 3:2,3)

This verse is asking Judah and Jerusalem why they are committing these sins. What is the reason? It refers to Micah 3:2-3 which gives a gruesome account of how Jerusalem and Judah **strip the skin from Israel, and the flesh from their bones, who also eat the flesh of My people... like meat for the pot, like flesh in the caldron.**" This reminds me of when Jesus told His disciples to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood in remembrance of Him until he returns. He was not talking about cannibalism but of partaking in the sacrifice he gave. Stripping of flesh from its bones reminds me of when Jesus was whipped, and his body being broken for us.

v:16 Moreover the Lord says: "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet,

The women of Judah and Jerusalem performed lustful acts, attracting others to commit sin with them. Proud outstretched necks and unsatisfied lustful wanton eyes were described. The walking and mincing and jingling of bells around their feet were calling out to others.

v:17 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.” (Reference to Deut 28:27; Jer 13:22)

The sin of the women has resulted in their crowns being barren. This baldness does not only refer to their heads but in their covered parts being revealed for others to see. There will be a witness to their shame. There is reference here to Jeremiah 13:22 that says, **“And if you say in your heart, “Why have these things come upon me?” For the greatness of your iniquity your skirts have been uncovered, your heels made bare.”** Women were prostituting themselves instead of being joined to their husbands.

v:18-23 In that day the Lord will take away the finery: the jingling anklets, the scarves and the crescents :¹⁹The pendants, the bracelets, and the veils ²⁰The headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; the perfume boxes, the charms, ²¹and the rings; the nose jewels, ²²the festal apparel, and the mantles; the outer garments, the purses, ²³and the mirrors: the fine linen, the turbans, and the robes. (Reference to Judg 8:21, 26)

Verses 18-23 detailed how the women of Judah and Jerusalem will remove the objects that the women have used to encourage their sin, and anything that would attract others to them. Perfumes and rings and beautifully colored scarves and robes were used to adorn, but these women have used them to entice sin. It will be stripped away. Essentially saying “no more name brands to make yourselves look good”.

v:24 And so it shall be: Instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench; instead of a sash, a rope: instead of a well-set hair, baldness; instead of a rich robe, a girding of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty. (Reference to Is 22:12; Ezek 27:31; Amos 8:10)

The judgment given removed everything once boasted about. Instead of a rich robe, a sackcloth which is used for lament and brokenness. Instead of beauty, branding to signify ownership by someone else, slavery. They were once slaves to their sin, now they are slaves because of it. Instead of a sash, a rope, that guides them and is even the source of their death. This is repeated in Isaiah 22:12.

v:25 Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war.

The men of Judah and Jerusalem were supposed to be the covering of the women, but they have prostituted themselves and lost their covering and protection.

v:26 Her gates shall lament and mourn, and she being desolate shall sit on the ground. (Reference to Jer 14:2; Lam 1:4; Lam 2:10)

To lament is to let out a soul cry. It is an emotional verbal expression of suffering. Judah will be reduced to rubble. Reference to Lamentations 1:16 says, **"For these things I weep; my eye, my eye overflows with water, because the comforter, who should restore my life, is far from me. My children are desolate because the enemy prevailed."**

Combining Chapter 1, 2 & 3:

Chapter 1 spoke of the lost children of God. They have forgotten their identity as royalty as God's children and created "replacement" idols and worshipped false gods. Throughout scripture God calls out a remnant of people who still have the original design flowing through them. This original design is recognizing that God is the one true and sovereign Lord that shall be worshipped and elevated above all else. Chapter two reminds us of the futility of things we created false value for. That value will be removed and restored back to God. Chapter 3 details the sin and judgment poured out to its people all the while, the Lord cries out for them to stop their sin, God in a posture of standing, sending prophets to cry out on His behalf, before it's too late. God does not desire for His people to be punished but He would not be a just God if there were no consequences to evil actions. He seeks to restore but the people have chosen their sin and provoked his wrath. To be angry and love even still, is God's posture. His chosen people fulfilled their own lustful and sinful desires and then lamented in the price.