Let God Be True!

Isaiah (Intro)

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Theme: God hated Judah's hypocrisy for its backsliding, disrespect, ritual religion, and He would punish.

Outline:

1 Introduction to the Book of Isaiah

2-4 Indictment of Judah's Backsliding

5-9 Severe Chastening Had Not Worked

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Preparatory Reading: II Kings chapters 14-20; II Chronicles chapters 25-32.

Related Links:

1. Introduction to the Book of Isaiah *(outline)*.
2. Overview of O.T. Prophets *(slides)*.
3. Chronological Table and Notes for Prophets.
4. The Prophets of God *(sermon outline)*.
5. Backsliding *(sermon outline)*.
6. Belly Worshippers *(sermons)*.
7. Three Assumptions of Faith *(slides)*.
8. Sojourn in Fear *(sermon)*.
9. The 'R' Factor of Repentance *(slides)*.
10. Forgiveness of Sins *(sermon outline)*.
11. Reviving First Love *(sermon outline)*.

Introduction:

A. God sent His prophets to Judah to get them to repent to avoid His judgment (II Chr 24:19; 36:15-16).

B. There was a fair, just reason Assyria scattered Israel and Babylon took Judah captive – sinful rebellion.

C. This book … and this first chapter … are addressed to the favored church God … not the Philistines.

D. We live in similar times of hypocrisy and backsliding, but we are not responsible for other churches.

E. What a difference between Isaiah's word and how Paul wrote to thank God for churches (Phil 1:3-7)!
F. The most crucial issue reading Isaiah or hearing it preached is to receive God's words (I Sam 3:7-10).
G. God told Judah He saw their backsliding hypocrisy, and He told N.T. churches (Rev 2:4-5; 3:14-20).
H. He fairly promised forgiveness and blessing for repentance (Ezek 18:1-32). He is fair to you (I Jn 1:9).
I. God's offer and promise of mercy is so much better, greater, and faster than man (Is 55:6-9; Dan 4:27).
J. This chapter and its message for Judah and Jerusalem is separate from that of chapters 2-4 that follow.
K. For much more to be ready for Isaiah.

Introduction to the Book of Isaiah – Verse 1

1 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.

A. The singular *vision* is a collective noun for all Isaiah would see, preach, and write down.
B. *Isaiah* = Salvation is of Jehovah = similar and reversal of *Joshua* = Jehovah is salvation.
C. *Isaiah* = Esaias of N.T., where he is referenced 60-75 times and his name used 21 times.
D. *Son of Amoz* is used 13 times with Isaiah; the Jewish scribal tradition says Amoz was brother of king Amaziah, thus Isaiah and Uzziah were cousins; it intends some value.
E. Isaiah's ministry concerned the nation of Judah with its capital in the city of Jerusalem.
    1. Since Rehoboam, the nation was divided into Israel (10 tribes) and Judah (2 tribes).
    2. The name Israel or Ephraim was used for the ten tribes with its capital at Samaria.
    3. Isaiah taught the southern kingdom of Judah with little of Israel (chapters 7,9,21).
    4. Hosea, the true contemporary of Isaiah (Hos 1:1), was to Israel (Hos 1:4-5; 14:1-8).
    5. Therefore, the sins and punishment Isaiah will pronounce are on the Jews of Judah.
    6. Therefore, the recovery and prosperity Isaiah will promise are on the Jews of Judah.
F. The timing of Isaiah is precisely stated here, unlike some of the obscure minor prophets.
    A. These are four consecutive kings of Judah … good, good, very bad, and very good.
    B. Hosea lists the same kings and a contemporary king of Israel, Jeroboam II (Hos 1:1).
    C. The four reigns were 113 years (52,16,16,29), but Isaiah need not touch both ends.
    D. We see at least 46 years of ministry (Is 6:1; 36:1), and considerable more are likely.
    E. Isaiah prophesied about 700 years (675-631) before Jesus Christ for a round number.

Indictment of Judah's Backsliding – Verses 2-4

2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

A. Appeals to *heaven or earth* indicate solemn declarations (Deut 4:26; 30:19; 32:1; etc.).
B. God spoke by prophets – no one less than God Jehovah – though by Isaiah's mouth/pen.

1. A prophet is a messenger of God that brings His inspired words to the chosen people.
2. These words – *for the LORD hath spoken* – should both excite and terrify wise men.
3. Similar descriptions occur a hundred times through Isaiah (Isaiah 1:10,11,18,20,24; 7:7; 10:24; 30:12,15; 42:5; 43:1,14; 44:6; 45:11,18-19; 48:17; 49:7-8; 57:15; etc.).
4. It is crucial we always hear scripture as God speaking to us (I Thes 2:13; II Pet 1:21).
5. The crucial issue reading or hearing Isaiah is to receive God's words (I Sam 3:7-10).

C. God used the example of parents (father) with rebellious children to illustrate their sin.
1. He will use animals and their owners next, and He also often used spiritual adultery.
2. After all parents do for children, if they rebel, it is a cruel, terrible, unnatural thing.
3. God used the comparison in other places to convict His people (Is 63:9-10; Mal 1:6).
4. Recall God's severe judgment of disrespectful children to parents (Pr 20:20; 30:17).
5. Human fathers are imperfect, but God fathered the Jews perfectly and abundantly.

3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

A. Brute beasts like oxen and asses know who provides for them, and they return to them.

B. God by Jeremiah used a similar comparison to animals to shame foolish Jews (Jer 8:7).

C. We are worse than brute beasts when we do not remember the Giver of every good gift.

D. He used *Israel* for His people, but specifically of Judah and Jerusalem (Is 1:8,11-15,21).

E. God used animals as well to mock and ridicule backsliding (Prov 26:11; II Peter 2:22).

4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

A. Here is further indictment of the Jews for their sinful living in the land of uprightness.

B. God's men preach like this – read the first four phrases and then compare to Joel Osteen.
1. God called Isaiah and all His ministers to blast away against men's sins (Isaiah 58:1).
2. Hypocrites hate such preaching, so they get smooth men (Is 30:8-11; I Tim 4:3-4).
3. Church growth gurus will emphasize sound systems and eliminate such preaching.

C. They had done three things identified here as offensive to God their Father and Master.
1. They had forsaken Jehovah – they forsook His rules of righteousness and affection.
2. They had provoked God to anger – their hypocrisy and idolatry filled Him with fury.
3. They had backslid from former days of righteous living and proper worship (Is 1:21).

D. Name calling with harsh and rude preaching is godly, regardless of effeminate teachers.
1. For more Bible proof of Rude Preachers.
2. For more about Bible *Instant Preaching*.

Severe Chastening Had Not Worked – Verses 5-9

5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

A. God had tried much chastening (*stricken*); He knew more would only produce rebellion.
   1. The following verses indicate chastening that reduced Judah from former greatness.
   2. Chastening ought to cause us to consider our ways (Hag 1:5), but scorners revolt.
   3. Prophets blasted revolt (Is 9:13,21; Jer 2:30; 5:3; 6:27-30; Ezek 24:13; Zep 3:1-4).
   4. Never balk or resist the word of God or God's word being preached, submit to it.
   5. When men are set in their ways to sin, they hate messages and messengers of reform.
   6. The judgment here is something you never want said of you – God forsaking you.
   7. If you resist God's reproofs long enough, irremediable judgment comes (Prov 29:1).

B. Isaiah pursued the metaphor of a totally sick body as a picture of national depravity.
   1. Though verses 7-8 will describe the chastening, let us see here revolting character.
   2. God would eventually forsake them due to incorrigible character under chastening.
   3. There was no part of them healthy with spiritual vitality for God and true religion.
   4. The head (mind) and heart (motives) had no good in them; they were fully corrupt.
   5. Repentance is the way to heal (II Cor 7:1; Heb 12:9-13; Jas 4:8-10; Rev 3:17-20).

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

A. Isaiah pursued the metaphor of a totally sick body as a picture of national depravity.
   1. Though verses 7-8 will describe the chastening, let us apply revolting character (5).
   2. God would eventually forsake them due to incorrigible character under chastening.
   3. There was no part of them healthy with spiritual vitality for God and true religion.
   4. The head (mind) and heart (motives) had no good in them; they were fully corrupt.

B. These Jews had made no effort to correct their maladies, which required full repentance.
   1. Disease and wounds of sin had spread until the whole body was infected and corrupt.
   2. Chastening can bring repentance, or denial, or revolt (what God saw as future in 5).
   3. Repentance is the way to heal (II Cor 7:1; Heb 12:9-13; Jas 4:8-10; Rev 3:17-20).

7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

A. The description here is of national tragedies of significant degree caused by outsiders.
   1. It was not total desolation: Jerusalem and the temple still existed (Is 1:11-15,21-23).
   2. Not all cities were burned, for this did not occur until Nebuchadnezzar and Titus.

3. The context indicates existing wealth and mighty men yet to sin (Isaiah 1:11,23,31).
4. The desolation is thus partial, but sufficient that reasonable men could have repented.

B. Since this cannot be after Nebuchadnezzar or Titus, when might we time this prophecy?
1. Neither does it fit Hezekiah's reign, for he originated a great revival of true religion.
2. It hardly matters, since God did not clearly state it, for the lessons are not altered.

C. It is easy to rush to the wicked reign of Ahaz, but there are several problems against it.
1. It is very true that terrible calamities occurred due to his reign (II Chron 28:1-27).
2. But, placement by Isaiah or the scribes as the first blast should be the reign of Uzziah.
3. For the timing of Isaiah's great vision in chapter 6 supposes this in Uzziah's reign.
4. The sin of this chapter is primarily hypocrisy, while that of Ahaz was total idolatry.
5. Functioning temple worship was not by Ahaz (II Kgs 16:14-18; II Chr 28:24; 29:3).
6. Under Ahaz, Israel was brought so low it is hard to see remaining wealth (Is 1:11,23).

D. Terrible calamities had befallen the Jews prior to Uzziah's reign that can be identified.
1. Note well that Isaiah as a prophet sees things stretching out for decades or centuries.
2. God had judged Judah by Syrians for king Joash (II Kgs 12:17-21; II Chr 24:23-27).
3. God had judged Judah by Israel for king Amaziah (II Kgs 14:8-14; II Chr 25:13-28).

E. From another angle, a prophet saw time in great swathes, so pinpointing has little profit.
1. The end of this section about Sodom and Gomorrah, if timed, must be the Chaldeans.
2. Isaiah could easily see back to Joash and Amaziah and forward to Nebuchadnezzar.

F. If the truth be told about these Jews, it is hard to find a time when they did not thus sin.

G. Other chapters will have similar obscure timing, but the lessons are hardly altered at all.

H. Too much emphasis on historical timing means a lack of application for today's reader.

8 And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

A. The city of Jerusalem is described as an insignificant, pitiful, small, or endangered city.

B. As noted above, Syria and Israel had both recently raided the land and had reduced it.

C. This cannot be destruction of Judah's fenced cities by Sennacherib (II Kings 18:13).
1. It is hard to imagine putting one of Isaiah's last warnings and prophecies first.
2. Hezekiah had promoted a great revival including the removal of the high places.
3. There was great wealth in the time of Hezekiah, thus his error with the ambassadors.

D. The lesson is to know and remember that God can easily reduce you to a pitiful state.

9 Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

A. If God had not kindly saved a few, the Jews' sins would have consumed all in judgment.

B. Paul quoted this verse in Romans 9 to confirm what he taught about sovereign election.

C. God's electing grace is taught through the Bible – here kindness to Judah and Jerusalem.

God Despises Hypocritical Worship – Verses 10-15

10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

A. Precious words of greeting from pastor to people – Isaiah to Judah's rulers and citizens!

B. Do not overlook the regular reminders that it was not Isaiah's rebuke but rather God's.

C. Pastors have a simple job description – *Preach the word!* – they should say it (II Ti 4:2).

D. People have a simple duty under them – *Hear the word!* – as Jesus said (Lu 8:21; 11:28).

E. The Spirit creatively transitioned from exceptions to Sodom and Gomorrah … to them.

11 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

A. God hates hypocritical worship, and He does not understand why people engage in it.
   1. He condemned halting between opinions – one or the other with zeal (I Kgs 18:21).
   2. He hated lukewarm over hot or cold – He would spew the lukewarm (Rev 3:14-21).
   3. Hypocritical worship fails to secure His blessings, brings His judgment, and it costs.
   4. Be wise – forget God and go feed yourself on the lusts of the world like a wild ass?

B. The sacrifices and offerings were straight from the Bible, but it does not mean anything.
   1. God does not care you are a member of a church that obeys the Bible quite carefully.
   2. Your exactitude with us on certain aspects of religion does not cover compromise.
   3. Sacrifices and prayers are an abomination from hypocrites (Prov 15:8; 21:27; 28:9).

C. Notice again the words of emphasis for your attention – *saith the LORD*. It is Jehovah!

D. Hypocrite! You live for yourself but show up Sundays. Why do you so? It has no value.
   1. Man up! Get out there in the world and fill your life with delicious sin (Ezek 20:39).
   2. Our God demands all your love, all your life, all your service … or He will judge.

E. Three Choices You Make Every Day.

12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

A. Our God – the omniscient Jehovah – confronted the Jews as to who made them attend.

B. Why do you attend church services? If your heart is not 100%, fix it, or watch MTV.

C. Do not attend church because family or friends expect it. Skip church for the world.

D. Outward worship for any reason but love is lose-lose; you miss the world; God hates it.

13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

A. The form of worship here, in the temple at Jerusalem, God had inspired through Moses.
   1. All the various assemblies and sacrifices had been detailed by God Himself for them.
   2. He stated that doing it *unto me* did not alter His critical and condemning judgment.

B. But if done with less than a perfect life, it is vain, abominable, unbearable, and iniquity.
   1. What was intended as keeping Moses' law became a despised act of further sin.
   2. Hear Isaiah at the other end – *He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol* (Is 66:3).

C. The words, *I cannot away with,* mean … I cannot bear, endure, or tolerate your worship.

D. What shall we say? How shall we apply such a standard opening and closing this book?
   1. Going to church without loving God and serving His kingdom is like devil worship.
   2. Professing Jesus Christ but living for yourself is like being gay and a transgender.
   3. Promising to serve this church at joining but not doing so is like kissing Pope Frank.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

A. God could not be clearer – He hates His religion practiced by those not living for Him.

B. Ordinances bother Him, trouble Him, and frustrate Him due to backsliding worshippers.

C. Those these were right acts of worship – unlike Ahaz – God hated them for hypocrisy.

15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

A. God does not hear prayers of sinners (Ps 66:18) – He abominates them (Pr 15:8; 28:9).
   1. He is omniscient – seeing all; omnipotent – doing all; but not for sinners (Is 59:1-8).
   2. Solomon warned that prosperity required confession rather than covering (Pr 28:13).

B. How are you treating your spouse – He punishes marital treachery (Mal 2:13; I Pet 3:7).

C. The self-righteous lawyers will excuse themselves – they have not committed murder.
   A. But Jesus said that anger without a cause is violation of the Sixth Commandment.
   B. And there are countless other ways you can hate or deprive others of deserved love.

D. There is some emphasis on civil rulers here due to context references (Is 1:10,21,23,31).

God Is Perfectly Just in His Dealings – Verses 16-20

16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ***cease to do evil;***

A. Everyone loves verse 18 in this section, but they hardly have a clue about its meaning.
B. This is practical repentance, reformation, and conversion on the part of these sinners.
    1. This was something they could do, should do, and would be punished if they did not.
    2. This was something they could do, should do, and would be rewarded if they did it.
    3. The consequences of doing so or not doing so were practical blessings or chastening.
C. Understand this verse and its context – the washing was their repentance from sinning.
    1. It is our job to rightly divide the word of truth for its sense, not sound (II Tim 2:15).
    2. God's children can cleanse themselves from the filth of sin (II Cor 7:1; James 4:8).
    3. David, though a sinner, understood he had practical cleanliness (Psalm 18:20; 26:6).
D. You can stop sinning, so that God no longer sees your sins, because they have ended.
E. You can stop sinning by choosing rather to do what is right in God's sight by the Bible.
F. The Bible is certainly an *if-then* warning and offer from God (Deut 28; II Cor 6:14-18).
G. Repentance and being an overcomer is our Lord's word with rewards (Rev chaps 2-3).

17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

A. Everyone loves verse 18 in this section, but they hardly have a clue about its meaning.
B. You can learn to do well – you better learn to do it (Ps 119:7; I Thess 4:1-12; Phil 4:11).
C. Here are five imperative clauses, with the last four different aspects of protecting others.
    1. Seek judgment by getting involved for equity (Is 1:23; Pr 31:9; Jer 22:3; Dan 4:27).
    2. Defend and protect the oppressed that have cruel persons taking advantage of them.
    3. Judge the fatherless who do not have ordinary means to save them from the violent.
    4. Go to bat for widows where you can to help them redress their grievances by others.
D. The five duties God demanded and expected were contrary to current practice (Is 1:23).
E. These were practical duties for practical salvation from threatened punishment (Is 1:20).

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

A. God spoke – He challenged the Jews to reason with Him if His system was not perfect.
    1. They could enjoy the good of the land promised to their fathers by obeying Him.
    2. They would be punished and taken from the land if they continued in disobedience.
    3. The Jews were very guilty of blaming God for an unfair system (Ezekiel 18:1-32).
B. Isaiah will prophesy of Jesus Christ and legal forgiveness of sins, but certainly not here.
    1. He did not reason with them that Jesus would wash away their sins no matter what.
    2. He did not reason with them that Jesus would wash away their sins for faith in Him.

3. These people did not know much about Jesus Christ , His blood, or legal forgiveness.
4. Like Nineveh at Jonah's preaching, they could repent and save their city from ruin.

C. No matter how stained with sin – red as scarlet or crimson – they could be fully clean.
1. Fussing about scarlet, snow, crimson, and wool is childish and distracting. Avoid it.
2. The transforming power of repentance cannot be overstated. He abundantly pardons.
3. God's forgiveness for confession, repentance, and reformation is just this glorious.
4. It is taught through the Bible (Job 33:27-28; Ps 32:5; Pr 28:13; Luke 15:7; I Jn 1:9).
5. Learn the importance of the 'R' Factor.

D. The cleansing here was by their repentance, reformation, and conversion to obedience.
1. It is stated that way very clearly in the first two verses of the section by imperatives.
2. It is stated that way very clearly in the next verse about their spirit and obedience.

E. It is Bible corruption to jump to Calvary for Jesus' blood making sinners legally white.
1. This is practical forgiveness of God to give natural blessings for their repentance.
2. Legal forgiveness of God for spiritual and eternal blessings is considerably different.
3. It is shame that the Wordless Book and other gimmicks corrupt minds from the truth.
4. No matter how sure you are what a verse means, we want only what God intended.

F. We love the legal work of Jesus on the cross, so we teach it where it is intended e.g. Zech 13:1; I Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5; Heb 1:3; 9:14; I Pet 1:18-19; I John 1:7; Rev 1:5; 7:14.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

A. The vital work of regeneration is ignored here, for they could and should repent of sins.
1. It is an axiom of scripture that God must work in the will and doing (Phil 2:12-13).
2. But he can also get Balaam's ass, many swine, or the Ninevites to do His bidding.
3. Diluting such passages by fussing about vital salvation leads to practical fatalism.

B. What a wonderful, conditional offer by the fairest Being in the universe – obey for good.

C. What mercy God extends over and over … though there is an end … for us to repent.

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

A. The opposite of repentance and reformation is to refuse fairness and rebel against God.

B. The sword would come – because God will not wait forever for repentance (Prov 29:1).

C. The sword did come, for the nation remained obstinate, so the Chaldeans razed them.

D. The mouth of the LORD spoke it – which makes it unalterable like no other (Esth 1:19).

Backsliding Described and Warned – Verses 21-24

21 How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged *in it; but now murderers.*

A. This section is about the terrible crime and sin of the Jews turning from their great gifts.
    1. Jerusalem had been a faithful city in worship, but in feminine terms was now a harlot.
    2. Jerusalem had been a faithful city in judgment, but now the judges were murderers.
B. What is the lesson for you? Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent (Re 2:5).
C. Backsliding is a terrible sin – turning away from goodness for filth of sin (II Peter 2:22).
D. For much more about the sin of backsliding.
E. For a commentary of Proverbs 14:14.

22 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

A. This is a metaphor to describe backsliding – corrupting good things with bad things.
    1. Silver is refined to get rid of dross, but backsliding is like adding dross back to it.
    2. Wine is carefully fermented to turn the juice to wine; adding water to dilute is insane.
    3. When God has converted you and lifted your heart and life up, why go back down?
    4. When God has cleaned you up and polished you for Him, why dirty yourself in sin?
B. This text should be remembered for the liars that say the Jews diluted their wine to juice.
    1. If the Jews diluted their wine back to juice, why did they ferment it to wine to start?
    2. If the Jews diluted their wine back to juice, why did excess use cause drunkenness?
    3. If the Jews diluted their wine back to juice, why did God here ridicule such a thing?
    4. If the Jews diluted their wine back to juice, why did they call Jesus a winebibber?

23 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

A. Consistent with directions for civil repentance above (Is 1:17), here are some chief sins.
B. Princes support government – they are pillars of it – but they were rebellious against it.
    1. First, they were rebellious against the king and the law – killing Joash and Amaziah.
    2. Second, they rebelled against law and justice – for they were associated with theft.
    3. Third, they loved bribes and were willing to corrupt the law for a mere gift or reward.
    4. Fourth, they did not get involved in cases for which their office existed – the helpless.
C. Are you fulfilling the roles God gave you? Or have you wandered from your duty?
D. Wandering from duty in Prov 27:8.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

A. Before Jehovah interrupted His blast with a saved remnant, He invoked a glorious name.

1. *Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel.* Glory! Amen!
2. *Thus saith the Lord* should be enough, but our God expanded it considerably here.

B. Because of their backsliding and the sins just listed, Jehovah would kill all His enemies.
   1. God hates sin and sinners – He hates all workers of iniquity – and He will judge sin.
   2. Paul piled on with a summary: *For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10:30-31).*

C. What a glorious statement of a king against whom there is no rising up (Prov 30:29-31).
   1. *Ah* … expression of angry dislike by One offended with power to revenge (Is 1:4).
   2. *I will ease me of mine adversaries* … He would end grief by hypocrisy (Is 1:10-15).
   3. *And avenge me of mine enemies* … willful sinners are His enemies to be destroyed.

D. He now promised prosperity for a remnant before He returned to judgment (Is 1:28-31).

A Remnant Purified and Prospered – Verses 25-27

25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

A. Here is one of those precious insertions by the prophet of promised/prophesied good!

B. Distinguish between vengeance on enemies (Is 1:24) and the purifying of others here.
   1. This is the remnant alluded to earlier (Is 1:9), which God would perfect in Babylon.
   2. His hand can come in judgment or assistance, and it is the latter here by purification.
   3. His hand of assistance and blessing would restore judges, righteousness, fairness.

C. The dross and tin were implied earlier as impurities resulting from backsliding (Is 1:22).

D. This great reformation and revival would result in the glory and prosperity that follows.

26 And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

A. Early history of Israel and Jerusalem had men like Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, etc.

B. Unfaithful rulers were identified as a cause for judgment on Judah (Is 1:10,17,21-23).

C. Did God do it? Most certainly! Think Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Maccabees, etc.

D. Of course, we do not want to overlook a perfect spiritual Jerusalem under Jesus' reign.

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

A. How would Judah and Jerusalem be restored? By God emptying His judgment on her.
   1. God judged the nation by eliminating the wicked and preserving elect in Babylon.
   2. God finished judgment of 70 years in Babylon and brought them again by His word.
   3. God also brought the Medes and Persians to destroy Babylon for her sinfulness.

B. How would citizens be restored? By God displaying righteousness in ruin and recovery.
    1. God purged out His wicked enemies and purified His elect remnant few in Babylon.
    2. He showed His righteousness in judgment, in keeping His promise, and in mercy.
    3. God also showed righteousness by destroying the worse, as explained in Habakkuk.

C. Here is one of those precious insertions by the prophet of promised/prophesied good!

Judah's Wicked to Be Destroyed – Verses 28-31

28 And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

A. The wicked persons outlined and described in the previous sections would be destroyed.

B. God was merciful and would recover a remnant (Is 1:25-27), but the rest were doomed.

C. As stated in this opening salvo, God had a remnant (Is 1:9), especially in Judah's Jews.

D. But God has no respect of persons, so those that provoke Him will not get away with it.

E. Be sure your sin will find you out … in certain discovery … and in certain punishment.

29 For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

A. High places and gardens were regular places of worship of pagans with groves of trees.
    1. They had been commanded to worship God's way only (Deut 12:1-4,11-14,29-32).
    2. We emphasize green trees and may overlook their use of oaks (Ezek 6:13; Hos 4:13).
    3. God could not have made it plainer about obedience or disobedience (Leviticus 26).
    4. While other kings let this issue slide, Hezekiah and Josiah did not (II Chr 31:1; 34:3).

B. False religion fails, and it brings God's wrath, which makes it shamefully confusing, for religion is to obtain divine blessing leading to human success, but not so in this case.
    1. The Jews would hate groves and high places of false worship (II Kgs 14:4; 15:4,35).
    2. The Jews would hate their gardens and false worship there also (Isaiah 65:3; 66:17).
    3. Why would they hate them? Because they would fail them … and bring judgment.

C. We must keep our worship pure at all times and in all ways – for two very good reasons.
    1. If we worship as the heathen and carnal Christians around us, we will not be blessed.
    2. If we worship as the heathen and carnal Christians around us, God will punish us.

D. God has one way of worship: any alteration or modification corrupts and condemns it.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

A. God by prophet Isaiah here mocked their groves of oak trees and their gardens of plants.

B. What Jehovah would do to them is burn them up, like dead and seasoned oak firewood!

C. What Jehovah would do to them is dry up their vitality, like a garden without any water!

31 And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.

A. Tow is fibers of flax, hemp, or jute, used for ropes, that burns quickly (Judges 15:14).
B. A spark is about all tow needs – for it is of fine fibers and completely dried of moisture.
C. The strong are wealthy false worshippers; the maker are those that set up false worship.
D. The two together – originators and participants in false worship – would all burn up.
E. This occurred in lesser degrees several times, but Nebuchadnezzar and Titus did it fully