

Judah's Just Punishment

Texts: Isaiah 3:1-4:1

Date: 6-14-20 Service at TBC 1pm

The folly of trusting man – Isa. 3:1-7

As a nation Judah had come to trust their accumulated wealth and prosperity. This in turn led them to idol worship and full-blown pride. As we unpack chapter 3 we find that Isaiah continues the Lord's message which told the nation that God's wrath and judgment was near on the people.

You see since man is transient, the nation's trust in man is of utter hopelessness because the Lord will remove man from the picture. Therefore, it is foolish to continue to rely on man.

The military and government would be struck down and judged for their wicked ways. These were the people in leadership who would be struck down for leading the people in the opposite direction that they should have been going.

With the removal of the leadership, government entities, and religious people, the nation would collapse. Isaiah now shows that inexperienced and unqualified leadership would fill the void. The idea here is of *inexperienced boys and children*.

The lack of leadership would lead to *oppression* of his friends and neighbors. The young people will not follow their elders and the despised will rise up against the honorable. Chaos and lawlessness will rule the nation. Disrespect and defiance to authority (anarchy) will become the norm of the day. The adolescents and inexperienced men will lose control quickly of the nation. The sole qualification of being a ruler will be that he has a cloak or clothing.

No one will desire to be a ruler over this type of chaos. Whereas normally government restricts lawlessness, it will become every man for himself. Therefore, anyone that is capable of ruling will be blamed for the certain ruin that is sure to follow.

No one will want to be a ruler!

The wounds are so great that no amount of treatment would be nearly good enough to cure this tragedy.

Oh what folly and failures had befallen God's people! This lesson is stated so clearly in this chapter: failure to trust God will lead a nation and people group down a path of total destruction. No amount of man-made solution will stem the tide. When man is left to his own desires, no man will even desire to rule. The nation will collapse from the inside out. The leadership had become so insolent and then had been run out of town, which would open them up for any opposing nation to be able to come and destroy Judah.

God will justly act on the basis of His character - Isa. 3:8-15

Judah's actions that would bring destruction and ruin are summarized in this verse. Their speech and actions were directly against God and His law.

Specifically, their words and deeds had provoked *the eyes of His glory*. This phrase means *His glorious eyes* or *the glorious presence of the Lord*.

Their sin was so blatant that it could not be overlooked. When we flaunt our sin in front of the person we are sinning against, that is a sin of high-handed rebellion. When a nation so stoops to deliberate sin against God's glory, then it shows how far away from God it has fallen. God's eyes of glory pictures the very truth that He sees all of mankind's actions. See Ps. 73:9-11.

When we mock God's laws, as Judah did, we can expect the judgment of God to befall our nation if we do not turn back to God.

When God judges, the righteous do not have to fear and can rest in His character.

God does not judge based on fairness; He judges on the basis of His character.

The unrighteous will also be rewarded according to their deeds. Here Isaiah calls them *my [Isaiah's] people*. The children and women are in control now. Either the men were acting weak like women or women were actually ruling now. Isaiah now loudly echoes that these inept leaders were leading the people astray and confused the direction of their paths.

God will judge according to His purposes and plans. God's judgment will only be stopped if man chooses to repent. This first phrase is judicial in nature and indicates that the Lord is taking His place in the courtroom to make the final decision.

God cannot and will not allow sin to go without judgment. This goes against His holy and righteous character.

God was bringing an indictment upon the leaders of the nation for their mistreatment of the people. God was saying that the judgment would be warranted. God always perfectly states His case, and He will exact the perfect judgment upon those who fail to obey and follow Him. Make application for today.

The prideful women will come to a terrible end – Isa. 3:16-4:1

In the last section we find the women (v. 12), who were trying to attract attention as they walked with their noses in the air, flirting with their ogling eyes, strutting small steps, and jingling the ornaments on their feet. They were showing off. They were seeking to lure others into their prideful ways. They walked with their necks outstretched (noses in the air) and ogling eyes (flirting with their eyes). This well could represent the pride of the whole nation. Even if it is specific to the women, when we add the men of the prior verses, we have a comprehensive indictment against the whole nation.

The issue wasn't the ladies beauty. The issues were not their ornaments in and of themselves. The issue had become one of inner pride and corruption of the heart which manifested itself outwardly.

The haughtiness would be exposed for what it was and their pride would be squashed through this series of humbling experiences. The exposing of their shame would be the very means that God would humble them.

Pride will never win in God's eyes. God hates a proud look. Prov. 16:18. God resists the proud (James 4:6). Those who exhibit shameful ways before the Lord will in the end be shamed themselves.

The women are left empty, mourning, and sitting on the ground hopeless.

What is the bottom line? Judah had proven once for all that it was folly to trust in man and man's ways. Pride always leads to a hard fall. God will judge on His character.

How does Isaiah 3 apply to me?

- 1) We trust in man to great peril to our own lives.
- 2) Opposition to the Lord will always ultimately lead to ruin and destruction.
- 3) God has a standard and that standard applies to the people then and to us in this dispensation.

What does this passage reveal about the character and nature of God?

- 1) God will not be mocked (v. 8).
- 2) God's will cannot be thwarted.
- 3) But God's will can be moved by our repentance.
- 4) The Lord will judge in His time and in His way (vs. 13-14).

Action Points

1. We must fully trust God's ways and active will in our lives and in the world around us.
2. We have nothing to worry about when we entrust our lives and the lives of others into the hand of God's justice.
3. Despite those who flaunt sin and oppose God in our world today, we must continue to live with humble and repentant hearts.
4. We must recognize that all of us are susceptible to any of the sins listed here. It is only through God's grace and mercy that we have been regenerated and changed.