

Book of Isaiah



Chapter 3

Theme: The cause of Israel's undoing: weak government; loose and low morals

Michael Fronczak

**564 Schaeffer Dr.
Coldwater, Michigan 49036**

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This is a continuation of the prophecy begun in chapter 2 (chs. 2 -- 5 constitute a complete prophecy). In this section on judgment, chapter 3 reveals God's judgment leveled particularly against the nation of Israel. Although it has application to other nations, the interpretation is definitely to Israel. Further along in this judgment section we will see God's judgment of surrounding nations, which are among the most remarkable prophecies in the Word of God, and many of them have been literally fulfilled. However, we find that God's judgment against Israel is more severe and intense than against any other nation. Why? Well, Israel was the nation God had chosen in a peculiar way, and it enjoyed a particularly close relationship to God. Privilege creates responsibility.

Because privilege always creates responsibility, I believe God will judge the United States more severely than He will judge any of our contemporary nations -- like China, for example. The United States has been privileged to know the Word of God as no other nation has -- except Israel.

Israel as a nation had more light than any of its neighbors, and light rejected brings severe punishment, as will be illustrated in this book.

The subject of God's judgment may be offensive to you, but please don't hide your head in the sand like the proverbial ostrich. Let's face reality whether we like it or not. God does judge sin. Not only will He judge sin in the future, He has judged it in the past. And He makes no apology for it.

The prophecy before us is a picture of Isaiah's day, and it has been fulfilled. However, its fulfillment does not exhaust its meaning, because the conditions described will prevail again at the end times and will bring down the wrath of God in judgment -- not only upon Israel but also upon the nations of the world.

The first fifteen verses deal with the subject of weak government and women's dress. These seem to be totally unrelated subjects, but we shall see that they are not as far removed as they appear to be. Weak government is caused by a lack of leadership, as evidenced by women rulers -- and we will see what Isaiah means by this.¹

Having affirmed in broad terms (2:9-21) that judgment would come, Isaiah gave examples of present sins in the nation that needed to be judged by God.

This section gives particular examples of the general statements that precede it. Isaiah's point was that depending on people will not yield the glorious destiny of Israel depicted in 2:1-4. The prophet used imagery to make his point rather than logical argumentation.

Verses 1 to 5 are a list of punishments that God will send. Rashi (the 12th century French commentator), quoting the Talmud (Hagigah 14a), says that these curses mount up to a climax, the worst of all of them being: "The child shall behave insolently against the aged." (Verse 5). The contempt and the hostility of the young generation against the older is deemed by the prophet and the Talmud to be the worst curse that can come to a society.²

¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

² <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/isaiah-31-15-a-commentary/4/>

¹For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

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.³

For links this oracle with the previous exhortation to sever a relationship with an arrogant man (2:22). God takes away Judah's leaders through the sword and exile. No historical reference is given because the truth is universal (see 2 Kin. 25:18–21).

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 heavens armies.

So when it is The Master of All, Yahweh of Heavens 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. This is also the reason why he calls God *the Lord* and *Jehovah of hosts*, that the majesty of God may terrify their drowsy and sluggish minds; for God has no need of titles, but our ignorance and stupidity must be aroused by perceiving his glory. (Calvin)

Isaiah uses the name of God a number of times in conjunction with other words that make the construction difficult for translation. The Hebrew word for "lord" *adonai* is translated "Lord" here and the name of God, "YHWH" is translated "LORD."

The words "stay" and "staff" are the same words in Hebrew. One is masculine and the other is feminine. Mash'en masc. is translated "stay," and Mash'enah fem. is translated staff. Both mean support or a crutch to lean on, that which you use to support yourself.⁴

"For" ties this section to the argument of 2:6-22. "Behold" (Heb. *hinneh*) commonly introduces a threat in prophetic material. The multiple names of God again hint at judgment to come (cf. 1:24; 10:16, 33; 19:4). God was going to remove what was essential from Judah and Jerusalem. Supply" (Heb. *mash'en*) and "support" (Heb. *mash'ena*) are masculine and feminine forms of the same word in Hebrew, meaning a staff, suggesting that every type of support will be removed. The figures of bread and water stand for food and drink—famine will come—but in a larger sense these things also represent all that is essential to the nation.⁵

³ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

⁴ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa3-6.htm>

⁵ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

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. 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.

²The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,

God would take away from... Judah any semblance of good government and replace it with a sense of futility. Because of her sin the Lord would take away all the supplies and people on which she relied: food and water (v. 1), soldiers (v. 2), civil (judge) and religious (prophet) leaders (v. 2), wise people (v. 2), military leaders (v. 3a), and skilled workers (v. 3b).⁶

The fact that Isaiah included the soothsayer (v. 2) and the clever enchanter (v. 3) in this list does not mean he was endorsing them. He was merely noting those on whom the nation was depending for survival and security. The Mosaic Covenant prohibited involvement in soothsaying and enchanting (Deut. 18:10-14). Isaiah himself wrote about Babylon trusting in this kind of activity (Isa. 47:12).⁷

Isaiah was not condoning fortune-tellers and astrologers by including them in this list. He was showing how far the nation had sunk.

³The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.

This is a list of the "great" men that the people were trusting instead of God.⁸

God is going to remove not only bread and water but all the men of leadership. Qualified men for high positions are lacking, and this is a judgment from God.

This can be brought up to date. Have you been impressed by the fact that there are no great men on the contemporary scene? There are quite a few men who are passing themselves off as great, but they would have been pygmies in the days of Washington, Lincoln, Jackson, Teddy Roosevelt, or the men who wrote the Declaration of Independence. I am not taking sides with any political party when I say this, but today there are many ambitious men, young and old alike,

⁶ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁷ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁸ The Believers Study Bible Notes

who have practically no qualifications as statesmen. One hundred years ago they would have been called cheap politicians, but today they are called statesmen!

We have men of war, but we have no great generals. Our army would not be in the situation it is in today if it had strong leadership. There is lack of leadership in our judicial system. We have an alarming crime wave because we have pygmies sitting in the seats of judgment. Where is the prophet, the prudent, and the ancient? We have no statesmen at all today. What we have is a group of clever politicians who know how to compromise. I am not talking about a certain political party. I am simply saying that it is always the mark of a decadent age and the judgment of God when a nation is not producing great men.

Moving into the field of the arts -- what greatness do you see on the television screen? I get rather bored with the television talk programs. Generally, the master of ceremonies comes out and says, "I am going to introduce you to a great artist, a genius." And some little peanut comes out on stage, strums a guitar -- doesn't play any music at all -- just yells at the top of his voice. And he is hailed as a genius! Another man comes along who is introduced as a great literary light, and all that he has written is a dirty book. My friend, we lack greatness in this day, but we are not willing to admit it because we have become a proud nation.

Where is greatness in the field of education? We used to believe that the educators had the solution to the problems of the world. Today it is obvious that educators cannot control even their own campuses.

It is said that we used to have wooden ships and iron men, but now we have iron ships and wooden men. I would go further than that and call them paper doll men. Our leadership is just a string of paper dolls!⁹

Verses 2 and 3: These are the supports of the nation that will disappear and what follows in the next two verses is what will be left afterward. The prosperity of the nations of Judah and Israel with the "stays and staffs" were still in place when this prophecy was given. Not only was the wealth of the nation to be gone but the leaders would disappear. The prosperity that Israel enjoyed has been described in the last chapter in Isaiah 2:7.¹⁰

In contrast with these people who were considered wise and mighty the Lord would raise up foolish, weak leadership. Inexperienced **boys** and **children** (3:4; cf. Ecc. 10:16, niv marg.) would be unable to stop oppression and conflict (Isa. 3:5). Anybody who could be grabbed would be placed in charge of the people, his only qualification (v. 6) being that he owned a **cloak**. **But** the only thing over which he would rule anyway would be a **heap of ruins**. The leaders would have no solution to the problem shortages the people would face (v. 7). Isaiah was speaking of the coming devastation of Judah by the Babylonian army.¹¹

"To make great men the source of a nation's greatness is always to end up with a dearth of great men. Unless the greatness comes from within the community itself, a condition which is ultimately the result of trust in God, no great leaders will rise from it. Instead, the leaders will merely reflect the spiritual poverty of the community."¹²

⁹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁰ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa3-6.htm>

¹¹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary:

¹² Oswalt, p. 131.

The Lord would remove the leading men in the military, political, religious, and commercial spheres of life. These were people the Israelites depended on. This happened when the Babylonians conquered the city and the land (cf. 2 Kings 24:14), and earlier when the Assyrians defeated Israel.¹³

Judah's administration was organized around warriors—mighty man, man of war, captain of fifty; sages—judge, elder, honorable man, counselor; religious mediums—prophet, diviner, enchanter; and craftsmen—artisan.

The two following verses, Isaiah 3:2, 3, are very clearly explained by the sacred historian's account of the event, the captivity of Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon: "And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land," 2 Kings 24:14. Which is supplied by our version.

⁴And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

As far as ability is concerned, men in high positions today should be wearing diapers. Juvenile adults are our rulers, and they are totally incompetent. That is exactly what brought Israel down to ruin in that day. Their leaders had the mental level of children, and God sent them into captivity. He judged them.¹⁴

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 mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, and the diviner and the elder; the captain of fifty and the honorable man, the counselor and the skillful artisan, and the expert enchanter. Instead of wise, competent leaders, God will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

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 heart's desire. This crisis of leadership can happen even in economically prosperous times (Isaiah 2:7 is part of this same prophecy). The terrible effect of this judgment of God, the granting of incompetent and ungodly leaders, may not be immediately seen, but it will be certainly seen, apart from the repentance of a nation and the mercy of God.¹⁵

Because of the Lord's judgment on Judah, the shrewd, ungodly leaders would be replaced by children and babes, meaning inexperienced and incompetent leaders.

¹³ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

¹⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁵ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

We must not forget that the Great Tribulation is not just for God to judge the world. Those final seven years of man's reign on the earth are devoted to the Jews, Daniel was told. The final week of years is for the Jews and Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24). It is called "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7).

For the Jews, things will be terribly difficult. There will be such a shortage of men that they will be turning to anyone to help them. Even a teenager, if he has a little more than they do, will seem like a good candidate for a leader at the time, even if he protests.¹⁶

3:4 *And babes shall rule over them.* The word translated "babes" (*ta'alulim*) is variously interpreted by the commentators. The Targum (the Aramaic translation/interpretation) says, "You will be governed by weaklings." Rashi takes the word to mean "mockers." The people will have so little respect for their leaders that there will be a general air of cynicism. Kimchi says it means the young since, as stated in the previous verses, the older leaders will all be killed in war and famine. The Malbim (Meir Loeb ben Jehiel Michael, 1809-1879) agrees that it means "young" but indicates that the word itself implies impulsiveness. In other words, "You will be governed by the young, who themselves will be motivated by wild impulses." Krauss offers a similar explanation: "You will be governed by youth, who will rule you with violence."¹⁷

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⁵And the people shall be oppressed, everyone by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

Part of God's judgment will be the removal of the objects of trust and their replacement by inadequate substitutes.¹⁹

My friend, it sounds as if Isaiah were talking about our day, but the same was true in his day. The child, the little college student, is saying, "Listen to me. I have something to say." I have been listening to them for years, and I haven't heard them say anything yet. One class is set against another class. "The people shall be oppressed, everyone by another." We have groups of minorities who want to inflict their ways on others. Christians are a minority also, but certainly we are not being heard.²⁰

¹⁶ Ron Daniel Bible Studies: <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah.php>

¹⁷ <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/isaiah-31-15-a-commentary/4/>

¹⁸ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide_Isa/Isa_3.cfm?a=682001

¹⁹ The Believers Study Bible Notes

²⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

"Good government is one of God's best gifts to a sinful race. How great then is the sin of those who refuse to concern themselves with their responsibilities as citizens of the state!"²¹

For everyone to be oppressed by another describes a state of anarchy. In such an upside-down world, child is against elder, the base against the honorable. In His judgment, the Lord has given over the wicked to their own evil ways.

Part of God's judgment will be the removal of the objects of trust and their replacement by inadequate substitutes.

⁶When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand:

As a result of God's judgment the people will become desperate for leadership, but the hardness of their hearts will prevent their consideration of God as the best leader.²²

Thou hast a mantle. Rashi bases his comment on the Talmud (Sabbath 119b) in which knowledge of the law is compared to a garment, and therefore he says the verse means, "You have learning, so become our ruler." Kimchi says it means, "You look respectable; be our ruler." Ibn Ezra says, "We do not want anything from you; keep your clothes, just rule us."²³

⁷In that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be an healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.

For there is hardly any conduct more offensive, or more fitted to disturb our minds, than when the worst examples of every sort are publicly exhibited by magistrates, while no man utters a syllable against them, but almost all give their approbation. (Calvin)

Things will become so bad, that in the minds of the people, the smallest achievements will qualify a man for leadership: You have clothing, you be our ruler, and let these ruins be under your hand. Yet, even such a man will not want to lead: In that day, he will protest, saying, I cannot cure your ills . . . do not make me a ruler of the people.²⁴

It is astonishing how realistically the prophet is here able to describe the consequences of a total collapse of the state. Anyone who remembers the months that followed May 1945 in Germany will have the sensation in reading this passage of being carried right back to these days. (Kaiser, cited in Grogan)

²¹ Young, 1:145.

²² The Believers Study Bible Notes

²³ <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/isaiah-31-15-a-commentary/4/>

²⁴ <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

Note the stages in Israel's degradation that verses 1-7 trace. Good leaders disappear (vv. 1-3), and immature, capricious leaders (v. 4) who begin to oppress the populace (v. 5) take their place. Society becomes divided as age gaps open up and respect for the respectable breaks down (v. 5). Unqualified people get pressed into leadership, and a spirit of despair dominates elections (vv. 6-7). Even though Israel and Judah were monarchies, the people did have the opportunity and responsibility for choosing some of their leaders.²⁵

⁸For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

The phrase “eyes of His glory” means that Judah defied God to His face.²⁶

"Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen" -- that's what the prophet says. We don't have many of God's men in our day standing up, pointing at our nation, and saying, "Our cities are ruined," although it is as true as it was in Isaiah's time.

"Because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory." This is the key to the chapter, and it is the key to the ruin of Israel and of any other nation. God judges nations by their relationship to Him.

The problem with the United States of America is that God has been run out of Washington, D.C. God has been ruled out in every area of our lives. A few little men think they can rule the world. How we need to be humbled, and I think we have been humbled. Russia has humbled us. China has humbled us. And little Vietnam humbled us. We are being humbled all over the world; yet we don't wake up. We continue merrily on our way, coasting downhill on our godly ancestry.²⁷

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)²⁸

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²⁵ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

²⁶ The Believers Study Bible Notes

²⁷ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²⁸ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

²⁹ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide_Isa/Isa_3.cfm?a=682001

⁹The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide *it* not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

Show Appearance of their countenance; there is a similar accusation laid at the door of Cain whom God said had a "fallen" face. If Cain was doing well he would be "lifted up" but as it was his face gave away the evil in his heart. So then the inhabitants of Jerusalem who take on the aspects associated with their sin. This is often the case, though not always so else there could be no hypocrites, with those who are committed to certain sins.³⁰

Sin is out in the open. What used to be done in the backyard has been moved to the front yard. What was done under cover is now done in the open. The boast is that we are more honest now. No, we're not more honest; we are the same hypocrites that our fathers were. They were hypocrites because they hid their sin, and we are hypocrites because we are sinning out in the open and trying to say that the sin is good! This is exactly what Israel was saying.³¹

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.³²

Impure propensities are particularly legible in the eyes: whoever has beheld the face of a *debauchee* or a *prostitute* knows this; of these it may be said, they wish to appear what they really are. They glory in their iniquity. This is the highest pitch of ungodliness. (Clarke)

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 is approved, and no one is allowed to proclaim a standard unless they live up to it perfectly.

Outward decency *is* important. It is important to *not* talk about many sins, even though they exist, and sometimes touch the church. It is through these means that God's people *declare a standard*, even though they or the world do not perfectly measure up to a standard. Ephesians 5:12 matters here: *For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

One of the most destructive lies of our time is that it is wrong or hypocritical to have a standard that we don't live up to. No one has *always* told the truth, yet it is right and good to teach our children, Don't lie. It would be wrong, and destructive, for someone to answer, You can't tell your child not to lie. You have lied in the past. You are a hypocrite. This attitude in our society translates into a certain result: *a wholesale lowering of standards*. Also, the charge of *hypocrisy* is false. It is not hypocritical to promote a standard you don't perfectly meet. Hypocrisy is when you *pretend* to keep the standard when you do not, or think it is fine for you to *not keep the standard*, when you think others *should*.³³

The maintenance of external decency is at least some evidence of a conscience not altogether seared. (Jennings)

³⁰ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa3-6.htm>

³¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

³² <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

³³ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves: God did not have to do anything unique or special to bring this judgment on Jerusalem and Judah. All He had to do was leave them alone, and allow them to **have brought evil upon themselves**.

When the Lord gives a nation the leadership they desire and deserve, it is either a blessing or a curse. In Judah's case in the time of Isaiah, it was a curse. In the United States at the end of the 20th Century, it is a curse.³⁴

3:9-11 The people would be proud of their sins, parading them out in the open. But sin is self-destructive. In today's world, sinful living often appears glamorous, exciting, and clever. But sin is wrong, regardless of how society perceives it, and, in the long run, sin will make us miserable and destroy us. God tries to protect us by warning us about the harm we will cause ourselves by sinning. Those who are proud of their sins will receive the punishment from God they deserve. Having rejected God's path to life (see Psalm 1), they had only one alternative—the path to destruction.³⁵

Instead of bowing before Yahweh's glorious face, the Israelites were with brazen faces rebelling against Him, as the people of Sodom did. So it would go hard for them. "Woe" is an interjection of threat or distress. This Hebrew word, 'oy , and its companion, hoy , occur 22 times in Isaiah, more frequently than in any other prophetic book. The Israelites had brought the judgment of God on themselves by their pride.³⁶

The people's tongue and look betray their arrogance against God. Considered a horribly sinful city (1:9), Sodom had been destroyed by God (Gen. 19). Yet Judeans were parading their defiance against God just like the Sodomites.

¹⁰Say ye to the righteous, that *it shall be well with him*: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

God promises to deliver His own people.

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)³⁷

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.

³⁴ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

³⁵ Life Application Study Bible.

³⁶ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

³⁷ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

Verses 8 and 10: Practices (or habits) is: Ma'al-leyhem from ma'alaliym as in verse 8. This word refers to the daily ordinary habits that are routine. See comments under Zechariah 1:4 and 5. In verse 8 the conditions were not that of committing sins as a violation of what is considered the "norm" but that sin was itself the ordinary way of life which was practiced thoughtlessly as the propriety of their perceived world. The righteous would also fare in the same way: that is the habits of anyone will have an ultimate natural outcome. Whether the righteous or the wicked, their habits will have an end that is predictable, as the next verse says.³⁸

3:10, 11 In the middle of this gloomy message, God gives hope: Eventually the righteous will receive God's reward, and the wicked will receive their punishment. It is disheartening to see the wicked prosper, while we struggle to obey God and follow his plan. But let us keep holding on to God's truth and take heart! God will bring about justice in the end, and he will reward those who have been faithful.³⁹

¹¹Woe unto the wicked! *it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.*

Woe is an interjection of distress or of a threat voiced in the face of present or coming disaster. Isaiah's book includes 22 occurrences of that word or its companion word *hōy*, more than in any other prophetic book.

This is another way of saying, "Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap."

Spurgeon on Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him: It shall be ill with the wicked, and let no present appearance lead you to doubt it . . . The eyes that never weep for sin here will weep in awful anguish forever . . . It will be a profitable thing for thee to feel the wrath of God heavy on thy spirit now, for if not, it will crush thee, crush thee down and down without hope, world without end. It shall be ill with you.

The faithful minority, however, would not simply get lost in the judgment of the unfaithful majority, but the Lord would remember them and send them good. Sin does bring its own wage s (Rom. 6:23). Here the long-term blessing of the righteous contrasts with the short-term blasting of the unrighteous. There were these two groups among God's chosen people then as there are now. The faithful frequently suffer along with the unfaithful, but their ultimate ends are very different (cf. Rev. 2:10-11).⁴⁰

³⁸ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa3-6.htm>

³⁹ Life Application Study Bible.

⁴⁰ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

¹²As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

This verse depicts the rulers as childish, weak, incompetent men who were leading the people astray. The intention may not be to criticize a particular leader (e.g., Ahaz), but to show the prophet's contempt for all the existing leadership.⁴¹

[children are their oppressors, and women rule over them] This shows the extreme weakness and ruin of Judah in their sinful days. Women and children here might represent weak and inexperienced rulers. It could also refer to the influence of the harem and the females at court, or to the kings and princes of Judah being effeminate.⁴²

[they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths] This may refer to the prophets and teachers of Judah who were leading sinful lives themselves, flattering the people and promising them safety in their sins (Isa. 9:15; 28:7; Jer. 6:10; 8:10; 14:18; 23:11). The Lord promised to judge His people for this (Isa. 3:13-15).⁴³

"Children are their oppressors." The greatest problem in our day is juvenile delinquency. The greatest increase in crime is among young people, and the age drops every year.

"Women rule over them." Oh, "women's lib" will not like Isaiah, and they won't like me any better. "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths." Whether women rulers are meant here or effeminate men is not clear. I think it is a little of both. The women's liberation movement is another sign of a decadent age. When women act like men, they are not coming up to a high level but are descending to the male level. The woman has been given a greater amount of tenderness, but when she becomes as blasé and brutal as a man, she actually becomes worse than he is. And that is the downfall of the nation. That was true in Israel's case, and it will be true in our own nation. Go to Italy and see the ruins of Pompeii, and then consider what removed the Romans from the earthly scene. The nation that once ruled the world collapsed -- not because they were attacked by someone on the outside, but because they fell from within.

Listen to Him now as He pleads with His people:

The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.⁴⁴

As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them: Again, the Lord both declares and bemoans His judgment on Judah, that they have been given incompetent and ungodly leadership. Those who lead you cause you err, and destroy the way of your paths.

Women rule over them: this was seen as a curse, not a blessing. Certainly, God may raise up particular women at particular times to be leaders in different spheres. Deborah (Judges 4-5) and Esther are examples of this. But this entirely different than a society where, in general, women rule over them. Such a society is cursed, not blessed.⁴⁵

⁴¹ The Believers Study Bible Notes

⁴² Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

⁴³ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

⁴⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁴⁵ <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

Isaiah personally bemoaned the plight of the people who had already begun to experience the frustration of incompetent leaders and who would have to endure still more of the same. In his day, women did not have the educational advantages that men enjoyed, and so were less quipped to lead than men. Children, in spite of their lack of maturity, experience, perspective, and wisdom, were nonetheless needed to lead adults. Unqualified leaders were leading the people astray and giving them confusing directions concerning God's will. God's special gift to His people throughout history involved furnishing inspired leaders. Now He would withdraw them.⁴⁶

A babe is their master and women rule over them. The same word here is used for "babe" as in Verse 4, and the commentators translate it as either a symbol of weak rulers or of mockers and cynics. Kimchi adds that, because of their sexuality (it has been a common misconception, from ancient times up to the present day, that women are more sexually enticing, and more sexually motivated, than men are), the men will fall under the domination of women. Krauss calls attention to the fact that the word for "women" (*nashim*) can also be read as "creditors," and that all the ancient translations indicate that one of the misfortunes that will come to them is that they will be always in the hands of their creditors.⁴⁷

¹³The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

The Lord stands up to plead, and stands to judge the people. The Lord will enter into judgment with the elders of His people and His princes: For you have eaten up the vineyard; the plunder of the poor *is* in your houses. What do you mean by crushing My people and grinding the faces of the poor? says the Lord God of hosts.

The Lord stands up to plead, and stands to judge the people: Here, the Lord is both a *prosecutor* (stands up to plead) and a judge against Judah. When you are in court, and the prosecutor and the judge are the same person, you know you are going to be found guilty!⁴⁸

3:13-15. Isaiah pictured the Lord seated in a courtroom ready to judge the people and especially the leaders. By stating that He rises to judge Isaiah meant that God, having the authority to judge, was about to do so. Two charges were leveled against the leaders. The first is that they had ruined God's vineyard (v. 14), that is, God's people (5:1, 7; cf. Ps. 80:8-18; Jer. 2:21; 12:10; Ezek. 15:6-8; Hosea 10:1). Like husbandmen caring for a vineyard, the leaders were to care for the people. But they had ruined the people by oppressing (crushing, Isa. 3:15a) them. The second charge is that they had taken advantage of the poor (vv. 14b, 15b) by plundering them (stealing what little they had) and grinding their faces. This violated the commands in the Book of Deuteronomy not to oppress others, especially widows, orphans, and the poor. Concern for the poor is also encouraged and illustrated in the New Testament (Acts 9:36; 10:4, 31; 24:17; James 1:27; 2:1-9). A materialistic, oppressive spirit was symptomatic of the leaders' self-centeredness. Rather than seeing their leadership positions as service opportunities they saw them as means of making money at the expense of others.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Watts, p. 41.

⁴⁷ <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/isaiah-31-15-a-commentary/4/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

⁴⁹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹⁴The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.

"The ancients" and "the princes" are the leaders of the nation. God lays the blame on the adult leadership. The juvenile problem did not originate with young people.

In Isaiah's time there were a few who were trying to get rich and rule over everyone else. "The spoil of the poor is in your houses." Godless capitalism and godless labor are big problems in our nation, and one is as bad as the other. The whole difficulty is that we are away from God. God is standing up ready to plead or ready to judge, and He will let the nation determine which it will be. We can have it either way. He will do one or the other.⁵⁰

The plunder of the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing My people, and grinding the faces of the poor? Gods charge against the elders and the princes of Israel is not that they have *failed to help the poor*. That would be bad in itself. But far worse than that, they have *robbed* the poor, and taken advantage of their poverty to enrich themselves.

3:14 The elders and rulers were responsible to help people, but instead they stole from the poor. Because they were unjust, Isaiah said the leaders would be the first to receive God's judgment. Leaders will be held accountable for how they lead. If you are in a position of leadership, you must lead according to God's just commands. Put the needs of others before your own. Fulfill the purpose God intended. Don't seek your own advantage. Corruption will bring God's wrath, especially if others follow your example.

3:14 Why is justice so important in the Bible? (1) Justice is part of God's nature; it is the way he runs the universe. (2) It is a natural desire in every person. Even as sinners, we all want justice for ourselves. (3) When government and church leaders are unjust, the poor and powerless suffer. Thus, they are hindered from worshipping God. (4) God holds the poor in high regard. They are the ones most likely to turn to him for help and comfort. Injustice, then, attacks God's children. When we do nothing to help the oppressed, we are, in fact, joining with the oppressor. Because we follow a just God, we must uphold justice.⁵¹

¹⁵What mean ye *that* ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

¹⁶Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing *as* they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

3:16-4:1 This passage contains a double reference: to the arrogant and immodest women of Jerusalem, and to the nation as a whole. In view of the context, Isaiah is just continuing his efforts at condemning pride and self-sufficiency and announcing the coming judgment for such sinful attitudes. This passage is not saying that it is improper for women to be well attired. Rather, it is saying that it is wrong for one to so trust in his material wealth that he becomes self-sufficient instead of dependent on God. Isaiah notes several sins of women: (1) vanity, (2)

⁵⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵¹ Life Application Study Bible.

immodesty and shamelessness in conduct, and (3) pride and haughtiness in spirit. These are all corrupting influences which decay and ruin a nation. When women fall into corruption, the moral decay reaches the heart of the land.⁵²

Five Things God Hates in Women

1. Haughtiness and pride (Isa. 3:16; 10:33; Prov. 6:17; 18:12; Ezek. 16:50; Zeph. 3:11).
2. Walking with stretched forth necks (Isa. 3:16; Neh. 9:16; Ps. 75:5). This means displaying the neck, elevating and extending it as far as possible, thus indicating pride and haughtiness.
3. Walking with wanton eyes (Isa. 3:16). The Hebrew: *saqar* (HSN-[H8265](#)) means to lie or deceive, and refers here to the art of alluring by a wanton look of the eyes (Prov. 6:13; 10:10). The Moffatt and Berkeley versions read "ogling eyes," meaning to look at another with improper admiration and coarse familiarity. This is the opposite of shamefacedness (note, 1Tim. 2:9) which is the godly reserve known to chaste women.
4. Walking and mincing as they go, walking seductively to attract the lusts of men (Isa. 3:16).
5. Making a tinkling with their feet (Isa. 3:16). In Isaiah's time the women wore ankle rings, bells and other ornaments which would strike together as they walked, attracting and charming men. Some joined the ankle rings with short chains which would make a sound as they walked and also compel the wearer to take short steps, resulting in the mincing and tinkling described.

Isaiah pronounced God's judgment upon the women for these customs, proving they were lascivious in purpose and practice -- a thing which God hates (Isa. 3:17-24).⁵³

What a picture of womanhood! The problem, of course, is in the heart. In 1Peter 3:1-4 we read, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation [or, conduct] coupled with fear. [This doesn't mean that she is to take abuse from him, but she is to live a godly life before him.] Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; [if you are trying to hold your husband with sex, you'll lose him]. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

When I counsel with young couples I always tell them that there are three cords that hold marriage together, and a threefold cord is not easily broken. There is the physical cord, and that is important. Also there is the psychological cord -- the same interests. Third, there is the spiritual cord -- the same love for God and His work. If a wife is trying to hold her husband with only her physical attraction, the time will come when he is no longer interested. This is what Peter is saying. A wife's attraction should be more than the way she dresses and styles her hair. Her beauty should be in the way she lives her life with a gentle and quiet spirit.

⁵² The Believers Study Bible Notes

⁵³ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

Isaiah pictures the women of his day as haughty and sexy, "mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet."⁵⁴

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, 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. In that day the Lord will take away the finery: The jingling anklets, the scarves, and the crescents; the pendants, the bracelets, and the veils; the headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; the perfume boxes, the charms, and the rings; the nose jewels, the festal apparel, and the mantles; the outer garments, the purses, and the mirrors; the fine linen, the turbans, and the robes.

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. To meet their unfounded accusations, he lays open the inward disease, which is manifested in the whole of their outward dress. (Calvin)

ii. In contrast, women of God are called to *in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself* (Philippians 2:3).⁵⁵

Wanton eyes: The women of Judah were sexually seductive and promiscuous. They wanted to behold and attract what was sexually impure.

What he adds about *wandering eyes* denotes shameless lust, which for the most part is expressed by the *eyes*; for unchaste *eyes* are the heralds of an unchaste heart; but the *eyes* of chaste women are sedate, and not wandering or unsteady. (Calvin)

In contrast, women of God are called to *be discreet and chaste* (Titus 2:5).⁵⁶

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: **The jingling anklets, the scarves, and the crescents; the pendants, the bracelets, and the veils; the headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; the perfume boxes, the charms, and the rings; the nose jewels, the festal apparel, and the mantles; the outer garments, the purses, and the mirrors; the fine linen, the turbans, and the robes.** Sounds like they had some pretty good malls in Jerusalem!

This love of finery, luxury, and the obtaining of it all is not unique to women. Many men have a problem with it also. But it is definitely a problem among many women. A 1992 story in the *Los Angeles Times* told about Michelle, a successful writer and editor, who feared the day her husband might discover her secret stash of credit cards, her secret post office box or the other tricks she used to hide how much money she spent shopping for herself. I make as much money as my husband . . . If I want a \$500 suit from Ann Taylor, I deserve it and don't want to be hassled about it. So the easiest thing to do is lie, she explained. Last year, when her husband

⁵⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵⁵ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

⁵⁶ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

forced her to destroy one of her credit cards, Michelle went out and got a new one without telling him. I do live in fear. If he discovers this new VISA, hell kill me.

In the same article, a school teacher explained more: Men just don't understand that shopping is our drug of choice, she joked, even while admitting that some months her salary goes exclusively to paying the minimum balance on her credit cards. Walking through the door of South Coast Plaza is like walking through the gates of heaven. God made car trunks for women to hide shopping bags in. A young professional named Mary explained: Shopping is my recreation. It's my way of pampering myself. When you walk into [a mall] and you see all the stores, it's like something takes over and you get caught up in it.

It is worthy of notice that the Prophet had good reason for reproof, with so great earnestness and vehemence, the luxury of women; for while they are chargeable with many vices, they are most of all inflamed with mad eagerness to have fine clothes. Covetous as they naturally are, still they spare no expense for dressing in a showy manner, and even use spare diet, and deprive themselves of what nature requires, that their clothes may be more costly and elegant. So grievously are they corrupted by this vice, that it goes beyond every other. (Calvin)

Nothing can exceed the curiosity which dwells in woman. Indeed there is no end to those contrivances; and it was not without reason that the ancients called the collection of a woman's ornaments *a world*; for if they were collected into one heap, they would be almost as numerous as the parts of the world. (Calvin)

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)⁵⁷

3:16-26 The women of Judah had placed their emphasis on clothing and jewelry rather than on God. They dressed to be noticed, to gain approval, and to be fashionable. Yet they ignored the real purpose for their lives. Instead of being concerned about the oppression around them (3:14, 15), they were self-serving and self-centered. People who abuse their possessions will end up with nothing. These verses are not an indictment against clothing and jewelry, but a judgment on those who use them lavishly while remaining blind to the needs of others. When God blesses you with money or position, don't flaunt it. Use what you have to help others, not impress them.⁵⁸

The Lord's condemnation of His people continues, but there is a change in focus. In verses 1-5 it was the male leaders who received criticism, but in this section the female citizens are more prominent. Undoubtedly what the Lord said about these women was true of them as females, but we should not limit their indictment to females alone. Men have been just as guilty of these sins as women, though in Isaiah's day they were more blatant among some women. The point is that the whole nation of Judah was guilty, not just the men.

3:16-4:1 Proud And Seductive Women

One thing that marked the anti-God society was the promiscuous way that the women dressed. Ladies, I don't know what women are thinking today. Showing off their bellies, wearing pants cut so low that their underwear is fully visible. Tight t-shirts, and words printed across their backsides. It's obscene, and it causes men to stumble.

⁵⁷ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

⁵⁸ Life Application Study Bible.

Luke 17:1(NLT) One day Jesus said to his disciples, “There will always be temptations to sin, but how terrible it will be for the person who does the tempting.

Rom. 14:13 ...determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way. God will judge women who dress in a way that flaunts their sinfulness.⁵⁹

¹⁷Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts.

Eight Judgments upon Women

1. Sending scalp disease upon them (Isa. 3:17)
2. Making them naked (Isa. 3:17)
3. Taking away their fine clothes, beautiful ornaments, and useful things (Isa. 3:18-23)
4. Cursing with a stink instead of a sweet smell (Isa. 3:24)
5. Giving a rent (rope) instead of a girdle
6. Baldness instead of healthy hair
7. Girding with sackcloth (girding with a rope instead of silk)
8. Burning (branding) instead of beauty⁶⁰

[scab the crown of the head] This may mean becoming bald by some scalp disease, but it could also refer to shaving the head by victors in war, as was often done to slaves. This would harmonize with Isa. 3:25-26 which predicted that the men would be slain in war. Since hair was a great source of pride to women, baldness would be extremely humiliating, depriving them of the glory given them for a covering (1Cor. 11:15).⁶¹

[discover their secret parts] This could refer to a scarcity of clothing or to being literally stripped of clothing and suffering the shame and indignities that women slaves often had to endure at the hands of their captors. Zechariah speaks of the women being ravished in the battle of Armageddon, and this could be the direct reference (Zech. 14:1-5).⁶²

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.

Because of their role in the nurture of children, it is important that women of God live and think like women of God. When the women of a culture become degenerate, then the hope for

⁵⁹ Ron Daniels Bible Studies: <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah.php>

⁶⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁶¹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁶² Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

the next generation is gone. But when the women of a culture turn to the Lord and His ways, there is great hope for the future.⁶³

In short, both men and women are instructed to make a sober use of the gifts of God, both in food and in clothing, and in the whole conduct of life. For the Lord cannot endure extravagance, and absolutely must inflict severe punishment on account of it; for it cannot be restrained by a lighter chastisement. (Calvin)

3:17-4:1. In contrast with their pride, wealth, and beauty, the women of Zion (cf. 3:16) would be in deep distress. They would have sores on their heads and would be bald. This baldness may refer to their shaving their heads, either in mourning or for medical reasons, because of their head sores. Being in deep distress they would not care how they looked. In fact the Lord would cause the Babylonian soldiers to take away all the women's fine jewelry and wardrobes (vv. 19-23). Instead of fragrance they would have an awful odor (v. 24) perhaps from their head sores (v. 17). Taken captive by the Babylonians, the women would be pulled by a rope and would wear sackcloth, black coarse cloth made from goats' hair and symbolizing mourning (cf. Gen. 37:34; 1 Kings 21:27; Neh. 9:1; Es. 4:1; Isa. 15:3; 22:12; 32:11; 37:1-2; Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 27:31; Dan. 9:3). Their beauty would be replaced by painful branding by their captors. The women would mourn because their men (husbands, brothers, and male friends) would be dying in battle (Isa. 3:25). The city would be so destitute of men and the women would be so disgraced that they would compete to gain a husband (4:1). Isaiah's picture of the Jerusalem socialites and their plight might be humorous if it were not so pathetic and realistic. Years later Jeremiah wrote that the women resorted to eating their own⁶⁴

18In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,

[In that day] "In that day" here refers to the day of the Lord when this will be fulfilled, for it continues with a picture of the Millennium (Isa. 4:1-6).⁶⁵

[bravery of their tinkling ornaments] Literally, finery of ornaments.

19The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

20The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

21The rings, and nose jewels,

22The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

⁶³ <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

⁶⁴ The Bible Knowledge Commentary:

⁶⁵ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

²³The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

²⁴And it shall come to pass, *that* instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; *and* burning instead of beauty.

[**stink**] Instead of the sweet perfumes considered necessary in public, there would be rottenness, a stench and an offensive smell like the decomposition of a diseased body.

[**rent**] Hebrew: *niqpah* (HSN-<H5364>), tether or rope. Instead of a beautiful sash, the poor had nothing but a rope to gird up their clothes.

[**baldness**] Instead of hair, they would be bald because of the scalp disease (see note, Isa. 3:17).

[**burning**] Hebrew: *kiy* (HSN-<H3587>), a brand or scar. This may refer to the scars from long suffering they would have to endure if ravished in the war of Zech. 14:1-5, the beauty of women being marred by mistreatment from the soldiers under Antichrist.⁶⁶

Women's dress is the barometer of any civilization. When women's dress is modest it tells something about the nation as a whole.

In these last few verses twenty articles of women's wear are mentioned by name. There certainly is nothing wrong with a woman dressing in style -- if the style is not immodest. I feel that all of us should look the best we can with what we have, even though some of us don't have too much to work with. God is not condemning the women of Israel for dressing in the style of their day. He is talking about the inner life. They were haughty and brazen. Real adornment is beneath the skin, not from the skin outward. Women's dress is the key to a nation's morals.

Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.⁶⁷

And so it shall be: Instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench; instead of a sash, a rope; instead of well-set hair, baldness; instead of a rich robe, a girding of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty. Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war. Her gates shall lament and mourn, and she *being* desolate shall sit on the ground.

Instead of . . . Instead of . . . Instead of . . . instead of: The Lord will replace their finery with the marks of captivity and humiliation. They will live the **stench**, the **baldness**, the **branding** and the general deprivation of captivity.

Do we realize how quickly God can take it all away? How much more reason to honor God with what we have, instead of indulging ourselves.⁶⁸

Now there cannot befall us anything worse than that we should be hardened against chastisements, and not perceive that God chastiseth us. When we labour under such stupidity, our case is almost hopeless. (Calvin)

⁶⁶ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁶⁷ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁶⁸ <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/guz/isaiah-3.html>

²⁵Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.

[**Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war**] This refers to the slaying of the many men in Judah in the war when Jerusalem will be surrounded and half taken by Antichrist before Christ comes to deliver them (Isa. 3:25-26; Zech. 14:1-5,14; Rev. 19:11-21).⁶⁹

Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war: without doubt, one reason the daughters of Zion loved all the luxury and finery was because it made them more attractive to men. They felt they could get men that way. But their ungodly love of luxury and finery resulted in the loss of their men.

²⁶And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she *being* desolate shall sit upon the ground.

a [sit upon the ground] Sitting upon the ground was a posture denoting great distress (Job 2:13; Ps. 137:1; Jer. 6:26; Lam. 2:10; 3:28; Mic. 1:10).⁷⁰

There was a Roman medal which showed a woman weeping; the insignia beneath her read, Judea capta. It represented the captives of Israel. Because Israel did not heed the warnings God gave them, they went into captivity.

As I write this, the terrible loss of our young men in Vietnam is still fresh in our minds. Now we are a nation at peace, and we feel very comfortable. But, my friend, the bombs are yet to fall on our nation, which I believe will be God's judgment upon us.⁷¹

She being desolate shall sit on the ground: A Roman medal, struck after Jerusalem's fall, shows a Jewish woman being desolate, sitting under a palm tree next to a Roman soldier.

⁶⁹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁷⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁷¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.