

# Isaiah

**The Lord Is Salvation**

**Law-  
Breakers**

**Must Pay**

**Isaiah 1:21-31**

**Lesson Five**

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum*

# Isaiah

**The Lord Is Salvation**

## Lawbreakers Must Pay

This oracle begins with a contrasting of the Jerusalem of King David, and the Jerusalem that Isaiah saw. **Read Isaiah 12:21-23.** It is quite a contrast.

At one time Jerusalem was known as a good wife. Her people were faithful, they were honest, and she they did things the right way. They lived a good life of fairness and justice. But that was then. Now, Jerusalem lives like a bad wife. She is not faithful to her husband. And where good people used to live in Jerusalem, now very bad people live there who have no respect for life. He called them murders which probably is accusing them of neglecting the poor and needy.

In verse 22 he paints an even more hopeless picture. He said that their wine and their silver had become worthless. There had once been the best. It had been what was purest and most tasty. Now, it tasted like water with a little wine flavor. He said the their silver had been pure and very valuable. Now it was dross. Dross is the description of the stuff that is left when the true silver is heated. Dross rises to the top and is skimmed off and thrown away. God wasn't describing real wine or silver used in making beautiful decorations. He was describing the people. He was talking about the way they behaved. Where once they had been valuable to His kingdom, they had become worthless. And, He goes on to say why they are worthless.

In verse 23, God reminded them of the corrupt leaders who were in charge. He said that all they wanted were bribes, friendships with those who broke the law and lots of publicity for themselves. And, as we said in an earlier lesson, what the leaders do, the whole nation is soon doing. So the leaders were worthless.

His specific charge is that they have not provided care for the orphans and have not listened to the needs of the widows. In Isaiah's day, these were the most helpless people. Orphans were children whose parents had died, and no one wanted them. There were no homes for orphans and no government agencies that saw to their care.

Women didn't work outside their home, and so when their husband died, they had no way to pay their expenses. There were some rules in the earlier part of the Old Testament about the brother of the dead husband taking care of the wife who remained, but there were many, many cases where that was not an option. The story of Boaz in the Old Testament book of Ruth tells of farmers who left part of the crop in the field for widows to harvest for their own use, but it is easy to see that there would be many widows who could not do that, for many reasons.

So, the sin of ignoring the orphans and widows, those who were poor and even in bad health,

# Isaiah

## The Lord Is Salvation

was a serious problem then, just like it is today.

We said in a previous lesson that this is written like a lawsuit in court. God has considered the evidence and is ready to pass judgment. He said that He would take care of His adversaries. He is talking about those of whom He has just spoken. The one guilty will be punished. The dross will be thrown away and only the pure silver will remain. God is going to reestablish the legal system as it was in David's day. And when people look at Jerusalem, they will see a righteous city...a city that treats everyone the right way. **Read Isaiah 1:24-31**

Those who repent will be saved...they will be redeemed. The word redeemed was often used to describe the saving of a person from death by substituting a sacrificial animal, or paying money. This reminds us of the fact that Jesus redeemed us by giving His life for ours. But, Isaiah quoting God, said that those who do not repent, the ones who keep on sinning and rebelling against God, will perish.

These people had obviously been involved in one of the popular cults of that day. They worshiped under large trees and in gardens (which could have been trees planted in rows). God said here that they were going to go the way of trees whose leaves wither and of gardens that get no rain. They were dying.

It is interesting to note here that God tells them that it is their sin that kills them. Just like the trees under which they worship, and just like the gardens in which they had their religious experiences, they were wilting...slowly dying. The sin of worshiping other Gods has its own reward. It brings its own punishment.

For today, we should think about what will happen to us when we neglect God's will for our lives and we must remember His promise of redemption if we only believe in His Son, Jesus.

And the final picture is of the lawbreaker, the person who does not repent. This person is like a shaving of wood that is used to light a fire. What that person does is like a spark that lights that shaving, which is covered in highly flammable material. A great flash fire will break out and they will be burned up even if someone tries to put out the fire.

\*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

### Page Three

**Scripture Memory:** "Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness." Isaiah 1:27

**Lesson Goal:** To let students see that sin always has consequences and God allows us to suffer.

# Isaiah

**The Lord Is Salvation**

## Student Worksheet

### **Lawbreakers Must Pay—Isaiah 1:21-31**

As the teacher goes through the lesson, listen for answers to these:

1. What had happened to the wine?
2. What had happened to the silver?
3. How did God describe their leaders?
4. Why did God talk about trees and gardens?

**Scripture Memory:** “Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness.” Isaiah 1:27

#### **How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:**

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.