

Isaiah

The Lord Is Salvation

**What A
Mess
They
Made**

Isaiah 3

Lesson Eight

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

Isaiah

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What a Mess They Made

The people of Judah made a mess; there is no doubt about it. And God will be specific about the mess and its consequences. Read Isaiah 3:1-15. Pretty strong isn't it?

God tells the people of Judah that there is coming a time when, in the capital and in the whole country, there will be great loss. God takes credit for causing this. It will be a disaster. Even the basics of bread and water will disappear.

He said that the leaders of the nation would be gone. He lists specifically soldiers, the judges, the preachers, the psychics, the religious leaders, the military generals, the high-ups, the counselors, the really good carpenters and ironworkers and clever enchanters, whatever they were (maybe magicians). That is a very impressive list of folks who were necessary to keep national life going.

When these are gone, there will be no one left to lead, other than children. Maybe not really young in years, but definitely short on wisdom, training and experience. Then, everything will come apart. In this leaderless society, everyone will do what they can to get what they want. It will be neighbor against neighbor.

So, someone comes up with a great idea. One brother will say to another, you've got the right clothes, you take over. It would seem that the only requirement for good leadership was having the right outfit. How much is that true in our world today. Is outward appearance what really gets respect? In this case, the guy with the good suit said, "Not Me!"

The people look guilty. In another translation of the Bible the first part of verse nine says, "The expression on their faces bears witness against them." They act like there is no God. They are responsible to no one. This is the sin that God is punishing. They have brought this on themselves. "Woe to them," says verse nine.

God instructed Isaiah to remind the righteous people that this criticism doesn't apply to them. We should remember that Abraham's *faith* was applied to him as *righteousness*. So these are the people who have faith in God. It will "be well with them." Verse 10.

Verse eleven ends with the phrase, "They will be paid back for what their hands have done." He goes on to tell them what they have done that angered God. First, He said that they were following the wrong leaders. They were being led down the wrong path.

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Second, He said that, like in court, God was going to act as judge and they would be condemned for ruining God's vineyard. This can only mean that the people have wasted the good things God had given them...now they are hungry. He said to look around their houses and that which they had stolen from the poor would be evidence against them. He pictured them doing two awful things. They beat the people...probably referring to servants being punished, and "grind the faces of the poor"...like putting them between two grindstones. Horrific.

God continues His condemnation. Read Isaiah 3:16-26. These are the wives of the wealthy. They made a show of themselves. There is no indication that all the women of that day fit into this category. The condemning here refers back to God's judgment on all the people.

So what had these women done? The same thing that the men were guilty of in this prophesy. What a dramatic picture He draws here. Women who were "stuck-up, prancing around in their high heels, making eyes at all the men in the street, swinging their hips, tossing their hair, wearing gaudy and garish cheap jewelry." (verse sixteen, *The Message*) What a putdown.

But, there will come a time when God will "snatch away their finery." Gone will be their "fancy baubles—the dangling earrings, anklets and bracelets, combs and mirrors and silk scarves, diamond brooches and pearl necklaces, the rings on their fingers and the rings on their toes, the latest fashions in hats, exotic perfumes, gown and capes...all the worlds finest fabrics and designs." Verse eighteen, *The Message* translation. God isn't upset about wearing good clothes or fixing hair; He is upset that they do this and don't even think of the poor.

Worst of all, they will loose their hair and sores will come on their heads. Now instead of smelling like sweet perfume, they will smell like rotten trash...instead of wearing a fashionable belt, they will tie their robe of burlap with a rope...instead of beautiful, styled hair, they will be ugly bald. Instead of beauty, there will be burning, this means shame or embarrassment.

Judah will be sad, in mourning and poor. She will, in exhaustion just sit down on the ground. This picture is a gloomy one. But remember that God is condemning their bad behavior and their lack of faith in Him. It should not make a Christian fear, but be happy in God's grace.

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

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Scripture Memory: "Tell the righteous that it will be well with them for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. Isaiah 3:10

Lesson Goal: To encourage students to expect judgment for evil and reward for doing good.

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Student Worksheet

What a Mess They Made—Isaiah 3

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

1. Who were the leaders of Judah who would be gone?
2. What was the sin for which God was punishing Judah?
3. What did God instruct Isaiah to tell the righteous people?
4. What was it that made God angry?
5. The condemnation by God, at this point should not make Christians _____, but be _____ in God's grace

Scripture Memory: "Tell the righteous that it will be well with them for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. Isaiah 3:10

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.