

ISAIAH 03

Loss & Gain, Sin & Salvation^a
(Isaiah 3:1-4:6)

Isaiah 3:1-4:6 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

The Glory Taken from Jerusalem

3^b For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts,
is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah
stay and staff,

the whole stay of bread,
and the whole stay of water;^c

2 the mighty man and the soldier,
the judge and the prophet,
the diviner and the elder,^d

3 the captain of fifty
and the man of rank,
the counselor and the skillful magician
and the expert in charms.^e

4 And I will make boys their princes,
and babes shall rule over them.^f

5 And the people will oppress one another,
every man his fellow
and every man his neighbor;
the youth will be insolent to the elder,
and the base fellow to the honorable.^g

6 When a man takes hold of his brother
in the house of his father, saying:

“You have a mantle;
you shall be our leader,
and this heap of ruins
shall be under your rule”;^h

7 in that day he will speak out, saying:

“I will not be a healer;
in my house there is neither bread nor mantle;

you shall not make me
leader of the people.^h

⁸ For Jerusalem has stumbled,
and Judah has fallen;
because their speech and their deeds are against the Lord,
defying his glorious presence.ⁱ

⁹ Their partiality witnesses against them;
they proclaim their sin like Sodom^k,
they do not hide it.

Woe to them!

For they have brought evil upon themselves.^l

¹⁰ Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them,
for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.^m

¹¹ Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him,
for what his hands have done shall be done to him.ⁿ

¹² My people—children are their oppressors,
and women rule over them.

O my people, your leaders mislead you,
and confuse the course of your paths.^o

¹³ The Lord has taken his place to contend,
he stands to judge his people.^p

¹⁴ The Lord enters into judgment
with the elders and princes of his people:
“It is you who have devoured the vineyard,
the spoil of the poor is in your houses.^q

¹⁵ What do you mean by crushing my people,
by grinding the face of the poor?”
says the Lord God of hosts.^r

¹⁶ The Lord said:

Because the daughters of Zion^s are haughty
and walk with outstretched necks,
glancing wantonly with their eyes,
mincing along as they go,
tinkling^t with their feet;^u

¹⁷ the Lord will smite with a scab
the heads of the daughters of Zion,
and the Lord will lay bare their secret parts.^v

^{18w} In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents;^x ¹⁹ the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarfs; ²⁰ the headdresses, the armlets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets;^y ²¹ the signet rings and nose rings; ^z ²² the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags;^{aa} ²³ the garments of gauze, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils.

²⁴ Instead of perfume there will be rotteness;
and instead of a girdle, a rope;
and instead of well-set hair, baldness;
and instead of a rich robe, a girding of sackcloth;
instead of beauty, shame.^{bb}

²⁵ Your men shall fall by the sword
and your mighty men in battle.^{cc}

²⁶ And her gates shall lament and mourn;
ravaged, she shall sit upon the ground.^{dd}

4 And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach."^{ee}

The Future Glory of the Survivors in Zion

² In that day the branch of the Lord^{ff} shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel.^{gg} ³ And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, every one who has been recorded for life^{hh} in Jerusalem,ⁱⁱ ⁴ when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion^{jj} and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning.^{kk} ⁵ Then the Lord will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies^{ll} a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion.^{mm} ⁶ It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.ⁿⁿ

Revised Standard Version (RSV)

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Chapter 3 continues the general theme of Chapters 1 & 2, and particularly emphasizing the desperation and depths to which Judah has fallen:

1. What will God do to Judah? Does this remind you of any historical events during the time of Isaiah?
2. In verse 6, a brother will nominate his brother for kingship. These are frivolous qualifications for leadership, but what is really signified here? Why nominate your brother? And why turn down the office?
3. Do the people of Judah try to hide their sin?
4. What will become of the righteous?
5. Why do you think Isaiah uses the metaphor in vs. 16-17? In verse 24, what does “branding” signify?

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^a The Titles of the lessons in this study are borrowed from those given by **Jhan Moskowitz** of Jews for Jesus to the chapter titles in his recorded study of Isaiah upon which much of this study is based. I owe a great debt to Jhan, my late friend and brother in the Lord, who was called Home before his time, not only for much of the work in this study, but also for giving me a whole new perspective on the Scriptures and the Jewish Messiah. Jhan’s original recordings may be downloaded from the Jews for Jesus web site. <http://jewsforjesus.org/jhan-moskowitz>

It is likely that much of Isaiah was first spoken, or recited, and then written down and collected into the form we have today. While we do not know for certain why, the prophets, including Isaiah wrote largely in poetic form. It may have been easier to remember, and be able to repeat, the prophecies when in verse than had they been in prose. The poetic form allows the use of imagery and other poetic devices which are less available in prose. We do not know whether any of Isaiah’s verse was set to music.

Chapters 1-5 of Isaiah are not tied to any specific historical events, but are more to paint the picture of the times in which Isaiah ministered.

Need stuff here about the divisions of the book. And this should be updated to include Jhan’s introduction.

^b **Chapter 3** describes the depths to which Jerusalem has fallen, perhaps during the invasion of King Sennacherib of Assyria (c. 701 B.C.) Military protection has collapsed, civil and religious leadership are no longer in place and the social order has broken down. As a result of Israel’s rebellion, and the resulting deterioration of the social structure, God is ready to fulfil the covenant curses described in Lv 26:14-46 and Dt 28:15-68.

^c (1) This might refer to the leadership and craftsmen being taken away in the Babylonian Captivity, 2Ki 24:14-16. Lv 26:26; Is 1:24, 5:13, 9:20; Ezk 4:16, 5:16-17.

^d (2) Ru 2:1; 2Ki 24:14; Dt 18:10-12; Is 9:14-15; Ezk 17:12-14.

^e (3) Magic was already declared unlawful by Torah, Lv 19:26; Dt 18:10. So the magicians and expert in charms were not true, but false, leaders.

^f (4) Ec 10:16. Some of their Kings were young when they began to rule, e.g. Manasseh, age 12. Others were immature in political ability, e.g. Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.

^g (5) Mi 7:2-6; Is 9:19; Jer 9:3-8.

^h (6) Is 4:1.

ⁱ (7) Is 1:6; Ezk 34:4; Hos 5:13; Mi 7:5-6. No one wants to take responsibility for leadership, there being no honor or gain in it. “Healer” may refer to healer of Judah and Jerusalem, a job that no human being can do. Only God can heal the land and people.

^j (8) Is 1:7, 6:11, 9:17, 59:3, 65:3; Ps 73:9-11; Ezk 3:20; Hos 4:5.

^k **Sodom.** Gn 13:13, 18:20; Is 1:10-17.

^l (9) Pr 8:36, 15:32; Ezk 16:46-49; Rm 1:18-26, 6:23. The people were proud of their sin. But even though it was socially acceptable, it was still sin, and had its consequences.

^m (10) Dt 28:1-14; Ps 128:2; Ec 8:12-13; Is 54:17; 2Pt 2:9.

ⁿ (11) Dt 28:15-68; Pr 1:31; Is 65:6-7.

^o (12) Is 3:4, 9:16, 28:14-22. The reference to being ruled by women may refer to a weak King being ruled by his mother, or harem. Or it may refer to the culture of the time which was accustomed to male rulers.

^p (13) Ps 50, 82, 7:6, 96:10-13; Is 66:16; Mi 6:1-5; Hos 4:1.

^q (14) Jb 22:4, 24:9-14; Ps 10:9, 14:4, 143:2; Pr 30:14; Is 10:1-2; Dn 7:14; Ezk 18:12, 20:35-36; Ps 14:4; Mi 3:1-3; Am 3:10; Jas 2:6.

^r (15) Ps 94:5; Am 2:6-8, 3:9-11, 6:4-7, 8:4-6; Mi 2:1-3, 3:1-12, 6:8.

^s **The Daughters of Zion.** This could refer to the specific fate of the noble, court, women of Jerusalem, or to the fate of the prophetic Daughter of Zion, that is, the Hebrew people themselves. The phrase is used in several senses in the Hebrew Scriptures including the following examples: 1) 2Ki 19:21; *A people confident in the deliverance of their God.* When Assyria threatened Jerusalem, King Hezekiah went to the Lord. In response, God sent Isaiah to reassure Hezekiah that Jerusalem would not fall to Assyria, and God considered the threatening insult to “the virgin daughter of Zion” as a personal affront to Himself. 2) Is 1:8; *A hut, abandoned after judgment came to an evil family.* Isaiah compares the rebellion of Judah to a sick body in a devastated land. The daughter of Zion is left as a lone remnant—a shelter hidden in the vineyard or a hut in a cucumber field that barely escaped destruction. 3) Jr 4:31; *A woman in labor, helpless before attackers.* The steadfastness of Hezekiah was rare in Judah—most kings encouraged rebellion against God instead of loyalty to God. Jeremiah warns that if the nation does not turn away from evil, God will punish them severely. And the people will be helpless against it—as helpless as a woman in labor. 4) Is 62:11; *A people awaiting salvation.* After the punishment of exile, God promises restoration to Israel. He will rejoice over His chosen people again. And in verse 11, He promises the daughter of Zion, “Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him.” 5) Mi 4:13; *A bull that threshes his enemies.* In verse 10, God warns that the daughter of Zion will suffer as much as a woman in labor. But in verse 13, He promises vengeance. The weak, powerless woman will become a bull with horns of iron and hoofs of bronze that will crush its enemies. 6) Zec 9:9; *A land awaiting its king.* This prophecy promises Israel’s enemies will be destroyed, but also speaks about a more permanent solution to the problem of sin. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; he is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” Despite the consistent rebellion of the daughter of Zion against her Father, He promises to restore her and present her with a Deliverer-King in the form of Jesus. The use of the term *Daughter* implies that God is a loving father. He cherishes and loves His people, even while they reject Him. By using the metaphor “Daughter of Zion,” God showed how He felt for the rebellious Israelites: frustrated, angry, but always with an eye to the future when the relationship would be restored, and He could once again return to them and welcome them into His arms, Zec 2:10.

^t **Tinkling.** From the small silver bells warn around the ankles.

^u (16) Dt 28:56; Song 3:11; Is 32:9-15; 1Tm 2:9.

^v (17) Dt 28:60.

^w **Ostentatious Wealth.** Pr 23:4-5; Am 6:4-7; 1Pt 3:3-4.

^x (18) Jdg 8:21-26.

^y (20) Ex 39:28; Ezk 24:17.

^z (21) Gn 24:47; Ezk 16:12.

^{aa} **(22)** Lk 15:22.

^{bb} **(24)** Est 2:12; Pr 31:34; 1Pt 3:3; Is 15:2-3, 22:12; Ezk 27:31; Am 8:10; Mi 1:16; Gn 37:34; Lv 19:28; Lam 2:10. The word “shame” is also translated “branding” perhaps referring to the brand place on slaves.

^{cc} **(25)** Is 1:20, 66:12.

^{dd} **(26)** Jer 14:2; Lam 1:4, 2:10; Jb 2:13.

^{ee} **(1)** Ex 21:10; Gn 30:23; 1Sm 1:4-8; Is 13:12, 54:4; 2Th 3:12..

^{ff} **The Branch of the Lord.** Referring to the Davidic ruler, Jer 23:5,33:15-16; Ezk 29:21; Zec 3:8,6:12-13.

^{gg} **(2)** Is 11:1, 27:6, 37:31-32, 53:2; Jer 23:5-6, 33:15; Zec 3:8, 6:12; Ps 72:16; Jl 2:32.

^{hh} **Recorded for Life.** Inscribed in God’s Book of Life, Ex 32:32; Ps 69:28; Mal 3:16-18; Lk 10:20; Heb 12:13; Rv 20:11-15. It might also refer to Nehemiah’s repopulation of Jerusalem by those whose descent could be properly proven through written genealogies, Neh 11:1-24.

ⁱⁱ **(3)** Is 6:13, 10:20, 28:5, 46:3, 52:1, 60:21, 62:12; Ob 17; Lk 10:20; Rm 11:4-5.

^{jj} **Filth of the Daughters of Zion.** Linking the sin of Jerusalem with menstrual blood as symbolic of ritual impurity.

^{kk} **(4)** Is 1:15, 1:31, 3:16, 9:19, 28:6, 33:14; Ezk 36:25; Mal 3:2; Mt 3:11; Lk 3:17.

^{ll} **Assemblies.** This may refer not simply to gatherings of people, but of those gatherings for ritual or liturgy.

^{mmm} **(5)** Ex 13:21-22, 24:16, 40:34-38; Nu 9:15-23; 1Ki 8:11; Ps 32:7; Is 60:1-2; Ezk 43:1-5; Rv 7:15.

ⁿⁿ **(6)** Ps 27:5; Is 25:4-5, 32:1-2. Other translations use the term “booth” referring to the tents of the Israelites in the desert.