

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

VI. God's Judgment For Trusting In Man Versus God, Isaiah 2:22-4:1

B. God's Judgment For The Trust Male Leaders Put In Themselves Versus The Lord (Isaiah 2:22; 3:12-15)

I. Introduction

- A. When God's prophet Isaiah called the nation to stop trusting in man (Isaiah 2:22), one of the great vices that had led to this call was the failure of Judah's leaders to trust in God versus trusting in themselves.
- B. Isaiah 3:12-15 clarifies this error, providing invaluable insight and an application for us today (as follows):

II. God's Judgment For The Trust Male Leaders Put In Themselves Versus The Lord, Isaiah 2:22; 3:12-15.

- A. The Isaiah 2:22 admonition to stop trusting in man that summarizes the Isaiah 2:6-21 general exposure of Judah's sins also acts to introduce Isaiah 3:1-4:1 where God focuses on specific sins caused by this errant trust in man versus the correct trust in the Lord, Edward J. Young, The Book Of Isaiah, 1974, volume I, p. 135.
- B. One part of society, its male leaders, had failed Judah, and Isaiah exposed and condemned it in Isaiah 3:12-15:
 - 1. Isaiah claimed that those who acted as irresponsible children were oppressing God's people, Isaiah 3:12a; Ibid., p. 155. He was referring in the context to Judah's male leaders (cf. Isaiah 3:12c), indicating the men who led no longer revered the Lord so as to function in responsible oversight of the people, but to do the opposite, to function selfishly in using their powers for their own gratification as would an immature child.
 - 2. The Isaiah 3:12b claim that "women rule over them" does not describe an actual situation, for this was a patristic culture where men had the lead, but it recalls "(t)he Arabian proverb . . . 'I fled to God from the rule of boys and the reign of women,'" meaning the men had become so weak in character that they had no more authority before others than a child, actually producing a dangerous situation for Judah, Ibid., p. 156.
 - 3. Isaiah then plainly stated in Isaiah 3:12c that Judah's leaders had caused her as a nation to go astray to where it was not aware where it was headed, Ibid. The Hebrew participial form is used for "going astray" to indicate the leaders were at that moment leading the nation astray and not in the right direction, Ibid.
 - 4. In contrast to the current misguidance by Judah's leaders, Isaiah 3:13a uses several participles to show the Lord's welcome ongoing *reactions* of "(t)aking His stand to plead is the Lord, and standing is He to judge the peoples," Ibid., p. 157. This appreciated relief to the ongoing misguidance of Judah's leaders reveals that the Lord Himself was even then in control of the desperate situation, that He stood ready to plead and to prosecute as well as to accuse the guilty in correcting the whole situation, Ibid.
 - 5. God is presented as standing to judge in Isaiah 3:13b, and Isaiah 3:14a reveals how the Lord will enter into litigation with the elders of His people, the men responsible for the nation's welfare as well as the officials, the "princes" in the government, those responsible for the administration of the government, Ibid.
 - 6. A sample of the sins the elders and officials had irresponsibly committed is given in Isaiah 3:14b-15:
 - a. The expression "eaten up" (v. 14b KJV) is better rendered "depastured" where the men of Judah are seen as keepers of a vineyard who had spoiled and not protected God's vineyard of Judah, Ibid., p. 158.
 - b. To explain this figure, Isaiah focused on one particular sin, the mistreatment of the vulnerable, Isaiah 3:14c: Judah's leaders had abusively used their powers to take from the poor so that what the poor once owned was now in their own homes versus their overseeing the poor to be sure their needs were met, Ibid.
 - c. Thus, instead of trusting the Lord for material blessing, the men had shifted to trust in themselves, not sensing their accountability to God, but they instead had taken advantage of the vulnerable around them.
 - d. Outraged, Isaiah addressed these leaders, asking what they meant by crushing God's people and figuratively grinding the faces of the poor as if grinding grain between two heavy millstones, Isaiah 3:15a, Ibid., p. 159. The leaders were wringing the poor out of all they owned due to their personal greed.
 - e. Isaiah 3:15b presents God as the "Lord God of hosts," stressing His sovereignty that the leaders had failed to consider, leading them to lose their sense of accountability to Him to aid and not abuse the weak.

Lesson: For failing to sense their accountability to Almighty God, Judah's male leaders had ceased functioning responsibly as men who trust in God and help, not harm, vulnerable subjects. This failure hurt the whole nation.

Application: (1) May we who lead realize our purpose before God is to revere and to trust in Him so as to help the vulnerable in accountability to the Lord. (2) If we are exposed to irresponsible men over us in some institution, may we realize that we have a Sovereign Lord Who will aid us and deal out justice for us in His own way and time.