

Isaiah Lesson 3 Article

3:8 — ... *Judah is fallen, because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory.* Sin is an affront to the glory of God, an insult to His goodness and righteousness. It is especially serious when a believer sins, for God has connected His holy name with that believer, whose conduct reflects on God's character.

3:10 — “*Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.*” God always rewards faithful and obedient behavior. Although God would judge Judah for her sin, He wanted to encourage the few righteous believers who remained to continue living for Him, for He would remember their good deeds.

4:2 — *In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious* Isaiah is the first prophet to call the coming Messiah by the name “Branch.” He sees a time when Jesus will reign in glory and bring prosperity and joy to the whole world (Is. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15 ¹

The prosperity of the nation made the leaders proud and covetous. Instead of trusting the Lord, they trusted their wealth and war equipment, not realizing that neither would deliver them in the coming day of judgment. The leaders were exploiting the poor, crushing them like grain in a mill (3:13–15). God will not allow His people to be proud and self-confident but will humble them and cut them down like trees in the forest. “The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day” (2:11, 17) when men flee from His wrath and discover the worthlessness of their idols and the consequences of their sins (vv. 19–22).

How will God judge His people? By taking away from them everything they were trusting, including food and water, leaders and soldiers, and judges and prophets (3:1–15) The entire support system of the nation would disintegrate, and there would be no remedy. Nobody would want to hold office except women and children. (In Judah's male-dominated society, this would be a humiliating calamity.) The national leaders in Isaiah's day were charting a course that was out of the will of God and would ultimately bring disaster, but the righteous remnant would be protected by God (vv. 10–12).²

Ver. 9.—**The show of their countenance doth witness against them.** This is not in itself a sin, but it is a sign of frequent and habitual sin. Vice, long indulged in, stamps its mark upon the countenance, giving men what is called “a bad expression”—a guilty and hardened look. It does not require a skilled physiognomist to detect at a glance the habitual criminal or sensualist. **They declare their sin as Sodom.** Not only does their countenance betray them, but, like the Sodomites (Gen. 19:5, 9), they boldly and impudently declare their wicked purposes beforehand, and make no attempt at concealment. Hypocrisy has been said to be the homage that vice pays to virtue. Where there is none, where vice has ceased to shroud or veil itself, a very advanced stage of wickedness has been reached. **They have rewarded evil unto themselves.** They have “received *in themselves* the recompense of their error which was meet” (Rom. 1:27). Their sins have at once marred their countenance and injured their moral nature.

Ver. 10.—**Say ye to the righteous.** The mention of the fact that the men of Jerusalem have permanently injured their moral natures by sin, and thus “rewarded evil to themselves,” leads the prophet to declare at this point, parenthetically, the general law, which extends alike to the evil and the good—that men receive in themselves the recompense of their deeds. The righteous raise their moral nature, become better, and, in becoming better, become happier. “It is well with them, for of the fruit of their doings they eat.” The wicked deprave and corrupt themselves, lower their moral nature, become worse than they were, and, in becoming worse, become more miserable. “Woe, unto them! with them it is ill; for the achievement of their hands is given them.”³

¹ Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Is 3:8–4:2). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.

² Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *Be Comforted* (pp. 24–25). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³ Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Ed.). (1910). *Isaiah* (Vol. 1, p. 52). London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.