

Tell the Righteous

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[0:00] Isaiah chapter 3, we're going to read from verse 1 to chapter 4, verse 1. See now, the Lord, the Lord Almighty, is about to take from Jerusalem and Judah both supply and support, all supplies of food and all supplies of water, the hero and warrior, the judge and prophet, the soothsayer and elder, the captain of 50 and man of rank, the counselor, skilled craftsman and clever enchanter.

I will make boys their officials. Mere children will govern them. People will oppress each other, man against man, neighbor against neighbor. The young will rise up against the old, the base against the honorable.

A man will seize one of his brothers at his father's home and say, You have a cloak. You be our leader. Take charge of this heap of ruins. But in that day, he will cry out, I have no remedy. I have no food or clothing in my house.

Do not make me the leader of the people. Jerusalem staggers. Judah is falling. Their words and deeds are against the Lord, defying his glorious presence.

The look on their faces testifies against them. They parade their sin like Sodom. They do not hide it. Woe to them. They have brought disaster upon themselves.

[1:39] Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. Woe to the wicked. Disaster is upon them. They will be paid back for what their hands have done.

Youths oppress my people. Women rule over them. Oh, my people. Your guides lead you astray. They turn you from the path.

The Lord takes his place in court. He rises to judge the people. The Lord enters into judgment against the elders and leaders of his people.

It is you who have ruined my vineyard. The plunder from the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing my people and grinding the faces of the poor?

Declares the Lord. The Lord Almighty. The Lord says, The women of Zion are haughty, walking along with outstretched necks, flirting with their eyes, tripping along with mincing steps, with ornaments jingling on their ankles.

[2:40] Therefore, the Lord will bring sores on the heads of the women of Zion. The Lord will make their scalps bald. And that day the Lord will snatch away their finery, the bangles and headbands and crescent necklaces, the earrings and bracelets and veils, the headdresses and ankle chains and sashes, the perfume, bottles and charms, the signet rings and nose rings, the fine robes and the capes and the cloaks, the purses and mirrors, and the linen garments and tiaras and shawls.

Instead of fragrance, there will be a stench. Instead of a sash, a rope. Instead of well-dressed hair, baldness. Instead of fine clothing, sackcloth.

Instead of beauty, branding. Your men will fall by the sword. Your warriors in battle. The gates of Zion will lament and mourn.

Destitute, she will sit on the ground. And that day seven women will take a hold of one man and say, We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes. Only let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace. People are looking to their political leaders to give them what they want.

[3:58] To fix all the problems of society. To give them protection from crime and terror at home and abroad. To give them good jobs.

Strong economy. Strong economy. Good education. Plenty of money to buy what they want. And women are looking to their physical beauty to get what they want out of life.

The job. The man. The looks. The attention. The power to turn heads their way. The status.

Having others treat them as something special. To give them special favors. Because after all, they're beautiful.

Now this is not a page out of the latest World Magazine or Time or Newsweek. This is Isaiah chapter 3. 2,700 years ago.

[5:00] And at once we realize that there's no new thing under the sun. And at once we realize that this old, old book of Isaiah is all so relevant to us living in the 21st century.

These things were written for us. It's written for you and me, whoever we are, wherever we live, and whenever we live. Here's a people trusting in their political leaders to give them the good life. Here are women trusting in their physical beauty to give them what they want in life. What do these two have in common?

Well, they're not trusting in God, but in man. Human leadership. Human beauty. Human beauty. They don't think they need God since they have their own leaders to give them what they want. Or they have their own beauty to give them what they want. They're both oozing with self-sufficient pride. They've turned things upside down.

[6:13] They've put man in God's place. And God has a day in store for both of them. And they're both going down.

When all that is proud and lofty and lifted up will be brought low and humbled, pounded into the ground.

When the Lord alone will be exalted. They both have heard the closing exhortation of chapter 2. Stop trusting in man.

He's just got a breath up his nose of what account is he? They both need to see the folly and self-destruction of proudly trusting in man instead of God.

So chapter 3 picks up where chapter 2 left off and applies the same principles. Chapter 2 found the nation trusting in their wealth, their gold and silver.

[7:10] Trusting in their military, their horses and chariots. And trusting in their idols that they could manipulate to get what they wanted. Chapter 3 finds them trusting also in their human leaders and in their physical beauty.

So here's self-sufficient Judah. Proudly getting on fine without God. They've just come through the glory years and they've got plenty of all the stuff that men and women live for.

But now the day in store has caught up with them. The Lord Almighty is about to take away from them.

We see that in verses 1. The Lord Almighty is about to take away what? All supply and support. And again in verse 18. The same note is struck.

In that day the Lord will snatch away. The Lord has come to take. Children, when you take away you subtract. And the Lord has come to subtract from Judah.

[8:15] So imagine here on the pulpit a house of cards. A tower that you build with playing cards or blocks.

And here's the tower. That's Judah getting on fine without God. But the Lord is coming to take away. And he's not going to just take a couple cards off the top that would leave the rest of the tower in place.

No, he's coming right to the bottom. He's coming right to the foundation. The things that all the weight of the tower is leaning on.

And he's going to pull those things out. He's going to take away that. And the whole tower will come crashing down. The whole nation of Judah will come down on itself.

So chapter 3 is about this total collapse of the nation of Judah. As the Lord comes to take away in judgment. Three things he takes away. And the first is found in verse 1.

[9:19] See now the Lord, the Lord Almighty. Is about to take away from Jerusalem and Judah. Both supply and support. All supplies of food and all supplies of water.

There's the first thing he's coming to get. All supply of food and water. How long can a nation survive without supplies of food and water?

We get testy when we've missed a meal or two, don't we? You see, I told you he's not coming to take some window dressing on the top.

He's coming for the thing that is the support of Judah. The thing that their weight is leaning, bearing down upon. And the point being made here is that if all supplies of food and water are cut off.

Well then every other support without exception is gone. If all food and water is taken away. You can be sure that the stock market has hit the bottom by then.

[10:23] You can be sure that jobs are scarce. That malls are empty. That money is worthless and real estate is devalued. That the whole economy is in a mess.

And you can also be sure that crime is rampant. And is uncontrollable. And peace and order are things of the past. And justice is a joke.

And the whole social fabric of the nation is coming unraveled. All supply and support is being taken from them.

So support is what we lean on. And so here's an old man and he's leaning on his cane. And somebody comes along and snatches away his cane. What's going to happen to the old man? Well he's going to stumble and fall. Well precisely what's happening to Judah. Verse 8. Judah. Judah. Is staggering.

[11:26] Jerusalem staggers. Judah is falling. God is taking away all supplies of food and water. Now this. This is no problem to God.

What is more of a mystery is how can God feed the whole nation? How is it that every day food gets from all the gardens and fields of the world onto all of our tables?

That's amazing. It's nothing for God to shut down the food and water. He's got many different ways to do that. And this was no mere empty threat.

Within a hundred years. Mothers would be eating their own children. In order to keep themselves alive. Food would be that scarce.

But the Lord takes away more than just food and water. Secondly. He takes their human leaders. These two are supports that they're leaning on.

[12:31] And verses 2 and 3 list all sorts of leaders. Leaders in government. Leaders in the military. Leaders in the business world. The skilled craftsmen.

Leaders in the community. Leaders on the both local and national level. Now. How would God take away these leaders? Well most of them would be taken away as casualties in battle.

They would be carried out and buried. They'd been slain. Others would be taken away into captivity. As the Assyrians and the Babylonians. Carried them off into exile. So God would take away all of these human leaders.

Chapter 4 will tell us that 6 out of every 7 men are gone from the nation.

[13:29] They're just gone. Either killed or taken away. And so the drain in the male population would lead to a total collapse of leadership. With leadership falling into the hands of incompetent nobodies.

Mere babes. Childish men. Notice he says. I will make boys their officials. Verse 4. Mere children will govern them.

Inexperienced. Irresponsible. Self-centered. Greedy. Incompetent youth. They will send a boy to do a man's job in those days.

Because the men are scarce as hen's teeth. As we say. Now we need to realize that good leaders. Are a blessing of God upon a nation.

Leaders who punish those who do wrong. And reward those who do right. Are serving the Lord.

Leaders who protect. And maintain law and order.

[14:38] And give stability to a nation. Are a blessing of God upon that land. And. But I must also. Show you from the passage.

That bad leaders. Are God's judgment. Upon a nation. Not only do bad leaders. Bring judgment. Down upon a nation. They are the judgment.

When God would punish a nation. For her sins against him. He leaves them. To bad leaders. He puts them in the hands of incompetent.

Leaders. And those incompetent leaders. Bring confusion. And chaos. Oppression. And disintegration.

To the whole nation. Its moral fiber is destroyed. Its economy. Its military. Its business life. Its churches. Its courts. And government. The whole society. Goes right down the drain.

[15:34] On their watch. Incompetent. Leaders. And that is God's judgment. On the nation. So verse 12 tells us. Youth.

Oppress my people. Women. Rule over them. Oh my people. Your guides. Lead you astray. They turn you. From. The path.

These young. Self-serving. Know-it-alls. Are ruling. And using their position. For their own advantage. They're oppressing the people. As if the people only exist.

To prey upon. And so they further. Their own cause. On the backs. Of the people. And they fill their houses. With the stuff. They ripped off. From the people's houses.

And they grind. The people. And the poor. Into the ground. And trample. Upon them. And these are the leaders. The very ones.

[16:30] Who should be setting. An example. In their own life. For the rest of the nation. Saying. Follow me. They're the ones. Who are leading them astray.

They're the ones. Who are taking the whole nation. Out of the path. Of God's blessing. And under. The curse. Of God. God. So when the Lord.

Judges the people. It's the leaders. He especially goes after. With the blame. Verse 14. It's you.

Who have ruined. My vineyard. He says. To the leaders. You've ruined them.

You've left. The land. A mess. So the leaders. Will undergo. A greater judgment. For the way. They have. Abused the authority. Entrusted to them. No ruler.

Has authority. Of his own. To use as he pleases. Every ruler. From the highest man. In the land. To the. The lowest. Leader in the land. Has authority.

[17:29] Entrusted. To them. By God. And one day. They'll give an account. For how they led. Dads. Businessmen. Teachers.

God calls. To account. Those. Who lead. Pastors. Elders.

And so on. Right through the whole. Social. Strata. They've ruined. My vineyard. And he calls them. To account. Now when the rulers.

Oppress the people. Should we be surprised. To see that the people. Oppress one another.

Monkey see. Monkey do. And so. The rulers. Are not enforcing the law.

They're not. Holding up justice. They themselves. Are oppressing the people. So what do the people do? They start biting. And devouring. Each other. As well. And it leads to the whole.

[18:25] Breakdown. Of social order. Law and order is gone. Chaos. Is reigning. People oppress each other.

Verse. Five. Man against man. Neighbor against neighbor. There's no more neighbor love. There's no more community. It's each man for himself. The strongest wins.

And notice again. It's the young. Who will rise up against the old. There's the generation gap. And it really gets bad. As things start unraveling. And the base. The things that don't deserve.

To have a voice. The people who don't have. An idea. Between their ears. They shout down. The honorable men. Who are left. In the nation. And these loud mouth.

Youth. Put down. Any remaining. Honorable men. Who. Would be worthy. Leaders. Disregard.

[19:26] For parents. Disregard. For the older generation. Is a mark. Of a nation. Heading. Ripe. For ruin. Complete.

Anarchy. And the breakdown. Of law. And order. That's what. These bad leaders. Lead to. And that. Is all part. Of God's judgment.

Upon the nation. Recently. We've seen. Young people. In Great Britain. Taking to the streets.

Stealing. Burning. Plundering. Trashing. You see.

Biting. And devouring. One another. We've seen. Youth uprisings. In. Egypt. And Libya. When leadership.

Oppresses. We should not. Be as surprised. To find the people. Oppressing. One another. And the problem.

[20:21] Is that often. It leads to. Incompetent. Leaders. Wanting to be. In places. Of leadership. And authority. Well this was all. Part of the judgment.

That Judah was. Heading for. Leaders. Oppressing people. People. Oppressing each other. And don't think. It couldn't happen. In our streets.

Judah never thought. It could happen. In there. Not. Not Jerusalem. Not the holy city. Oh. And it did. It did. What we watched.

On television. In Egypt. Could happen. In Chicago. In New York. It happens. As a judgment. Upon a nation.

That forgets God. And Isaiah says. That the nation. Will be so. Impoverished. And ruined. That they're going to have.

[21:16] Trouble finding. Enough men. Who even want to. Shoulder responsibility. In government. And be the leaders. Isn't that something. Nobody wants to lead.

Anymore. So our wannabe future presidents. Are gathering in Iowa. And other places. And in televised meetings. And the candidates. Are all there on stage. And they're seeking the presidency. They want it. They want it badly. They'll put their whole past history. Under microscopic inspection. In order to get this coveted prize of presidency. They'll spend long days and nights. On the campaign trail for over a year now. To get that prize. Of presidency. Many of them will spend fortunes of their own money. They're seeking the presidency. And there they are on stage. And they're telling you. Why you should vote for them. And the difference they will make. And they lay out their proposals. [22 : 17] To fix everything that's wrong. In our nation. And beyond. Give me your vote. And I will give you a better economy. A safer world. And on and on. Go the promises. And these are the people.

With all the answers. And you and I expect it. Of them. Yea we demand it. Of them. And there's a tendency in man. To put our trust in other men. To trust in our human leaders. If we just had the right leaders in Congress. Oh what a difference it would make. If we just had the right man in the White House. The right people on the Supreme Court. Then our nation would prosper again. And God has a way of punishing our misplaced trust in men. He turns us over. To our leaders. And lo and behold we find. What happens. When mere men. Lead us.

[23 : 17] He takes away our good leaders. And leaves us in the hands of incompetence. When our problems are the greatest. And the crisis calls for the strongest leaders. All that we might learn to stop trusting in man.

Now. The problem will get so great in Judah. The land will be so decimated. That no one will be seeking leadership positions. Can you imagine no one wanting to be the president of the United States?

But there's nobody stepping up and saying. I want that position. I want that preference. Having men look up to me as tough dog.

Nobody will want it. That's how bad it would get in Judah. Verse 6 says. A man will seize one of his brothers at his father's home. And say. You have a cloak.

You be our leader. You be our leader. Take charge of this heap of ruins. Notice the qualifications for leadership are at an all time low.

[24 : 19] You have a cloak. You've got a coat. Well that makes you a step above the rest of the people. Things are that bad. You got a coat. You're qualified to lead.

And tell us. As they shove him up on stage. You be our leader. What will you do to get the economy rolling again? To get some food back on the shelves. I have no remedy.

And what will you do to restore law and order to our streets? I have no remedy. And what will you do to keep foreign nations from plundering us?

I have no remedy. How's that for a campaign slogan? I have no remedy. As the moderator asks the next question.

It would be a breath of fresh air, wouldn't it? To hear that sometime from a man seeking the presidency. Somebody to stand up and say, Folks, the problems of our nation are bigger than man's solutions.

[25 : 25] We need God to fix our land. But no. We've got the answer. And you and I expect that of them.

We trust too much to human leadership. It was happening 2,700 years ago. It's happening, I'm afraid, today.

But in that day, he will say, he will cry out. He's been thrust to the front. I have no remedy.

I have no food or clothing in my house. Don't make me the leader of the people. I don't even know where I'm going to get my next meal. Don't make me responsible to get food for the nation.

You see how bad things are. Nobody wants to lead. Nobody wants to rule over this heap of ruins. That's what will happen in the day when God comes to humble all that man lifts up in pride and self-sufficiency.

[26 : 36] The Lord will take away all food and water. He will take away all good leaders. And last, he will take their beauty and glory. The Lord has a controversy not only with the leaders but also with the ladies.

These ladies obsessed over their physical beauty. They went to all ends to make themselves beautiful. And they had the money to make it happen. Notice verse 16 to 23.

The Lord says, The women of Zion are haughty, walking along with outstretched necks, flirting with their eyes, tripping along with mincing steps, with ornaments jingling on their ankles.

Therefore, the Lord will bring sores on the heads of the women of Zion. And the Lord will make their scalps bald. In that day, the Lord will snatch away their finery, the bangles and headbands and crescent necklaces, the earrings and bracelets and veils, the headdresses and ankle chains and sashes, the perfume bottles and charms, the signet rings and nose rings, the fine robes and the capes and cloaks, the purses and mirrors, and the linen garments and tiaras and shawls.

Now that's a strange list of beauty aids. And standards of beauty have changed over the ages. But the obsession with beauty hasn't.

[27 : 57] I don't need to prove that to you, but here we find 2,700 years ago, the women of Judah caught up in the frenzied pursuit of physical beauty.

Last year, our nation spent some \$8 billion on cosmetics. That's an average of \$100 a month for every woman.

That's a lot of paint. What's the aim? Physical beauty. Our world puts a high premium upon physical beauty.

And some of you ladies feel that pressure every day. Now it needs to be said that God has nothing against physical beauty. He created beautiful things, didn't He?

Amen. Beautiful flowers. Beautiful sunset. Landscapes, waterfalls. Yes, beautiful women. He created them.

[29 : 00] He has no quarrel with beauty. He's all for it. Ugly and dowdy are not virtues that He commands in Scriptures. And in this passage on physical beauty, it's important that we understand what is God upset about.

We need to be careful that we don't draw the wrong conclusions. He's not against earrings. He's not against earrings and bangles, whatever they were, and these other things.

The mirrors and purses and all that's listed. No, He's still dealing with arrogant pride and trusting in man. That's been the theme throughout.

It runs right through chapter 2 and through chapter 3. It's the theme of chapter 3. Man's pride and self-sufficient trust in their human beauty.

That's what He's after here. Look again at verse 16. The women of Zion are haughty. Haughty.

[30 : 09] They're proud, arrogant show-offs. Notice how everything they do is calculated to draw attention to themselves. They're walking along with outstretched necks.

See, that's different, isn't it? Outstretched necks. Perhaps a long neck was a sign of beauty in that day. I don't know. Maybe it made them look taller.

Maybe it was the place they displayed all their dazzling jewelry and necklaces. Maybe it was just their high opinion of themselves that tipped their nose up and extended their neck.

Maybe it's all of that and more. But they're walking around with outstretched necks. It's all part of their haughtiness. And what else? They're flirting with their eyes.

They're batting their lashes at the man. Or however you flirt. They're tripping along with mincing step. I'm not going to try to demonstrate that.

[31 : 10] But she's taking these itsy-bitsy, dainty steps that cause the jingle bells on her ankles to shake a lot. And give off some noise.

Here I come. Here I come. Look at me. It's all to draw attention to self. Now we laugh at that. But I suppose that some of the things that ladies do today will be laughable 2,700 years.

Maybe even 27 years from now. We have our ways, don't we women? Of drawing attention to ourselves. What we wear. How we wear it.

How we carry ourselves. And it's not just the women. Men can be just as vain. Look at me.

This obsession with beauty turns women in on themselves. Their focus is self. They're full of self.

[32 : 12] It's pride in human beauty. And God sees it. And comments on it. And has judgments for it.

So that's something. You'd think there were other things God would be concerned about than these proud beauty gals. No. Every high thing that lifts itself up is heading for a day of bringing low.

Including pride in human beauty. Now let me talk to our female friends for a moment. You may not be spending \$100 a month on cosmetics.

But are you aware of the very subtle danger of becoming obsessed with physical beauty like the rest of the world around us?

Where you just shift your focus a bit to where you give more time and attention and thought and preparation to outward beauty rather than to inward beauty.

[33 : 20] When Peter says that your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as braided hair, wearing of gold jewelry, fine clothes. Nothing wrong with all of that.

But that should not be your focus. That should not be what you consider yourself as being beautiful because of. Okay, if I got my hair set, I've got my jewelry on, I got the right outfit on, I'm good.

If that's what you think is beautiful, you're missing the point. It's not your outward adornment. What should carry the day with you is inward beauty.

It should be your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit which is of great worth in God's sight for this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful.

They were submissive to their own husbands and God looks and says, that's beautiful. That's beautiful. That's gorgeous. So which do you think about most?

[34 : 25] Outward adornment or inward adornment? How can I look more like Jesus Christ? Or how can I look more like that girl on that magazine cover that everyone fawns after?

How can I have more of the beautiful graces of holiness that were in Jesus Christ? Or how can I have more, my hair look more like hers and my outfit and my makeup to give me that look?

Which is it? Beware of obsession with physical beauty. It's a sure thing that where there's obsession with physical beauty there is pride at the bottom.

Pride in physical beauty. Pride in your ability to turn the heads of the guys. And you know it. And you walk into the room and you know that eyes are on you.

And that makes you feel good about yourself. That's pride. And God notices it. But also beware of trust in your physical beauty.

[35 : 43] You can't help but notice how beauty is rewarded in our society. It opens doors. It gets certain perks.

It gets you what you want. The guy that you want.

The job you want. And you can just slowly start shifting your trust away from trusting in the Lord for everything that you need.

Guys, jobs, everything else. To where you're trusting in your physical beauty. Or if I had it I would get these things.

And you're looking to get it from the wrong place. It's misplaced trust. And that's what God sees in the heart. And that was his problem with these haughty, self-sufficient women in Zion.

[36 : 42] They were proudly trusting in their own beauty and power of attraction to get the man of their choice. To get the attention and status and sense of importance.

They didn't need God. They had physical beauty to do what others depend on God for. And they also had the wardrobe with all the clothes and accessories to show it off.

And so verse 18 says, In that day, the Lord's going to march into every expensive wardrobe in Judah and snatch away all these things that the women proudly trusted in to make themselves beautiful.

Nothing wrong with those things. But when you trust in them, when they are sources of pride, God says, I'm coming into the wardrobe. I'm going to snatch them all away.

I'm going to take away all the beauty and glory in Judah. Now this is the same day of the Lord that chapter 2 wrote about when He comes in glory to bring low everything that's self-exalted.

[37 : 47] That same day, He's coming into the wardrobes of Judah. And when He's done, there won't be a beauty aid left and there won't be a beautiful lady left.

Get the five contrasts of what they were now as they heard this prophecy of Isaiah and what they will be then in that day. Verse 24 says, Instead of fragrance, all their perfume, there'll be a stench. They stink. Instead of beautifying sash to show off their figure and tie that dress up just nice, it will be a rope, a rough, hemp rope of slavery.

And instead of well-dressed hair, disgraceful baldness. Instead of fine designer clothing, gunny sack, cloth.

cloth. And instead of beauty, branding, or shame. Poor, poor women of Judah. Their food's gone. Their beauty's gone.

[38:55] And what's more, the men are gone. Six out of seven have been killed or taken into exile. So now the women outnumber the men seven to one.

And they're all desperate for a husband. Once so proud, so self-confident in their beauty and power to nab a man, whoever they wanted.

Now, bald and branded, stinking, ugly hags with sores on their heads, dressed in gunny sacks and ropes, begging to belong to someone. They are so desperate that they take the offensive in the relationship.

And seven of them come and hang on one man. And they have to barter themselves away. We'll provide our own food. We'll provide our own clothes. You won't have to do any of that. Just take away our disgrace of singleness and marry us. It's the same judgment for the people's proud trust in their leaders.

[39:58] God took them away. So with a proud trust in beauty, God takes it away. Stop trusting in man. Leaders, human beauty.

It's of no account. Now, some commentators say these haughty women of Zion are just, it's just a metaphor for the nation as a whole.

I say, why either or? I have no doubt that there were such haughty women in Zion and God had a controversy with them. But they also served to be a picture of the whole nation.

These haughty women who were proud about their beauty encapsulate the arrogant, self-sufficient spirit that ruled the land. It was all proud trust in man.

Man's wealth and military, idols, leaders, and beauty. They're all seeking their own glory through their own resources. And so, lifted up with pride in their own beauty and glory as a nation, they're parading their self-sufficiency on the runway of the world, as one commentator put it.

[41:12] Look at us. Look what Judah has accomplished. Look what we've made of ourselves. Look over our military, our wealth, our beauty, our leaders, our religion.

Look at us. And when man says, look at me, God says, I'll bring you down.

A day is coming for you. And all their beauty and glory as a nation would go down with the beauty and glory of these women. And instead of beauty, it would be disgrace when a whole nation would end up like a destitute woman, ruined and helpless.

Now, why does God do this to the nation? When God comes to take away all that they were leaning on and reduces them to ashes, then, then, a remnant in Judah will put their trust in the Lord alone and they will count Him as their beauty and their glory as their leader.

And so, God comes and He only takes away what we're leaning on for support that He might give us something better. Even Himself.

[42:33] Himself. Himself to be their leader that they look to and trust in. Himself to give them beauty and glory in their land to be for them their beauty and glory.

And so, this is a chapter that calls us to turn away from any trust and pride in ourselves and to cast all of our trust on the Lord. You know, it's the same thing that brings a nation to ruin, that brings an individual life to ruin.

It's striking out in life without God. I can handle this without God. And we just push God off to the background. and it ruins nations and it ruins individual lives.

The nation that forgets God will be turned into hell. So, what an invitation we have here. God's knocking the supports out that we might look to Him for all that He promises to be for us.

So, let's hear again that exhortation to stop trusting in man. Whether it's human leaders or beauty and glory, we're heading into another election year.

[43:52] We're going to hear it. We have it coming up every election cycle. Let's not subtly let our trust land on a human leader. Let's pray for better leaders. Let's pray for righteous people in positions of leadership.

Let's pray that God as you are judging us and leaving us in the hands of rulers that we deserve that you in wrath would have mercy on us. Our trust is not in any human candidate.

Our trust alone is in you. Let's be very careful that that remains the case with us. And let's treasure God's leadership over us by following His lead.

Where's He leading us? He's leading us in paths of righteousness for His namesake. Let's show that we treasure His leadership by embracing His lead and following His lead and walking in ways of righteousness.

And let's repent where we've left off His lead and wandered off in our own way and let's trust in the Lord with all of our hearts that He knows better than us how we ought to live our life and not lean on our own understanding but in all our ways acknowledge Him and let Him direct our paths as He promises to do.

[45 : 10] Embrace Him as your leader and then let's be obsessed with the beauty of our Savior and count His righteousness as our beauty. Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness my beauty are my glorious dress.

In flaming worlds with these arrayed with joy I lift up my head. let's not be proud of any beauty or glory in our lives as if it was our own doing.

What do you have that has not been given to you and if it has been given why do you boast as if it had not been? Let's seek the beautifying graces of the Spirit of God likeness to Jesus who is the fairest of ten thousands.

Let's seek after the beauty of His holiness in our lives knowing that charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting but a woman that fears the Lord is to be praised.

Now there's another lesson before we close. Sometimes the righteous are found in a nation that is heading right into the jaws of God's judgment. I'm not trying to play a prophet for the United States of America.

[46 : 18] I'm talking about Judah. but you have to be blind not to see some parallels. Sometimes the righteous are found in a nation that is ripe and beginning to taste the judgment of God.

They're part of a nation that's staggering and falling because their sins have provoked God's wrath. Verse 8 tells that the words and deeds of the entire nation are lived in defiance of the glorious presence of God.

The look on their faces testifies against them. They parade their sins like Sodom. They do not hide it. Folks, we have people parading their sins in literal parades and it's provoking to the Almighty.

It's a brazen look on their face. There's no shame. They glory in their shame. People break the commandments of God not in private, not hiding it, but out in the open.

It's acceptable. The wicked freely strut about in their sin when what is vile is honored among men. That nation is ripe for ruin.

[47 : 33] Woe to them. They've brought disaster upon themselves. But hear me, they not only bring disaster upon themselves, they bring it to the whole nation. To the whole nation. And that's where it gets interesting because there are some righteous in the nation ripe for judgment.

What about them? Does God care about us? Does He know we're here? We're heading into the jaws of judgment. What's going to happen to us?

Yes, the righteous are in the same nation. They have the same lack of food and water, the same economy, the same immoral society, the same crime in the streets, the same exile in Babylon, the same incompetent leadership.

And they would suffer many of the disasters that were coming upon the whole nation right alongside their wicked counterparts. And there's a most tender word in this chapter for the righteous who are in a nation that's about to be brought to their knees by the well-deserved judgments of God.

It's the only good news in the whole chapter. It's just a staggering thing. You're watching the evening news and the whole 30 minutes is just full of bad news, economy plummeting, everything's gone down the tubes.

[48 : 57] And right in the middle there's a 30-minute unannounced immediate segment of the best news in the world. And then it's right back to the old bad news. That's what chapter 3 of Isaiah is like.

You're reading along all this judgment, judgment, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. Tell the righteous it will be well with them for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds.

Verse 10. There it is. And then it's right back to woe to the wicked. Disaster is coming on them. But there it is. There are a few righteous people in this wicked nation that God is going to judge and bring down.

They're righteous. That means that God has taken their sins and put them on His substitute son and taken Christ's righteousness and put it to their record. It means God has taken out their unrighteous heart and put a righteous heart in.

It means they are committed to God's righteous laws. These are the righteous in the land and God sees them. He's not forgotten them. They don't get lost in the crowd of sinners.

[50:08] The Lord knows them by name. He knows where they live. He knows what they're facing. He knows how they're feeling. And He comes with an encouraging word for them. And let me just say we don't know the misery we may yet have to live through as God judges this nation's sins.

But whatever they may or may not be in this section when God is telling Judah judgments are coming and it will not be well for you Judah.

He says He's got one word. Tell the righteous Isaiah. Tell the righteous it will be well with them. Isn't that good?

God knows we're here. And it will be well with us for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. There's a harvest for all the righteous deeds in your life.

There's a harvest for all the righteous sowing in your life. It may seem like it's all going down the drain with the nation. No, no. God says it will be well with you.

[51:19] Every seed planted in the kingdom of God will have its harvest. Every act of obedience to God's law from the heart. Every faithful stand taken for the Lord.

Every bit of persecution suffered for Jesus and the Word's sake. Every temptation rejected. Every day that you're found faithful at your post serving the Lord as mother as child as father as businessman whoever you are doing it is unto the Lord.

Every word spoken for the Savior. Every deed of kindness done. Tell the righteous it will be well with them because they're going to enjoy the fruit the harvest of their deeds.

Whatever a man sows that shall he also reap. That only goes for the wicked it goes for the righteous. They will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. God's righteous principle of sowing and reaping is still operative in the world though it seems like it's chaos and the world's coming undone and yes for a while it may mean the righteous suffer and yes it may mean the wicked prosper but not for long it will be well with you my righteous brother or sister because you will enjoy forever the fruit of your deeds.

Your work in the Lord is not in vain. He is the rewarder for those who earnestly seek him. God is not unjust. He will not forget your deeds your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

[52:57] Oh they will be mine in the day when I make up my treasured possession I will spare them just as in compassion a man spares the son who serves him and you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked between those who serve God and those who do not Malachi 3 in this life you don't often don't always see the distinction do you?

Both are found together in the same nation suffering under the same leadership under the same unjust laws under the same bad economy under the same cancer under the same business that fails we are found together and the distinction is not seen but it will be well with the righteous and that distinction will once again be seen on the day when God comes to humble every high and proud thing he will lift up the humble who trusted in him and who served him and they will enjoy his gracious rewards all of grace yet rewards still the fruit of their deeds brothers and sisters we need to heed that encouragement we need to take it right into our bosom forgetfulness of it leads to weariness and doing good it's the promise of the harvest that keeps the farmer at the self-denying hard work all year long and we too will reap if we do not give up keep trusting keep glorying in your great

God and Savior tell the righteous I've told you I've been on an errand this morning to tell you it will be well with you for you will enjoy the fruit of your deeds let's pray Lord we've seen this morning how easily we put our trust in man human leaders human beauty how easily we take to ourselves the credit Lord even our good deeds that will be rewarded in that day will be the works that you have worked in us all that we have accomplished you have done for us we thank you that you've not forgotten us we thank you that in your purposes for this nation your eye is upon your people you've shown your love to us in Christ and you're not about to forget us can a mother forget the baby at her breast though she may forget I will never forget you see I have engraved you upon the palms of my hands so we would take comfort that you know where we're at you know the nation we live in and all of its problems and that we can safely trust ourselves to you we pray in Jesus name amen