

## Isaiah Chapter 1 Continued

**Isaiah 1:13 "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; [it is] iniquity, even the solemn meeting."**

These were all occasions prescribed by the Law of Moses.

Vain oblations are worthless offerings.

Even the solemn meeting became nothing more than a sinful gathering because of their wrong motives.

All of these things just remind God of His children He loved who had gone astray.

Vain oblations would be those given to no avail.

They would be given, not of the heart, but in formality.

They were keeping the law in form only.

Isaiah brings to light some of the times when they would offer unto the Lord.

These times now are just painful memories of their transgressions.

Incense had been a sweet smell to the Lord, now it was a stench.

"I cannot away with" means endure.

This type of offering was a sin itself.

To worship in form only, greatly displeases God.

**Isaiah 1:14 "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear [them]."**

It is impossible to doubt the Lord's total aversion toward hypocritical religion.

Other practices God hates include robbery for burnt offering (61:8), serving other gods (Jer. 44:4), harboring evil against a neighbor and love for a false oath (Zech. 8:16), divorce (Mal. 2:16), and the one who loves violence (Psalm 11:5).

The new moon was the signal of the first of the month and a time of special worship.

The feasts were especially holy times, such as feast of Unleavened Bread.

They had been a joy, but when done out of obligation and not from love, became a sad remembrance to the Lord.

**Isaiah 1:15 "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood."**

The following Scriptures show us that Solomon knelt before the altar of God and held his hands up to heaven in praise, when he prayed.

1 Kings 8:22 "And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:"

1 Kings 8:54 "And it was [so], that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven."

This type of prayer is usually very pleasing to God. God looks into the heart of man and knows when the prayer offered is sincere.

It would not help to lift your hands up in humble praise before the Lord, when you prayed, if the praise and prayer are not sincere.

God will not hear our prayers when we are not sincere.

His eyes are closed to them, because they have bloody hands.

This possibly is referring to the death of Isaiah.

**Isaiah 1:16 "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;"**

This is the answer to their problems.

They must repent of their sins.

"Repent" means to turn the other way.

It actually means, turn in the opposite direction.

To say we are sorry is not enough, we must walk in the salvation provided.

A Christian washes in the blood of the Lamb to get clean and free from sin.

These Hebrews must repent and wash away their sins and then walk before God uprightly.

The Hebrews had ceremonial washings which symbolize our water baptism.

The old man of sin must be buried in water baptism.

The new man rises to walk a wholesome life.

Wash does not indicate that the sinner may cleanse himself. Nor does it refer to mere ritual washing.

Rather, it indicates that the sinner must accept the cleansing offered by the Lord, a cleansing of the heart resulting in true repentance.

The outward evidence of the emptiness of Jerusalem's ritualism was the presence of evil works and the absence of good works.

**Isaiah 1:17 "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."**

These Hebrews had been given the Law of God.

They must set an example to the whole world of how to live.

They were the chosen people.

This is just exactly like the Christian walking in newness of life.

Doing well is a slow progressive learning of what is pleasing to God.

You cannot do the will of God, until you know what His will is.

First learn, and then do the will of God.

Be fair in all of your judgments.

Help those who cannot help themselves, especially the widow and orphans.

Illustrative of good works are deeds done on behalf of those in need (verse 23).

Verses 18-20:

The prophet's appeal to come and reason together reveals God's gracious invitation to all men.

It literally means to be "reasonable" by repenting and turning to God.

Their sin is described as scarlet and red like crimson, referring to their bloodguiltiness before God.

The term crimson also means “worm”, referring to the colorfast red dye of the scarlet worm.

The eradication of this stain turns it snowy white and is symbolic of the life changing grace of God, which delivers men from the guilt and condemnation of sin.

Thus, the prophet reminds his readers that God stands ready to cleanse and forgive all who will turn to Him.

In developing His call for cleanliness (in verse 16), the Lord pardoned the guilty who desire forgiveness and obedience.

This section previews the last 27 chapters of Isaiah, which focus more on grace and forgiveness than on judgment.

**Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."**

The two colors speak of the guilt of those whose hands were “covered with blood” (verse 15).

Being covered with blood speaks of extreme iniquity and perversity (59:3; Ezekiel 9:9-10; 23:37 and 45).

White as snow ... like wool:

Snow and wool are substances that are naturally white, and therefore portray what is clean, the blood guilt (verse 15), having been removed.

Isaiah was a prophet of grace, but forgiveness is not unconditional.

It comes through repentance as (verse 19 indicates).

The beautiful thing about Almighty God is that He will reason with us.

There is no way that we can completely do away with our own sin.

Even the blood of animals could just cover the sin for a year and not clear the conscience of man.

The precious blood of the perfect Lamb, Jesus Christ, did away with sin for all time for everyone who would receive it.

The type of whiteness (as snow above), symbolizes the righteousness.

Snow is beautiful white and falls from heaven with no effort on our own.

Salvation is that way, as well.

God, Himself, reconciles Himself to man.

Salvation and freedom from sin, is a free gift coming down from God.

We have no part in it, except to believe and receive it.

We need to see in this that, even though the sin is very bad, God will cleanse it.

Verses 19-20

“Willing and obedient ... refuse and rebel”.

The prophet offered his readers the same choice God gave Moses (in Deut. Chapter 28), a choice between a blessing and a curse.

They may choose repentance and obedience and reap the benefits of the land or refuse to do so and become victims of foreign oppressors.

“Eat ... be devoured”:

To accentuate the opposite outcomes, the Lord used the same Hebrew word to depict both destinies.

On one hand, they may eat the fruit of the Land; on the other, they may be eaten by conquering powers.

**Isaiah 1:19 "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:"**

Throughout the Bible, obeying God brings great blessings, and disobeying God brings a curse.

The beautiful thing about those who work for God is, God does not care about your technical training.

He wants you to have a willing heart and obey Him.

The Holy Spirit will train you.

Psalms 37:25 "I have been young, and [now] am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

**Isaiah 1:20 "But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it]."**

The fact that "the LORD hath spoken it" means it will certainly happen.

God cannot and does not lie.

About the most foolish thing a person could do, would be to refuse so great an offer.

Rebellion is akin to witchcraft.

To rebel against God would be a much more severe thing than to rebel against people.

#### Verses 21-31

recounts Jerusalem's current disobedience, with an account of God's actions to purge her (in verses 24-31).

This concluding passage is supplementary to the rest of the chapter.

It looks forward to the millennial kingdom when Jerusalem will again be restored as God's faithful city.

Verse 24 uses three different divine names: Lord (Adon, lower case); LORD (Yahweh, caps), and mighty One of Israel (Abir Yisra'el).

All refer to the same person of the Godhead.

Converts are literally "turned ones" or "repentant ones."

**Isaiah 1:21 "How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers."**

Often in the Old Testament, spiritual harlotry pictured the idolatry of God's people.

In this instance however, Jerusalem's unfaithfulness incorporated a wider range of wrongs, including murders and general corruption (verses 21 and 23).

As Isaiah prophesied, ethical depravity had replaced the city's former virtues.

We see the results of refusing to follow God.

The main thing to notice here is the fact that they had been faithful in the past.

God speaks of Jerusalem as His bride.

To become unfaithful, turns a beautiful bride into a harlot.

This is true, whether it is a city, church, or an individual.

To go against God is to commit spiritual adultery.

The blessings of God were upon His bride, but unfaithfulness causes all kinds of sin.

Murder is a sign of total degradation.

**Isaiah 1:22 "Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:"**

Silver of this kind has trash mixed in it.

It is not pure.

Wine, many times, symbolizes the Holy Spirit of God.

It appears the operation of the Holy Spirit has been stopped.

Silver indicates that at some time these people were redeemed, but have gotten mixed up with the world and are become debased by the evil of society around them.

This is what has happened in our society today.

Even churches have gone so far as to deny the power of God in their services.

There is great danger in wandering from the pure teachings of God.

**Isaiah 1:23 "Thy princes [are] rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."**

The LORD is King.

His sons would be called princes.

Christians (sons of God), are princes, because our Father is the King.

This "princes" is speaking of God's children who have rebelled against Him.

The lost world is not spoken of here; these are God's people who have become worldly.

They are disobedient to the teachings of God.

These rewards are speaking of bribes to pervert justice.

This is a perfect description of our society today, even many Christians.

The two most important commandments are love of God and fellowman.

Both of these are broken in the verse above.

**Isaiah 1:24 "Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:"**

These titles of God emphasized His role as the rightful judge of His sinful people.

“The Mighty One of Israel” occurs only here in the Bible, though “the Mighty One of Jacob” appears 5 times.

Now we see the judgment spoken upon the rebellious.

In the physical, this is speaking of Jerusalem.

Silver is purified by applying great heat to it.

The redeemed (in this case), will be purified by great persecution and trials.

Those who are not purified by the heat are destroyed by it.

Notice, the three names for God in the above verse: Lord, the LORD of hosts, and the Mighty One of Israel.

The wrath of God is poured out to get the people to repent.

**Isaiah 1:25 "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:"**

God’s judgment of His people has future restoration as its goal.

They were subsequently restored from the Babylonian captivity (Jer. 29:10), but his promise has in view a greater and more lasting restoration.

It anticipates a complete and permanent restoration, which will make Jerusalem supreme among the nations.

The only such purging and restoration in Scripture is that spoken of in conjunction with the yet future “time of Jacob’s distress” (Jer. 30:6-7), i.e. Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week and the second advent of the Messiah.

The tin, in the verse above, is the non-precious metal that had been used to take away the pure state of the silver.

The Right Hand of God is Jesus Christ.

Whether that is meant here, I cannot tell.



Jesus is the One who cleanses us with His blood and makes us righteous in God's sight.

Tin symbolizes sin in the verse above.

**Isaiah 1:26 "And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city."**

This is a prophecy of the New Jerusalem, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

It is also, speaking of the church which Jesus, Himself, purifies.

Jesus is the Judge of all the world.

Christians will reign with Him as His subordinates, when He sets up His kingdom.

He is the Righteous Judge.

**Isaiah 1:27 "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness."**

Zion was originally a designation for the hill Ophel, this name became a synonym for the entire city of Jerusalem.

Isaiah always uses it that way.

“Be redeemed, her converts”:

That remnant of the city who repented of their sins would find redemption in conjunction with God’s future restoration of Israel’s prosperity (59:20).

"Zion", as we said before, is the church or the city of Jerusalem.

Those who repent (converts), and receive Jesus as their Savior are redeemed and take on the righteousness of Christ.

**Isaiah 1:28 "And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners [shall be] together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed."**

When heat is applied to silver and the trash (dross), comes to the top, the dross is skimmed off and thrown away.

It is no good to anyone. This is what happens to the transgressors who will not turn to God.

Those who reject God will be put in the lake of fire with Satan and all of his followers.

Concurrent with the future blessing of the faithful remnant, the Lord will relegate the unrepentant to destruction.

This is the only way Zion can become pure.

**Isaiah 1:29 "For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen."**

These were settings where Israel practiced idolatrous worship.

It is ironic that the Lord has chosen Israel while some citizens of Jerusalem have chosen the “gardens”.

When God calls them to account for their rebellious choice, they will be ashamed and embarrassed.

It seems there was false worship being conducted under these trees and, also, places of worldly pleasure called gardens.

This is just saying they chose the pleasures of the earth for a little season over God.

**Isaiah 1:30 "For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water."**

In the winter, the oak tree sheds its leaves.

The evergreen tree symbolizes everlasting life.

A garden would soon wither and die without water.

**Isaiah 1:31 "And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench [them]."**

The tow “tinder”, would hold him back from doing what he desired to do.

This, again, is speaking of the pull of the world being so great that they would go that way.

This leads to destruction in the lake of fire.

Both the rebel and his works will perish.

This is final judgment, not merely another captivity.

## **Isaiah Chapter 1 Continued Questions**

1. Why does God say the oblations and incense are an abomination to Him?

2. They were given not of the \_\_\_\_\_, but in formality.
3. To worship, in form only, greatly \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What did the new moon signify?
5. Name one of the feasts spoken of here?
6. They had been a joy, but when done from obligation and not from love, they become a \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord.
7. How did Solomon pray in the dedication of the temple?
8. When would it do no good to raise your hands in prayer to God?
9. What is wrong with the hands in verse 15?
10. What could these bloody hands be referring to?
11. What is the answer to their problem?
12. What does repent mean?
13. How does a Christian get clean and free from sin?
14. What did the Hebrews have that symbolized our water baptism?
15. What were the instructions in verse 17?
16. Why must the Hebrews set an example for others?
17. Who is the Perfect Lamb?
18. Whiteness like the snow comes from where?
19. First \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_, the will of God.
20. If ye are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, ye shall eat the good of the land.
21. What does Scripture mean when it says, "the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it"?
22. Rebellion is akin to \_\_\_\_\_.
23. To become unfaithful, turns a beautiful bride into a harlot, whether it is a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or an \_\_\_\_\_.
24. What is murder a sign of?
25. What does wine symbolize many times?

26. What does the silver, in verse 22, tell us?
27. Who is the King?
28. Who are the "princes"?
29. What 2 commandments of God are broken in verse 23?
30. How is silver purified?
31. What are the three names given for God in verse 24?
32. What is the tin, in verse 25, symbolic of?
33. Who is the Right Hand of God?
34. Verse 26 is a prophecy of what?
35. What is "Zion" symbolic of?
36. What happens to the dross burned out of the silver?
37. What is intended by the leaf of the oak fading?
38. What problem would the tow cause?