

Isaiah 1v1-31 (NIV)

¹ The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

² Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me. ³ The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand."

⁴ Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.

⁵ Why should you be beaten any more? Why do you persist in rebellion? Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted. ⁶ From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness--only wounds and bruises and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil. ⁷ Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire; your fields are being stripped by foreigners right before you, laid waste as when overthrown by strangers. ⁸ The Daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard, like a hut in a field of melons, like a city under siege. ⁹ Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah! ¹¹ "The multitude of your sacrifices--what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. ¹² When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? ¹³ Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations--I cannot bear your evil

assemblies. ¹⁴ Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; ¹⁶ wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, ¹⁷ learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.

¹⁸ "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; ²⁰ but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

²¹ See how the faithful city has become a harlot! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her--but now murderers! ²² Your silver has become dross, your choice wine is diluted with water. ²³ Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow's case does not come before them. ²⁴ Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: "Ah, I will get relief from my foes and avenge myself on my enemies. ²⁵ I will turn my hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities. ²⁶ I will restore your judges as in days of old, your counsellors as at the beginning. Afterwards you will be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City."

²⁷ Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness. ²⁸ But rebels and sinners will both be broken, and those who forsake the LORD will perish. ²⁹ "You will be ashamed because of the sacred oaks in which you have delighted; you will be disgraced because of the gardens that you have chosen. ³⁰ You will be like an oak with fading leaves, like a garden without water. ³¹ The mighty man will become tinder and his work a spark; both will burn together, with no-one to quench the fire."

Seeing God's Glory

1. The Word of the Lord (Isaiah 1v1-31)

John Percival

Introduction

- 'the inside story'
- God's word to Israel... and to us

God's Word reveals our true state as rebellious children (v2-9)

- the basic problem
- pleading with the people

God's Word exposes the uselessness of false religion (v10-17)

- religion without reality

God's Word exhorts us to come to God for cleansing (v18-31)

- what God offers
- the choice we have

Conclusion