

# Judgement And Wrath

**Title:** God's Wrath Against Rebellious Judah And Jerusalem

**Text:** Isaiah 2:12-22

**Introduction:** In the first chapter (1:1-2a) we see the reason for the book. Isaiah is not wanting to hear himself speak, he is speaking on behalf of the Lord against a stubborn and rebellious people. We see in vs. 2 "**For the Lord speaks.**" We don't need a prophet today in the streets announcing God's wrath, grace and mercy, we have His word! Oh that we would listen. Isaiah 6:10 defines their condition, "**Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed.**" This was the message Isaiah was to deliver.

## POINT 1 - THE ASSESSMENT

The question is asked in vs. 5 "**Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion?**" In other words, what other area can you be wicked in? What else can you do to defy the Lord and His ways? There is nothing left, vs. 5a-6. The whole head is sick, wounds aren't bandaged up, care isn't taken for this, the entire body is sick from the head to the foot. Vs. 7-8 there is desolation, fire, the city is overthrown by strangers.

Unless the Lord (vs.9) in His mercy had not left a few, survivors, a remnant they would have all been destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrah. I want to remind you of Lamentations 3:22 "**The Lord's loving kindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail.**" In the following chapters we will see the judgment and wrath of God, but even in the midst of judgement He is merciful. What we truly deserve, He extends mercy to us. In the account of the fall when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and hid themselves because of their nakedness, it wasn't our first parents that sought God, He sought them. Genesis 3:9 "**Where are you?, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?**" In our text today, it was God who left some, it was God who did not utterly destroy the city nor did He destroy man. Yes, consequences were the result of the fall, death, suffering, pain, and punishment. God loved both Adam and Eve, yet He cursed them. It is by the mercy of God that we are not consumed today.

## POINT 2 - THE WORTHLESS WORSHIP

In vs. 10-15 (chapter 1) God expresses the putrefied acts of vain worship. **Is a just rejection of those shows and shadows of religion which they kept up among them, notwithstanding this general defection and apostasy.**<sup>1</sup> God expresses His putrefied disgust of all the vain worship they bring. Vs. 13 "**Bring your worthless offerings no longer.**" Their hearts were empty of true devotion. They had made odd festivals and feasts which weren't true worship. Vs. 14 details how they had become a burden or God had essentially had enough of the vain worship.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Isa/Isa\\_001.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Isa/Isa_001.cfm) (accessed 2.11.22)

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This begs the question for us. Obviously we aren't doing new moon festivals but is our worship true? By that I am asking the question is when we worship are we doing it for ourselves, for emotion of the flesh or are we reflection our worship to God? Let's be careful not to make worship about us. It doesn't take long to see that odd, bizarre worship tactics in some churches where smoke, lights and props are used instead of the word of God. But not only that, we can turn worship into an entertaining experience. We must be careful to avoid such. There are some principals of worship worth noting.

The Inventive Principal - we may do in worship whatever we might imagine.

The Normative Principal - whatever is not forbidden in Scripture for worship is permitted.

The Regulative Principal - whatever is not prescribed in Scripture is forbidden.

### POINT 3 - A CLEANSING CALL

Wash yourselves does not imply that men have the righteous ability to earn their own righteousness. Vs. 16-20 are the results of a spiritual healing resulting in outward fruits. These fruits are listed, cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek, reprove, defend and plead. All of these are the outward actions of an inward change. They exist today in our conversion, we may be vain in worship, church attenders only, and repentance brings about true fruits of conversion.

It's a call to repent. This is what we do. The gospel is a conversion gospel. Matthew Henry says, ["If you would have your sacrifices accepted, and your prayers answered, you must begin your work at the right end: Be converted to my law."](#) We are left with two roads, the obey or the reject road (vs. 19-20).

### POINT 4 - A DAY OF RECKONING

Isaiah 2:12 is a day of judgements or reckoning. We define reckoning as *"an accounting, a settling of a matter."* In vs. 13-21 we see those to whom the accounting will be applied. Part of this reckoning is found in chapter 3:1 ["Lord God of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah."](#) Yes, God removes those who are stubborn and in the way. He does this in churches too. Notice the reasons for judgement. Vs. 8 because their speech and actions are against the Lord. Vs. 9 for they do not even conceal evil. Vs. 12 even defines judgement as children and woman ruling over them. Furthermore, the ones who have led to such a disgrace and shame are the leaders, vs. 12 ["Those who guide you lead you astray, And confuse the direction of your paths."](#)

This is why the church must have the highest standard for church leadership. Elders, pastors, deacons must be above the culture and speak the truth to the flock. They must proclaim the truth of God at all costs, Ephesians 4:15 ["Speak the truth in love."](#) As it has been said, *"As the pulpit goes, so goes the church."*

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## POINT 5 - JUDGEMENT AND GOD'S GLORY

The pronouncement of judgement upon those who openly reject and disobey God (Isaiah 5:8-25). Let's be clear, God is perfectly just in consuming anyone, anything and entire nations and people with wrath, if He wills. There's no mistakes or unfairness in God's actions. Let's note in vs. 3-7 a few things about the presupposition of judgment. Vs. 4 "Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones?" The result is judgement in vs. 5-6. Is it any wonder, why we as Christians today think God won't judge us while we are still on earth? We think we can sin, live as we want and not expect God's wrath for our disobedience here? Not all judgments are a result of sin, but many can be. The fact we don't fear God and His holiness. Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction." Proverbs 1:29 "Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the Lord."

In vs. 8-11 we see the intent on drunkenness and wine and God reduces that to literally nothing. A bath is 10 1/2 gallons, ephor about 9 gallons. The land won't produce what it could. The abundance will be turned into want and warnings against those who "stay up late that wine may inflame them." All of these activities are a result of a people that do not fear God and His wrath and judgment. And we find out why in vs. 12 "But they do not pay attention to the deeds of the Lord, Nor do they consider the work of His hands." Matthew Henry's commentary "God's judgments have already seized them, and they are under the tokens of his displeasure, but they regard not; they consider not the hand of God in all these things; his hand is lifted up, but they will not see, because they will not disturb themselves in their pleasures nor think what God is doing with them."<sup>2</sup> It would be advisable for us to consider our ways in what we do, whether they are honoring to God. We would rightly consider where our affections lie. And if lying in the wrong place to consider the word of God and repent.

The judgment continues in vs. 13-25 with woes pronounced to those who call good evil and evil good. It's not surprising that the world does this for they do not know anything else but what is natural to the flesh. However, when the church starts calling good evil and evil good, dark light and light dark, we have begun to ignore the knowledge of God (vs. 13) and began to think we are wise in our own eyes. In other words, that we know what's right based upon our own sinful desires. Isaiah 5:21 "Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And clever in their own sight!" It's wise in the eyes of some leaders in the church to have their message fit the cultural narrative. One pastor says Romans 1 isn't talking about homosexuality or LGTBQ because there wasn't social media. I have no idea what that means. Other leaders are constantly talking about divine impression, dreams and voices in their heads as they lead churches. That may seem wise in your eyes, but it's not biblical and it's not of God.

## POINT 6 - GOD'S GLORY AND HIS PERFECT WRATH

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Isa/Isa\\_005.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Isa/Isa_005.cfm) (accessed 2.12.22)

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Isaiah 5:16, God will be glorified in all things, even judgment and wrath. When Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt, God wasn't unjust but just in His doings. Often times the purpose of judgement is for men to live righteously. In fact, we ought to live in fear of wrath. In other words, it provides a motive for righteous living. Matthew 6:20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Though this kind of living runs counter to the culture, our life isn't here nor should we seek pleasures here. God will be glorified in our living as others see Christ. Our reward isn't earthly, it's eternal.

May we live today as if it were our last and judgment was coming so God will be glorified. May we be mindful of the judgement of God, even as we live godly in this world, we may have to endure judgment in the midst of ungodly leaders. Proverbs 29:2 "When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, But when a wicked man rules, people groan." The reason we don't lose heart in the midst of trials is because our hope is eternal not temporary.