

ISAIAH 1 vs 1

The book of Isaiah has two great divisions, carefully preserved through the centuries: **chapters 1 – 39** speak to judgments on the nations – including **Israel** led by Ephraim, and **Judah**, the southern 2 tribes; **chapters 40 – 66** speak to the glorious work of the Messiah.

First we read: God's criticism of both rebel houses **Israel** and **Judah**, thereby affecting all the local neighbors in the hood; and **second**: chapters 40–66; God's consolation to both houses who have separate histories. The great Isaiah scroll found in the Qumran caves, dated from the 2nd century BC has put to rest many wild speculations about prophet Isaiah.



Isaiah lived around 740 BC, when Assyria took the House of **Israel**, the northern 10 tribes who carried with them all the birthright promises of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Isaiah mentions **Ephraim the 2nd son of Joseph**, heir of those birthright promises. Isaiah wrote till around 680 BC through the reign of 4 kings.

¹ The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah kings of Judah. /

Isaiah was a prophet to the southern kingdom; Uzziah was a good king who reigned during the zenith of Judah's power and prosperity since the days of Solomon, sadly he overstepped his assignment thinking he could do the work of the high priest offering incense to intercede for the people; so the LORD struck him with leprosy, and though he continued to reign; during this time there was moral decay among the people. Jotham, son of Uzziah, began as a co-regent perhaps after the king acquired leprosy; Ahaz was most evil; and Hezekiah promoted some reforms, but died before Assyria reached Jerusalem.

² Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth for the LORD speaks, for the children I have nourished and brought up, but they rebelled against Me / this vision isn't merely addressed to people living 2,700 years ago; Isaiah definitely is speaking to me and you, **he wants heaven and earth to pay attention**: the LORD God has done his fatherly duties to provide for and train His children; He knows they are children, He did not ask them to walk on water, or create things from nothing, His children are no match for their glorious Father; but I bet He wants them to grow up. I can't imagine heaven populated with a bunch of 2-year olds, can you? / after 300 years they again were doing what Moses warned them about.

³ The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's manger but Israel does not know, My people do not consider / God's own creation of brute oxen and dumb asses have more sense than His own people. In the NT we learn: **Jesus came to His own, but His own did not receive Him** -- **John 1**. Paul wrote: **all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible were made by Him and for Him** -- **Colossians 1**. Isaiah wants heaven and earth to consider: who created whom, who is Boss -- and who isn't.

⁴ Ah sinful nation! people weighed down with crimes, offspring of evildoers children who are corrupt, who abandoned the LORD,

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they provoked **the Holy One of Israel** to anger, they have gone away backward / weighed down with crimes; with rigged scales of disparities and injustices; they are rotting/ not a good thing; Isaiah uses this title 30 times; instead of learning from the Lord, they are walking backwards... Can you imagine only driving your carcass in reverse all your life?

⁵ Should you be troubled again? as you continue stepping over the line, the whole head is sick, the whole heart is weakened / Do you need your butt paddled again?

⁶ From the sole of your foot to your head there is no soundness in it; only wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores: they are not closed, nor bandaged, nor softened with ointment / from head to toe they are sick; remember: this is Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷ Your land is wasted, your cities are set on fire: your land -- foreigners devour them in your presence and it is deserted, as overthrown by outsiders. / they were attacked from all sides; from Israel, from Syria, Edom, Philistia, and Assyria, all carving up Judah,

⁸ And the daughter Zion is left as a shed in a vineyard, as a shack in a cucumber garden, like a besieged city / Jerusalem is a broken-down – and left a dilapidated shelter.

⁹ If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we would be as Sodom, we would be as Gomorrah / totally annihilated, a fading recollection of depravity in history.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom, give ear to the law of our God give ear to the law of our God people of Gomorrah / wanton leaders in Jerusalem; the law of God is not a bad thing; having no other gods before the One who is Creator makes lots of sense -- because there is no other who matters. Laws create order; no laws = disorder. In God's heaven, it is orderly; they don't need people with weapons standing on the street corners, or even securing its borders; their citizens seek God first; their road aren't clutter with traffic.

¹¹ To what purpose are all your sacrifices to Me? says the LORD: I have enough of your burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of well-fed cattle; I do not delight in the blood of bullocks, or lambs, or goats / in the NT we read: [for the law made nothing perfect](#)... it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.

¹² When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this stampede in My courts?

¹³ Bring no more worthless offerings; and no more incense that is repulsive to Me / designer incense, from Arabia and India?– apparently some had missed the point;

your new moons and sabbaths, your calling of assemblies, your solemn meeting, I will not endure -- crimes / that one word describes it all; in other words, your religious veneer is all sheer evil. Your pretentious traditions and practices are fruitless and insignificant.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates to Me they are a burden; I am weary to bear them / Wow! When the LORD... who never sleeps, who tirelessly cares for His own... when He gets exhausted... then Houston, we have a problem.

/ notice, the LORD does not say **He hates His new moons...** He is **NOT** talking about **His 7 appointed feasts** the 7 specific days to be fulfilled by Messiah, Moses told us about them. He does **not** hate those days that still are [shadows of things to come](#):

15 You may stretch out your hands, but I will not look: yes, you may amply pray, but I will not hear: your hands are full of blood / covered in blood; **a-dam** literally means: first blood. Since the LORD confronted Cain, What have you done? Jeremiah tells us they murdered their own children due to alliances they made with their heathen neighbors.

16 Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean, remove your evil deeds from My sight / what? we aren't supposed to sit on our butts and wait for the LORD to do it all?

[1] Cease to do evil / and how do we do that? By changing our focus... looking to Him;

17 [1] Learn to do good; [2] Seek justice, [3] reprove the oppressor, [4] defend the fatherless, [5] plead for the widow / so we stop doing one thing, and learn to do **a handful of things**, and isn't it interesting? No: walking on water, or leaping tall buildings.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are as scarlet they will be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they will be as wool / the color of our blood and our brothers; most sin is against those closest to us.

(An aside: in the 1800s, the Grimm's brothers recorded the ancient stories of the various tribes who populated northern Europe and taught their children stories cloaked in scriptural truths **in this verse**, we find the origin of the name: Snow White; or [building your life on a solid foundation](#)... so the big bad wolf cannot destroy -- **1 Corinthians 3**)

19 If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best of the land / if you consent and obey:

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20 But if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

21 How the faithful city has become a whore, / the epitome of disloyal infidelity! She was once full of justice; the upright lodged in her; but now murderers.

22 Your silver has become dross / junk; your fine wine diluted with water: 23 Your rulers are rebels, and friends of thieves: Everyone loves a bribe, and chases after rewards they do not defend the orphan, nor does the widow's request come to them. / so they were like many in our genius 21st century:

24 So the LORD God of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, says; Ah, I will be relieved of My adversaries, I will avenge Myself on My enemies:

25 I will turn My hand on you and smelt your junk, and take away all your tin / Judah and Jerusalem, / which only happens after turning up the heat:

26 Then I will restore your judges as at the first and your counselors as at the beginning: after that you will be called, The city of the upright, the faithful city. 27 Zion will be redeemed with justice, and her converts with rightness / it starts with cleaning out the lawless judges; those who turned around one day, will do right, and pay their vows.

28 But those stepping over the line and sinners will together be destroyed, those who abandon the LORD will cease to be. 29 For you will be ashamed of the oak groves which you desired, and you will be embarrassed by the gardens that you chose / oaks came from Palestine and Lebanon; their towering alliances with foreigners which they were wedded to; oaks and gardens indicate where their unfaithful rendezvous took place.

30 For you will be like a withered oak leaf, or like a garden that has no water. 31 The strong will be as tinder, and his work like a spark; both will burn together, and none will extinguish them / the worker and his work will go up in flames; In every generation, in every nation the LORD calls people to return to Him.

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