

*Isaiah's Message*

READ ISAIAH 1-2

*Your princes are rebels  
and companions of thieves.*

ISAIAH 1:23

The people of Judah do not understand the moral implications of the covenant, so they oppress the poor. Isaiah believes that the root of their uncaring attitude is the practice of idol worship:

Ah, sinful nation,  
 people laden with iniquity,  
 offspring who do evil,  
 children who deal corruptly,  
 who have forsaken the LORD,  
 who have despised the Holy One of  
 Israel,  
 who are utterly estranged! (Isaiah 1:4)

Even temple sacrifice is tainted because the people do not obey God's law:

Trample my courts no more;  
 bringing offerings is futile;  
 incense is an abomination to me.  
 (Isaiah 1:12–13)

Human pride is the downfall of the people:

The haughty eyes of people shall be brought low,  
 and the pride of everyone shall be humbled;  
 and the LORD alone will be exalted  
 in that day.  
 For the LORD of hosts has a day  
 against all that is proud and lofty,  
 against all that is lifted up and high.  
 (Isaiah 2:11–12)

Isaiah reacts in horror over the oppression of the poor by  
 the wealthy classes and the ruling princes of Judah:

Your princes are rebels  
 and companions of thieves.  
 Everyone loves a bribe  
 and runs after gifts.  
 They do not defend the orphan,  
 and the widow's cause does not come  
 before them.

Therefore says the Sovereign, the LORD of  
 hosts, the Mighty One of Israel:

Ah, I will pour out my wrath on my  
enemies,  
and avenge myself on my foes!  
I will turn my hand against you;  
I will smelt away your dross as with lye  
and remove all your alloy.  
And I will restore your judges as at the first,  
and your counselors as at the beginning.  
Afterward you shall be called the city of  
righteousness,  
the faithful city. (Isaiah 1:23–26)

He explains how the situation in the land is looked upon  
by God:

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts  
is the house of Israel,  
and the people of Judah  
are his pleasant planting;  
he expected justice,  
but saw bloodshed;  
righteousness,  
but heard a cry! (Isaiah 5:7)

Isaiah makes it clear that the people have plenty to think  
about. He is battling for the souls of the chosen people, whose  
hearts are hardened and who choose to ignore God.

*CCC, 238; 544: God's love for the poor*