



# A HARD RAIN IS GONNA FALL

The prophecies of Isaiah son of Amoz, who prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the reigns of Uzziah, Yotam, Achaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up — and they have rebelled against Me!

An ox knows its owner, an ass its master's crib: Israel does not know, My people takes no thought." Ah, sinful nation! People laden with iniquity! Brood of evildoers! Depraved children! They have forsaken the Lord, spurned the Holy One of Israel, turned their backs on Him. Why do you seek further beatings, that you continue to offend? Every head is ailing, and every heart is sick. From head to foot no spot is sound: All bruises, and welts, and festering sores — not pressed out, not bound up, not softened with oil. Your land is a waste, your cities burnt down; before your eyes, the yield of your soil is consumed by strangers — a wasteland as overthrown by strangers! Fair Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a cucumber field, like a city beleaguered. Had not the Lord of Hosts left us some survivors, we should be like Sodom, another Gomorrah.

Hear the word of the Lord, you chieftains of Sodom; give ear to our God's instruction, you folk of Gomorrah! "What need have I of all your sacrifices?" says the Lord. "I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, and suet of fatlings, and blood of bulls; and I have no delight in lambs and he-goats. That you come to appear before Me — who asked that of you? Trample My courts no more; bringing oblations is futile, incense is offensive to Me. New moon and sabbath, proclaiming of solemnities, assemblies with iniquity, I cannot abide. Your new moons and fixed seasons fill Me with loathing; they are become a burden to Me, I cannot endure them. And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you; though you pray at length, I will not listen. Your hands are stained with crime — Wash yourselves clean; put your evil doings away from My sight. Cease to do evil; learn to do good. Devote yourselves to justice; aid the wronged. Uphold the rights of the orphan; defend the cause of the widow.

"Come, let us reach an understanding, --declares the Lord-- be your sins like crimson, they can turn snow-white; be they red as dyed wool, they can become like fleece." If, then, you agree and give heed, you will eat the good things of the earth; but if you refuse and disobey, you will be devoured by the sword. — for it was the Lord who spoke. Alas, she has become a harlot, the faithful city that was filled with justice, where righteousness dwelt — but now murderers. Your silver has turned to dross; your wine is cut with water. Your rulers are rogues and cronies of thieves, every one avid for presents and greedy for gifts; they do not judge the case of the orphan, and the widow's cause never reaches them. Surely, this is the declaration of the Sovereign, the Lord of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: "Ah, I will get satisfaction from My foes; I will wreak vengeance on My enemies! I will turn My hand against you, and smelt out your dross as with lye, and remove all your slag; I will restore your magistrates as of old, and your counselors as of yore. After that you shall be called City of Righteousness, Faithful City." Zion shall be saved in the judgment; her repentant ones, in the retribution.