

# Defendants subpoenaed for testimony (Isaiah 1:10)

Continued from page 5B  
 Matthew 6:7, 8). We hear God's Word best when we hear it for what it actually is and not what we want it to be (2 Timothy 4:3,4).  
 4. What were the "appointed feasts" (v. 14)?  
 The blistering indictment continues with strong statements of the Lord's contempt. He hates the appointed feasts. God actually referred to their feasts as "your" (v. 14) new moons and appointed feasts. They were no longer His, for the people had corrupted them and were no longer fulfilling the purposes for which they had been established. When He gave the law to Moses, God gave detailed instructions about how the people of Is-

rael were to treat these special days. They were always to honor Him and recognize His goodness and faithfulness to His people. They were never intended to be simply for the people.  
 Psalm 81:3-4 says, "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob." The "new moon" observations were to be held at the beginning of each month, as prescribed in Numbers 28:11-15. Certain offerings were specified for that time, and in each case they were to be offerings "made by fire unto the Lord" (v. 13).  
 "Appointed feasts" (Isa.

1:14) refers to the feasts that were to be observed at specific times and in specific places. God was probably thinking of the three annual major feasts every man of Israel was to observe, along with the lesser feasts for which God also gave instructions (Leviticus 23). The times of intended worship and fellowship were no longer being carried out as He had described. The result was that when they spread out their hands to Him in prayer, He hid His eyes from seeing them and refused to listen to what they said (Isa. 1:15).  
 5. What specific reason did God give for His refusal to see their sacrifices and hear their pray (v. 15)?  
 The reason for God's re-

fusal was explained in one simple statement: "Your hands are full of blood" (Isa. 1:15). The same hands they extended to God in prayer had been used to commit violent deeds, leaving them defiled and guilty in the sight of God. Perhaps once again we should stop to examine our own hearts. Is it possible there are times when we approach God in worship on Sunday after having done sinful deeds during the previous week? This might not be actual shedding of blood, but it could include impure thoughts, lies, stealing, and so forth.  
 Judge Offers a Chance (Isaiah 1:16-20)  
 6. What actions did God

require of Judah to stop their bad ways (v. 16)?  
 It was not enough for the people of Judah to feel sorry about their sins. They would need to change their ways. Three actions are mentioned in verse 16. The first of these is "Wash you, make you clean." This is not a call to exert human effort or to stir up enough willpower to accomplish the change. It is a call to allow God to cleanse the heart. James 4:8 says it this way: "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your


hearts, ye double minded."  
 The second action is "Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes" (Isa. 1:16). True repentance is a change of mind that results in a new direction for life. The people of Judah seemed to think that they could live any way they wanted to as long as they made things right with God through the sacrificial system. That attitude had turned the entire system of sacrifice into a sham with no practical, life-affecting meaning in it.  
 We too must realize that a relationship with God de-

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