

Isaiah 1:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

Analysis

The metallurgical imagery of purging dross 'as with lye' and removing alloy depicts God's refining judgment that purifies rather than destroys utterly. This selective judgment preserves a remnant—a key Isaianic theme (Isaiah 10:20-22). God's hand upon His people, though painful, is redemptive, burning away impurity to restore original design. This anticipates the New Testament's refining fire (1 Corinthians 3:12-15) and Reformed theology's doctrine of sanctification through trials (1 Peter 1:6-7).

Historical Context

Lye (potash) was used as a flux in smelting to separate pure metal from impurities. Isaiah's audience would understand this as intensive, thorough purification requiring extreme heat—symbolizing severe judgment.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What 'dross' is God currently burning away in your life through trials?

2. How does understanding judgment as refining rather than merely punitive change our response to hardship?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵשׁ יְבָה	נִדְיָה	עַל יְהֻ	וְאֵצֶר פָּ	כְּבָר	סִגְגָּה	וְאֵשׁ יְבָה
And I will turn	my hand	H5921	purge away	H1252	thy dross	and take away
H7725	H3027		H6884		H5509	H5493
בְּדִילְךָ כָּל						
H3605	all thy tin	H913				

Additional Cross-References

Malachi 3:3 (Parallel theme): And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Isaiah 4:4 (Parallel theme): When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

Isaiah 1:22 (Parallel theme): Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

Jeremiah 9:7 (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

Jeremiah 6:29 (Parallel theme): The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away.

Ezekiel 20:38 (Parallel theme): And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel 22:22 (Parallel theme): As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.

Zephaniah 3:11 (Parallel theme): In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

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