

Wednesday, June 21, 2023 • Read Isaiah 2:22–4:6

Questions from the Scripture text: How should God's people respond to an idolater (2:22)? What personal provisions does the Lord take from His idolatrous people in v1? And what national and church provisions in v2? And what cultural provisions in v3? What rulers will they have instead (v4)? And what do people do to each other in the absence of wise authority (v5)? How desperate will they be for authority (v6)? But how will people feel about ruling such a people (v7)? What provoked such a judgment (v8)? How do they respond to their sin (v9)? Who will experience good from God within this general judgment (v10)? What will each individual wicked person be receiving (v11)? What is the crowning judgment upon these wicked (v12)? Who is making a case against whom in vv13–15? What metaphor does v14d use for their crime? What specific things does He accuse them of in v14e? In v15a? In v15b? Whom does He specifically accuse of what in v16? What specific penalties will correspond to this immodesty (v17)? And what will He especially remove as being emblematic of their worldliness, immodesty, and self-indulgence (v19–23)? With what resulting effect (v24)? What would happen to whom, who the women had so despised (v25)? And how would they respond (v26)? How would their immodest seductions be turned upon their heads (4:1)? What moment/time does v2 introduce? Who will have what attribute then? For whom will this beauty and glory be? What will the remnant of Zion and Jerusalem be called then (v3)? What will the Lord have washed from whom (v4)? What will He have purged from where? By what two things? What will He then create (v5)? Where? What will be over all the glory? What will this glory also do for them (v6)?

How does God respond to the worldliness of His people? Isaiah 2:22–4:6 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirty-three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God punishes the worldliness of His people by making all of their false pleasures miserably fail them but provides Himself as their supreme pleasure and protection in Christ.**

In 2:20–21 the picture had been of a man casting off his idols, too late, as he tries to squeeze into a hole to escape from the terror of Yahweh and the glory of His majesty. Now v22 warns against a special case: the most insidious idolatry is to hope in man and find happiness in man. So the Lord was going to judge Jerusalem and Judah not only by taking their food and drink (3:1) but all the most capable men in church, state, community, military, and culture (v2–3).

As many cultures have learned by pain, when God gives a people child (or childish) rulers (v4), self-interest of the wicked runs amok (v5), and men become desperate for good government (v6). God will judge Judah such that any man who just has clothing will seem the best option, even if he can't provide for his own home (v7). Why? Because they have not only sinned in the most abominable ways, but approved of sin (v8–9, cf. Rom 1:18–32). He will spare His remnant, but the wicked are ruled by children—alas, even by women (v11–12)!

In v13–15, the Lord uses courtroom language to make the case for why this was an appropriate punishment: those with power and influence used it not to serve those beneath them but to plunder, crush, and face-grind them! Tyranny is offensive to God in men/authorities, as also immodesty is offensive to God in women. What a display they made of themselves in v16! So the Lord will display them (v17)—not as beautiful but as disfigured. All of the luxurious objects with which they peddled themselves (v19–23) would be replaced with the repulsive (v24), and those whose attention they so sought the Lord would simply eliminate (v25–26) until they are desperate just to have anything legitimate (4:1).

This is what Judah and Jerusalem have deserved. How can it be undone? How can the filth of the daughters of Zion be purged (v4)? Only by a “judgment” and “burning.” The connection of this judgment and burning to the glorious Branch (v2) would become more apparent in chapter 53 and crystal clear when Christ came and suffered God's wrath in sinners' place. Christ suffers the judgment and burning that brings His people forgiveness and salvation!

And this forgiveness is such that the formerly offensive objects of God's wrath are now called “holy” and recorded among the “living” in Jerusalem. Instead of wrath, there is reward: the glorious presence of God—represented by the pillar of cloud and fire in v5—attending every home of His people. Instead of punishment, there is protection: God Himself continually tabernacling among them (v6), a refuge from every possible type of trouble. Jesus, the Branch of Yahweh, has in Himself all beauty and glory (v2a), and those who are in Him will bear much fruit (v2b, cf. John 15:1–5).

The judgment in 2:22–4:1 would be stunning by itself. And the blessing and glory in 4:2–6 would be stunning by itself. But it is especially shocking to see that the glory of the latter is actually God's response to the guilt in the former! And in this He most magnificently displays the glory of the Son! Thus, we complete the composite picture that began back in 2:1–5. The failure of ethnic Israel as a covenant people was a necessary intermediate step unto the glory of Christ as the true Israel in Whom the covenant people of God—from Israel and all nations—would be glorified.

Which danger belongs to your particular place in life? How have you provoked God? How has your nation been provoking God? How has your church been provoking God? What hope can there be for them?

Sample prayer: Lord, You are right to condemn us to our own injustice and oppression, to give us to have children and women to rule over us. And You are right to condemn us for our immodesty, to give us over to utter humiliation. But You are right and merciful and glorious to have punished our guilt upon Jesus Christ the glorious Branch, and to restore us to Yourself and Your glorious presence and protection. For His sake, forgive us and help us, we pray through Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, AMEN!!

Suggested songs: ARP130 “LORD, from the Depths to You I Cried” or TPH434 “A Debtor to Mercy Alone”

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Isaiah 22 through 4 over 6. These are God's words. Sever, yourselves from such a man whose breath is in his nostrils. For what account is he? For behold the lord, yahweh of hosts. Takes away from jerusalem. And from Judah, the stock and the store, the whole supply of bread, the whole supply of water.

The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, the diviner and the elder. Captain of the 50 and the honorable man, the councilor and the skilful artisan. The expert enchanter. I'll give children to be their princess and babies shall rule over them. The people will be oppressed everyone by another and everyone by his neighbor.

The child will be insolent toward the elder and the base toward The honorable. When a man takes hold of his brother in the house of his father saying, you have clothing, you be our ruler. Let these ruins be under your power in that day. He will protest saying I cannot cure your elves for in my house.

Is neither food nor clothing. Do not make me a ruler of the people. For jerusalem, stumbled. And Judah's fallen. Because they're toned than they're doings are against yahweh. To provoke the eyes of his glory. The look on their countenance witnesses against them and they declare their sin is sodom.

They do not hide, it low to their soul. For they have brought evil upon themselves. Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them. For they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Whoa, to the wicked shall be ill with it. For the reward of his hands shall be given him.

As for my people children or their oppressors and women, Rule over them. Oh, my people. Those who lead you cause you to air. And destroy the way of your paths. The lord stands up to plead stands to judge the people. The lord will enter into judgment with the elders of his people and his princess.

For you have eaten up the vineyard the plunder of the poor. It's in your house. It's what do you mean by crushing? My people and grinding the faces of the

poor? It says the Lord Yahweh opposed. Moreover, you always says, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk without stretched necks and Want an eyes walking and mincing as they go.

Making a jingling with their feet. Therefore, the lord will strike. With a scab, the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion. The lord will uncover their secret parts. Then.

In that day, the lord will take away the finery. The jingling and cuts of the scarves, cresence the pendants, the bracelets, the fails, the, headdresses the leg ornaments, the headbands the perfume boxes. The charms, the rings, the nose, jewels, the festival in the mantels. The outer garments, the purse is the mirrors.

The fine linen, the turbines, the robes. And so it shall be. Instead of a sweet smell, there'll be a stench. Instead of a sash or rope instead of well set hair baldness. Instead of a rich robe guarding of cyclopth. And branding instead of beauty. Your men shall fall by a sword, your mighty in the war.

Her gates shall lament and mourn and she. Being desolate shall sit on the ground. And that day, seven women. So, i'll take hold of one man, saying we will eat our own food and wear our own apparel. Only let us recalled by your name. To take away our approach.

In that day, the branch of yahai. Shall be beautiful and glorious. And the fruit of the earth shall be. Excellent. And appealing. For those of israel who have escaped, And it shall come to pass that, he who has left in zion. And remains in jerusalem, will be called. Holy Everyone who is recorded among the living in jerusalem.

When the lord has washed away, the felt of the daughters of zion. And perch the blood of jerusalem from her midst. By the spur of judgment by the spirit of burning. The job i will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion. And above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day.

And the signing of a flaming fire by night. For overall, the glory, there will be a covering Then there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime, from the heat. For a place of refuge. And for a shelter from storm. And rain. Men so far the reading of god's inspired and inherent word.

This ends a section. Or a mini section that began beginning of chapter 2 chapter is one through five altogether. Give the background of of the prophecy of isaiah as a whole which is about how israel was supposed to be. A people who belong to god and we're a light to the nations and the nations were supposed to see what it was like to have the lord y'allah as god and to come and want to be part of Israel.

Um but instead nate israel has looked at the nations and said, we wish we could be like them. And have engaged all sorts of idolatry and immorality instead. And so god would bring into the world, his own son. You would bring into the world to the servant. The holy one.

And he would be. What israel? Should have been in the first place. And in order to gather others into himself. He? Would pay for their sin, even having no sin of his own. He would have to atone for their sins suffer, the punishment due to their sin. So that god, Who would righteously and justly.

Bring them into him. Make him their king, make him, their priests make him their prophet. And constitute, then, as his people, From israel, and even from all the nations from Assyria from egypt, From all over the world. So that's the That's the Scope of the whole book of isaiah.

But here in chapters one through five, we have the present problem. Of what israel has been and then very specifically in chapters. Uh, two through four, we begin with the exalted end. That you always house would be a mountain above all the mountains. At the beginning of chapter 2, And many people.

Would come and would gather on the mountain of yahweh and be taught by the lord long to him? Uh, but israel who was given the opportunity to have this. And the middle of time. And to have the nations admire them have instead. Adopted the idolatry and we left off.

Uh with the picture of, i idolaters on the day of judgment crawling into holes and throwing their idols out at the mouth of the whole because they can't get into the whole With their idol. And yet, they're still an idle in the whole why? That brings us to. To today's passage.

Because the man himself is his own idol. His own ideas. His own abilities. His own desire. His own display of himself. And so, It's really one whole piece from the beginning of chapter 2 to the end of chapter 4. It's just a little long to take. But the transition from last week's portion to this week, Starts with the man inside the hole.

And now in verse 22, he says, cut yourself off from such a man Why would you ever hope in any men? Their breath is in their nostrils. Don't you know how easily they are extinguished? Can't you see that? They are just creatures? You should not hope in something. Someone who is just a creature.

You should not find your security, your safety in them. You should not find your purpose in them. You should not find your pleasure in them. And so, he says, The the lord says he's taking away. Everything else. Everything that you would find safety and security. Hope and purpose and pleasure.

Food. And drink verse one. Those who Are your champions militarily. Uh, first part of verse 2 and In civil society. And in the church, Judge and the profit and the culture diviner. And In the church to find an elder and Um, And even in the culture, the counselor the skillful ours in the expert enchanter.

And so forth. And, Is going to replace them with. Well, how we should consider everyone by comparison to god, but he's going to give the worst Uh, examples. Of of them. He's going to give children and babies as princess. People, whose Governance is foolish and childish. And will result in wickedness being uncontrolled and goodness going unrewarded.

Because that's what the rulers in the society and the nation are supposed to do. You're supposed to punish the wicked and award, the good maintain peace. And enact such just laws as As keep order. But what will be the result of having foolish and wicked governance? You see it in verse 5, the people are oppressed everyone.

By another everyone by his neighbor. This isn't this what we have seen in our own nation, as the Lord has given us over To wors and worse governments. That everyone is against everyone else. I'm wickedness goes more and more unrestrained. This is you can you'll be able to to see as authority breaks down.

Nobody will respect authority in any context or in any level. You have children who are insulin, not only towards their parents, but towards their grandparents, towards the elderly, When those who are Other fools wasters losers. Acting as if they are superior to those. Our wise. And and strong and refined self-controlled.

An honorable, the base. The despised. Well, we'll be insolent towards the honorable, They'll be looking for anybody. Because the lord will have taken anything away. Taking everything away and Anyone who looks like he might be in a slightly better position. They'll try to make him. Uh, governor in verse.

Six, six and seven and And he won't want to be, he won't be able to do anything for any of them. Why? Because god's people chose to have their hope in something. Other than God, And their purpose in something other than go on the pleasure in something other than god and What is this?

The judgment. To which they have provoked. The lord verse 8 says, they've provoked him verse 9 Basically says the same thing as roman's one. Doesn't it. Not only were there sin, be like the sin of sodom but they won't be embarrassed of it. They do such things end up prove of those who do them.

Isn't that what we saw at the end of roman's one? Isn't that the same thing here? They declare their sin as sodom. They do not hide it. Now, there is a remnant that god will save. Verse 10. Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them. But what the lord is about to do in exiling israel and exoning.

Well, the northern kingdoms already been exabbed by assyria but what the Lord's about to do and anxiety and Judah. And jerusalem. Is a reminder, a picture of the great judgment. And that comes, At the last day. So the lord enters into judgment. With his people, he shows. That their rejection of him.

Has lost for them all basis of morality. He judges those who should have been protecting the defense list, defending the defenseless And verses 14 and 15. And then he highlights another. Area. In which you can see the complete depravity. That women, instead of Being adorned with godliness. Uh, being modest.

Uh, loving to be treasured just by their own husband and not making themselves. Public display. They do nothing but display themselves. And you get this description. From verse 16, to verse 23, Which i tried to get kind of all out in one breath, but the list of things and Adommments accessories was just too long and it starts out with the picture.

Of the girl, and the way she The way what she does with her head and the Blinking of her eyes and even the way that she prances. He had designing to show off what's on her neck and what's on her head and her eye makeup and all of her accessories right down to her ankle bracelets, which she makes sure to give a good jingle with every step that she takes.

Uh, she's trying to get noticed. And so, there's this. Uh, there's this exhausting list. And the lord says, They want to get noticed. I will let them get noticed. I will expose. How wicked they are. I will humiliate them. They will wish that no one could see them. And, There they are.

They're left all by themselves when the exile comes. When the siege comes. The end up verse 24. Okay, in And, In the condition of a captured slave of war. There's no one to help them verse 25, because All of the men are being slaughtered. And, The women. Wish that.

There was even one man for seven of them. Who could be their husband and now not just to be their husband to provide for them. But just so that they can belong to him. And not be out there on their own and exposed to the world as As on display for other men but just to belong to the one man.

As a wife, who belongs to her husband. And finds the place that god has given her especially in belonging to that husband and not being open to the whole world. And they said, Uh, seven women take hold of one man. Say we will eat our own food, we'll wear our own apparel, you don't even have to provide for us.

Just marry us so that we can be called by your name. So that we can be brought under you. To take away this reproach of being exposed what a very different picture, isn't it? From them, wanting to be displayed to the world. And realizing what the lord has actually shown about them.

The truth that he said about them at the last. And finally saying, We just want to belong to the one man. What a blessed thing marriage is. Where you can have. A man, who knows what you are like? And loves you anyway and you belong to him and your under him and god has given you.

That blessed union and you are. Hidden from the world as it is. Yeah, for women. Marriages as it were the introvert's dream. You get to belong? To the man and delighting him and not be displayed to the world. But there's a parallel, i think. Between the sin of judah and jerusalem as a whole.

And the sin of these women in particular, June and jerusalem did not want. To be just under yahweh and belong to him. And be under his name. And to be separated from the world. They wanted to be displayed to and participate with and out there. And all of the indulgences of the world.

And so, they're rejected having yahweh. As covenant head and being Under his name. Well. There's then a parallel not just in those who are judged, but those whom the lord leaves behind. And in verses two through six of chapter 4, Uh what you have is a description of the blessedness of the remnant who are being restored to faith in the lord.

But then suddenly, by the end of verse 6, you realized It's describing all those in god saves on the last day the last day. So, there's this foreshadowing of the last day that takes place. For the remnant. That is left behind in jerusalem when all the rest of Judah and jerusalem have been carried off to Babylon.

And so he says, in that day, the branch of yahweh shall be beautiful and glorious and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent into feeling for those of israel who have escaped. Now, at first in verse 2, what you have is is not people who have tons of luxury.

But they are left uh left back and in jerusalem and the branch of yahoo the promised messiah that he's about to talk about a lot more. This language of the branch is going to become Um, Very significant. It's what jesus identifies himself as when he says, i am the vine.

And the amazing thing is that they get to be united to jesus. And in john chapter 15, But those who are left behind. Who have experienced the siege and have seen what happened to god's people. When they send against him. And realize that the promise of the christ still holds true how precious that promise will be to them.

And the whatever is left in the land. It's not going to be Uh the well kept vineyards and all of groves and all of the things that God had given them. But whatever fruit they have they have now from god as a mercy, They have that fruit from god as a mercy that they have together with the promise of the christ and union with christ.

And so the fruit to suddenly excellent and appealing, they're not complaining that About about what they have. And god is restoring them to himself. In verse three, she'll come to pass, he who has left in Zion. And that language using the language of zion for for jerusalem as a hint that there's Something higher and bigger and more eternal.

Uh, in view here. Um, within just what the part that is foreshadowing, it, he who has left design and remains in jerusalem, will be called, holy We realize that it's not because of How righteous they were but the god spared them. When he was judging everyone else and he called them.

Holy He decided to make them holding to himself and we know the same of ourselves when he brings us to faith in christ. We will know the same of ourselves and we come to the last day and just and realize the reason we have been spared is because god decided to set us apart to himself as holy.

He decided to save us for himself. It's all in his pleasure. It's all in his goodness. He who has left in zion and remains in jerusalem will be called. Holy everyone who is recorded among the living. In jerusalem and you think of psalm 87 in the recording of the names.

Um, of those. Who belong to the city of god, the, the book of life. In the background here. When the lord has washed away, the filth of the daughters of Zion, And purged, the blood of jerusalem. From her midst, by the spirit of judgment. And by the spirit of burning.

And here is really the transition from where he, where you realize. Yes, he is talking about taking away the the sinners and punishing their sin punishing their filthiness. Removing their filthiness. Um, verse 4, but this language of Uh, purging by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.

Uh, that does Bring us forward to the cross, doesn't it? And those who are left back. The remnant that remains. It's not because they were the righteous. Holy pure ones. Now, they They were, i think we can assume from chapter 3 and verse 10. Um, Those who by grace and by faith.

Uh, we're in a righteous standing with god. And we're walking with him to some extent, but Uh, what verse 4 describes. There's no mere man. Who can stand up to that purging? But it's the lord jesus christ. He is the one who knew no sin who became sin. At the cross.

So that the judgment and the burning that our said, every one of our sins. Well, every despising thought of one another and harsh spirit, let alone interaction if it comes out of our mouths. Every indulging of the self instead of serving god. Moments of time here and there. On up to.

Into all sorts of. Blasphemies and and lies and lusts. And Um, Desiring that it wasn't his day on the lord's day so that we could do something that isn't worship. All of that sin. That is innocent, comes out of us. And all of the wrath of god against all of that sin fell upon christ at the cross.

So what verse 4 is talking about is not just the most wicked of the land had been removed. It's reminding us. There's there's a picture there. Of what has to happen. For us to be able to be In the happy and holy presence of god. Like what we see in verse 5 and 6.

We have to have our guilt removed. We have to have our health removed. And how can that happen? The only way. Was about the cross of jesus christ. Which god and his love gave for us. Which jesus was highlighting. When he said, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me.

Nevertheless not my will but yours be done. What he was praying really was, wasn't it? I know it's not possible. And therefore since this is the only way that they may have the holy and happy presence of god forever. As we father, you and i and the spirit of determined from before the world began to give to them, since this is the only way not my will.

Not my. Knowing the The, the horror that i am about to go through and would not go through for any other reason, But since this is the reason i go to it willingly, I submit myself to it says the lord over the last day. Around the night that he was betrayed in the garden and his brain.

And so we have the then. In verse 5 and 6 and this is totally end of time stuff, this did not happen. Uh, when Uh, when the Babylonian exile was completed, the remnant that was left back in Judah didn't suddenly have pillar of cloud and pillar of fire above.

It's talking about the perfection, Of the presence of yahweh with his people. The that so great is what he gives us in our union with christ and in the full enjoyment of that union in our communion our fellowship with christ. That it is like every single one of us.

Has the pillar of cloud. Every single one of us has the power of fire. Every single one of us has our own personal tabernacle. Why Because every believer. Has jesus christ. Every believer. Has the spirit of god. Every believer. Has god the father in him through union with the son ministered to him by the spirit.

And it's a wonderful poetic description of that. In verses 5 and 6 here. Then y'all may will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion. And above her assemblies. A cloud and smoke by day. And the shining of a flaming fire by night. For overall the glory. There will be a covering.

That is. Uh god himself is the is the glory in the midst of the people and god himself as the glory who is over. Over the people. And it is, as it were this living tabernacle, which didn't just have the curtains in the walls, but you remember the ceiling?

Uh, inside the tabernacle as well and the gloriousness especially as the incense and those finding from the light on On the With the curtains that made the, the ceiling and The designs that were in them. And verse 6, then the conclusion, there will be a tabernacle For shade in the daytime, from the heat.

For a place of refuge and for a shelter from storm and rain. Protection from from all things. What blessedness the lord has for his people. But as a blessedness that they forfeited in themselves, And had to be earned instead. By the lord jesus christ. Who is the one who brings us into perfect happiness and perfect holiness with god?

Forever and ever. And, So, What a wonderful section it would have been. Um, A lot to try to do from chapter 2 verse 1. To chapter 4 through 6 and one devotional. This was a lot just for this devotional. Uh, but you can see what he's sending us up.

Uh, to To consider and see. In the history of the movement from judged israel. To suffering servant to glorified king. As he takes us through the rest of The rest of the the book of this prophecy. Praise God. Spray. Our father in heaven, we pray that you would Deliver us from trusting in ourselves.

Or other people. Which is the worst of idolatries. And give us to rejoice over you to trust in you. To trust in the lord. Jesus christ help us O Lord. Not to desire to make display of ourselves. Give our daughters, especially the gentle and Quiet spirit. That is adorned with good works and modesty We thank you and praise you for marriage.

We pray. That it's purity and its purpose would be preserved. And My marriage with. Mommy. And Each of the children's future marriages. We do pray, O Lord for our land. Which is suffering. Much of the same. Consequences of your judgment. As you give a people over to wicked rule, Because they have rejected you and trusted in themselves.

Oh lord. Grinch repentance. Grant revival. Grant that your church would lay hold of christ. And repent of these things. Oh, lord. We confess that one of the reasons why the nation. Has gone. So completely awry. Is because the church rather than being different. Has bought into much of the same mindset.

Is the rest of the culture. Even o, lord unto the sin of sodom. And being unabarrassed of it. Oh, lord have mercy, we pray. We thank you and praise you. For the righteousness of the lord jesus. And especially For his willing to suffer the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning.

And what was due to our sin, but fell upon him at the cross. Thank you for calling us. Holy Thank you for writing down our names in the book of life. Thank you for making us to enjoy as excellent and good, and beautiful. Whatever else you have given us together?

With the lord jesus. Thank you for giving us him himself and your spirit himself. That we might be as those who have pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. And tabernacle each over our own house each over our own congregation our own assembly. We pray o, god, that you would continue to bless to us the rest of the book of isaiah as we study it together.

And that the knowledge of you that this book teaches and especially the knowledge of christ knowing you in him, That this book teaches. Would be something that your holy spirit gives to each of us and grows each of us in as we move through it. Thank you, lord, for giving us the time to worship you together as a family, just now.

And now, as we come to conclude the worship, we pray o. God That this heart towards you would shape the way we think about and live, In the rest of this day, which we ask in jesus name. Amen.