

Isaiah Chapter 2

Chapters 2 through 5 comprise a single connected discourse.

Verses 2:1-5: Gives the first of 3 pictures of Zion (Jerusalem), in this discourse that depicts her future exaltation.

“The word that Isaiah . . . saw” indicates that this is a separate prophecy from that of chapter one. The prophetic perfect tense implies that the prophet sees the future as though it had already happened. The passage is repeated (in Micah 4:1-4), in similar form.

The setting is the millennial age, when the nations of the world will come to the Holy City (Jerusalem), to learn the ways of God. Christ Himself is pictured as the Judge who will direct the affairs of nations during His millennial kingdom. Thus, the weapons of war will be turned into tools of peace and economic productivity.

Isaiah 2:1 "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

This is a prophecy of the last days beginning here. This is not the last days on the earth for the people living when Isaiah wrote this, but of the end of the age in, possibly, our time. It seems that the prophecy was directed to Judah and Jerusalem.

The book of Micah contains this portion of Isaiah’s prophecy almost word for word (Micah 4:1-3), indicating that the younger contemporary of Isaiah may have obtained the words from him. Both passages present a prophetic picture of Zion in the future messianic kingdom when all people will recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the world.

Isaiah 2:2 "And it shall come to pass in the last days, [that] the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

The “last days” is a time designation looking forward to the messianic era (Ezekiel 38:16; Hosea 3:5; Micah 4:1). The New Testament applied the expression to the period beginning with the first advent of Jesus Christ.

Old Testament prophets, being without a clear word regarding the time between the Messiah’s two advents, linked the expression to the Messiah’s return to establish His earthly kingdom, i.e., the millennial kingdom spoken about (in Rev. 20:1-10).

This is speaking of the church. The true Zion is not only Jerusalem, but the church as well. The church is many times spoken of as a city on a hill which sends out the Light. This could be a time, when all, who are mentioned here, will attend the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is high and lifted up.

We must look up for our help. "Our help cometh from the Lord". This will be a time when the LORD's house (church), will be lifted up.

"Mountain of the Lord's house" is a reference to Mt. Zion, the location of the temple in Jerusalem. The expression occurs two other times in the Old Testament (2 Chronicles 33:15; Micah 4:1).

Isaiah 2:3 "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

Isaiah frequently called Mt. Zion the "holy mountain".

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ teaches the Word of God. The above Scripture is speaking of the Word of God being taught by God's servants. The written and the spoken Word of God comes forth from God, but is presented to the world by God's servants.

Isaiah 2:4 "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

With the Messiah on His throne in Jerusalem, the world will enjoy uninterrupted peaceful conditions. Warfare will continue to characterize human history until the Prince of Peace (9:6), returns to earth to put an end to it.

The One we know as Jesus is the Judge of all the world. There will be no war, or even thoughts of war, during this time. There will be perfect peace. Jesus is the King of Peace. The next verse helps us understand what causes this great peace.

Hebrews 8:10-11 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:" "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

The house of Israel is not just the Hebrew nation, but all believers in Christ, as well. The Hebrews are physical Israel, and the Christians are spiritual Israel.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

When the King of Peace (Jesus Christ) comes, there is perfect peace.

Isaiah 2:5 "O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD."

Isaiah is saying, since they know the total outcome in the end days, why not live that way now? He is inviting them to walk in the Light which is Jesus Christ our Lord. They are God's children. They should not be walking in darkness.

When it speaks of "house of Jacob", it is speaking of his family. This then, is the Hebrew nation spoken of here.

Verses 2:6-4:1: After a glimpse of Judah's glorious future (2:1-5), the prophet returned to the present for a scathing rebuke of her idolatry and the Judgment of God it evokes.

Verses 2:6-9: Isaiah stated the Lord's formal charge against the people of Jerusalem.

The phrase "replenished from the east" means that they had become filled with pagan influences from the East, namely Assyria and Babylon. Soothsayers (Hebrew anan, "to cloud" or "cover"), clouded over the truth rather than shedding any real light on it. The mean man refers to the lower class of society and the great man to the upper class. Both were bowing to idols and in danger of God's judgment.

Isaiah 2:6 "Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and [are] soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers."

It seems they have picked up some of the sins of their neighbors. They have become worldly. They have followed the ways of the Assyrians and the Ammonites. God has always called His people to be holy and separate.

Through caravans from the East, an influx of religious superstitions had filled Jerusalem and its environs.

God has stopped hearing their prayers, because they are living in darkness. They are living worldly lives. They have even begun soothsaying like the evil Philistines around them. The countries around them have evil practices in worship, and these of the house of Jacob have picked up their evil ways. God had warned them not to be yoked with those of darkness.

Isaiah 2:7 "Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither [is there any] end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither [is there any] end of their chariots:"

Their wealth was probably one of the things that had drawn these Hebrews. Silver and Gold are not a sin, in themselves. It is a sin to get them by tricking, or cheating others. It is also, a sin to lust for them, or covet someone else's silver and Gold.

These Hebrews had none of these things in abundance. These Hebrews had abandoned their teachings in favor of earthly things.

Isaiah 2:8 "Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made:"

The word that “idols” was taken from means nothings. These idols are not a god. They are nothing compared to God who created all things. The second commandment in the Bible forbids this type of worship.

Exodus 20:4 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth:"

The Jews were given the 10 commandments. They knew not to do this. The Gentile world did not have these laws.

Jotham and Ahaz, two of the kings under whom Isaiah prophesied, failed to remove the idolatrous high places from the land.

Isaiah 2:9 "And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not."

This is just speaking of the fate of these evil ones. They must turn from all of this, before God will forgive them.

The “mean man” refers to the lower class of society where the “mighty man” refers to the upper class.

This section (from 2:10-22), pictures conditions during the future day of the Lord. Though some elements of the description could fit what Judah experienced in the Babylonian captivity, the intensity of judgment predicted here could not have found fulfillment at that time. The tribulation period before Christ’s return will be the time for these judgmental horrors.

Isaiah warns his listeners to “run for cover” because of the coming judgment of the human government (Joel and 2 Thess. 1:7-2:12). Since this Day of Judgment is coming, when all human government shall collapse into the dust, the prophet urges his readers to trust in God. The ships of Tarshish refer to the fleet of Western Europe (Spain), which carried smelted ore. The reference to shaking the earth (is similar to Revelation 6:14).

Isaiah 2:10 "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty."

This is speaking of them hiding in the caves in the rocks. It seems the land of Israel has many of these places, where they hid in time of great trouble. No one can hide from God. He knows everything, and He sees everything. Even though they are involved with these people, they still fear the LORD.

Isaiah 2:11 "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day."

This is speaking of that day when every knee will bow.

Philippians 2:10 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;"

When the Judge of all the earth comes in all His glory, everyone will bow down in humble adoration of Him. God loves the humble, not the haughty.

Isaiah 2:12 "For the day of the LORD of hosts [shall be] upon every [one that is] proud and lofty, and upon every [one that is] lifted up; and he shall be brought low:"

The wrath of God is reserved for those who are too proud of themselves to admit they need a Savior. We know a day is certainly coming that will be the Lord's Day. It will be the day when He will say "It is enough". On that day, every person on the earth will be judged of God.

The phrase "day of reckoning" or "day of the Lord" appears 19 times in the Old Testament and 4 times in the New Testament to express the time of God's extreme wrath. The day of reckoning can refer to a near future judgment (Ezekiel 13:5; 30:3), or a far future judgment (Zech. 14:1; 2 Thess. 2:2).

Two "day of the Lord" expressions remain to be fulfilled:

- (1) At the end of Daniel's 70th week; and
- (2) At the end of the Millennium (see 2 Peter 3:10).

At times, the near fulfillment (Joel 1:15), prefigures the far fulfillment (Joel 3:14); on other occasions, both kinds of fulfillment are included in one passage.

Here Isaiah looks to the far fulfillment at the end of the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7).

Isaiah 2:13 "And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, [that are] high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,"

The cedars and oaks were objects of great admiration to people of Old Testament times (Psalms 91:12; 104:16; Ezekiel 27:6; and 31:3). Yet even these impressive created objects would face destruction because of human rebellion.

When the wrath of God comes on the earth, the trees will be burned. You see, the wrath comes through burning of trees, the water becoming wormwood, etc. This could also, speak of a day near unto them when the trees were cut before the fall of the land.

Isaiah 2:14 "And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up,"

It seems these people had a false idea of their worth. They thought themselves to be above punishment from God. This is speaking of the fall of their country by judgment from God. This is not just speaking of those of Judah, but could also, be a warning to us today.

We are not above the judgment of God either. As we have said before, wars are sometimes judgments of God on His people.

Isaiah 2:15 "And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,"

King Uzziah and King Jotham built great fortifications to hold back the enemy. In the corners on top of the wall, they had high towers to warn early of an attack. All of this will not protect them from God however.

Isaiah 2:16 "And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures."

This does not mean the handful of ships that were built to go to Tarshish, but means all of the great ships. The pleasant pictures, probably mean the various works of art. It appears these people had put their faith in things of this world. Nothing in this world can equal Almighty God, who made it all.

Isaiah 2:17 "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day."

It appears this haughtiness was because of acquiring things thought to be valuable on the earth. They had a false sense of their own worth; because of the great accumulations of things they called wealth.

All of these things shall be brought low, and the LORD alone shall be exalted. Those who have put their faith in the LORD will be exalted. Those who have put their faith in things of the world shall be brought down.

Isaiah 2:18 "And the idols he shall utterly abolish."

This just means that there will be total destruction of every idol. This could be speaking of the time the Babylonians come and conquer them, and can also mean at the end times. God wants us to be His 100%, or not His at all. He will not tolerate us having idols.

Isaiah 2:19 "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

(Revelation 6:12; 15; 16 uses this passage and 2:21), to describe man's flight from the terrors of tribulation during the period before Christ's personal return to earth. This shows that the final fulfillment of the prophecy will be during Daniel's 70th week.

Whether this means that great earthquake that will be felt around the entire earth, or whether this is something that greatly frightens them, is uncertain. This is saying, they will run from the city and hide in the caves. Their fear is not of man, but of the LORD. This makes me believe it is a great earthquake. It is however, impossible to hide from the LORD.

Isaiah 2:20 "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;"

There will come a sudden awakening that these idols, made by hand, have no power to save them. They will toss them away, because they are of no help to them at all.

Isaiah 2:21 "To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

Be sure, your sins will be found of God, regardless of where you hide. It appears they try to hide in the rocks, but this will not save them. When the judgment of God comes, there will be no hiding place from Him.

Isaiah 2:22 "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?"

This is just a warning to stop trusting in mankind, or in the things he makes with his hands. This scripture calls readers to stop depending on other humans and to trust only in God, who alone is worthy.

The statement, whose breath in his nostrils, implies that even the breath of man is not a product of man, but God. God breathed the breath of life in man, and he became a living soul.

Even the breath of man, belongs to God. He can take it back any time He wants to. God is in control of the next breath man takes. When the breath of life leaves man, he must give account to God. Mankind is of no account at all on his own.

The only hope for mankind is to turn from his idols, repent, and receive the LORD.

Isaiah Chapter 2 Questions

1. The word that Isaiah saw in verse 1 was concerning whom?
2. What age is this really speaking of?
3. What does verse 2 say, will be established in the top of the mountains?
4. What is this speaking of?
5. Where can we expect help from?

6. What is the LORD's house?
7. What does the church of the Lord Jesus teach?
8. Who is doing the teaching?
9. Out of _____ shall go forth the law.
10. And the Word of the LORD from _____.
11. They shall beat their swords into _____.
12. Who establishes the peace spoken of in verse 4?
13. What Scripture tells us the believers in Christ are included in this?
14. Let us walk in the _____ of the LORD.
15. What does "house of Jacob" mean?
16. Why has God forsaken them?
17. What is one of the evil things they have begun to do in verse 6?
18. What was, probably, the thing that lured them to pick up the ways of these evil people?
19. The Hebrews had abandoned their teachings for what?
20. What did these evil people worship?
21. Why did they enter into the rock?
22. The lofty looks of man shall be _____.
23. Who is the wrath of God reserved for?
24. What effect will the wrath of God have on the trees?
25. What are wars, sometimes?
26. Who were two of the kings who had built fortifications?
27. What had these people put their faith in?
28. What had caused these people to be haughty?
29. Where will they try to hide from the LORD?
30. What is the terrible shaking, probably?

31. What will the people do with their idols in that day?
32. What great awakening will come to the people?
33. Who has control of man's breath?
34. What is the only hope for mankind?