

# Isaiah 1- Chapter 4:1 • God confronts the Kingdom of Judah

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Well, I don't think I probably have to tell you that the book of Isaiah is, I don't know, arguably one of the most popular books in the entire Bible and we quote it a lot, especially during times like Christmas when we begin to take that time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. You hear a lot of quotes from the book of Isaiah because there's a whole lot in the book of Isaiah about the first coming of Jesus.

We recite prophecies like *"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."* from Isaiah seven (Isaiah 7:14 NIV) Or from chapter nine we like to read, *"...to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* (Isaiah 9:6 ESV) And then finally, *"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned"* (Isaiah 9:2 NIV) also from Isaiah chapter nine. So we have a lot of passages, a lot of prophecies given in the book of Isaiah that relate to the first coming of Jesus.

But that Isaiah actually speaks more prophetically about the second coming of Jesus Christ? Did you know that? It's really interesting. Isaiah talks more about His second coming than His first. And he talks about what's going to happen at His coming. He talks about the great kingdom that Jesus is going to establish on the earth during the Millennial Kingdom. And I trust we'll get even to some of those passages tonight.

The prophet Isaiah and his writings have also found their way into many great works of literature and works of music. I don't know if you're aware of one of the most popular works of music that I think has ever been produced that is largely from the book of Isaiah.

If I ever get a chance to go to Dublin, Ireland, and I would really, really like to visit Ireland someday. We're kind of trusting all of these travel restrictions are going to be lifted someday, but if I ever get to Dublin, I want to go see there, there's a place in Dublin where Handel's Messiah had its world premiere performance back in April of 1743. And I'd love to see that place.

Because Handel's Messiah, in addition to being one of the most incredible musical masterpieces of all time, is also taken from the Bible. And most of the text that you find in that incredible musical piece is taken from the book of Isaiah, so Handel was a big fan of the book of Isaiah.

Let me just tell you very quickly before we get into the text that Isaiah was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah. By the time Isaiah came along, and Isaiah, by the way, prophesied somewhere between, well, he prophesied for a period of about 40 years between around 740 to 700 BC.

And during his lifetime, this was long after the separation of the nation of Israel into two separate kingdoms. The northern kingdom, which was called Israel. The southern kingdom named after the largest tribe, which was called Judah, and of course in Greek, Judea. And Isaiah was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah.

And again, he prophesied for a period of 40 years. That's a long time, and his prophecies covered the reigns, as we're going to read here in a moment, of four different kings. King Uzziah, King Jotham, who was the son of Uzziah, and actually had a co-regency with his father, King Ahaz, who was one of the worst kings that had come along in Judah, and then finally, King Hezekiah, who was absolutely one of the best kings ever. But we'll discuss more about those kings as we get into the book of Isaiah here.

It's probably also important for you to know that Isaiah's name means "the Lord saves." And what's so important about that is that meaning is kind of a distillation of the message of the book of Isaiah, "the Lord saves."

So let's get into it. Isaiah chapter 1:1. It simply tells us that what you're about to read is:

*"<sup>1</sup> The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, (and that's not Amos, by the way, which we also have a prophetic book of. This is Amoz) at "which Isaiah saw concerning Judah. (that's the southern kingdom) and Jerusalem. (the capital of the southern kingdom) in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. And he begins to speak directly to the southern kingdom of Judah and speak to them about their rebellious attitude. He says,*

*<sup>2</sup> Hear, O heavens, and (he calls the heavens to listen and to hear this testimony; he says,) give ear, O earth; (also to the earth) for the Lord has spoken: "Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. And then almost with an attitude that is incredulous, the Lord says,*

*3 The ox knows its owner, and the donkey it's master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.*" Isn't that interesting? It's almost like the Lord is saying, how could this possibly be?

It's interesting those of you who have pets and other maybe even large animals like horses or something like that, when you come to feed your animals, they know you. They know who you are. And they walk toward you if they think that they're about to get fed.

I remember as a kid I used to help some of my friends feed horses. And we'd go after school and do that task. And all we had to do to bring the horses in was- we'd go into the barn, and we'd take some oats and put it in a coffee can. And we'd hold that coffee can out the door and we'd just shake it. And the horses would hear that wheat rattling and they would just make a beeline for the barn because they knew, they understood they knew what mealtime was all about.

God is saying that even animals understand the hand of their owner, those who take care of them. So how is it that mankind, which has been given the greatest gift of understanding, doesn't know his God, his Creator, God? It's one thing for an animal to know its owner, man ought to know his God.

And so he says in verse four,

*"4 Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.* (cut off, if you will; he says,)

*5 Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.*

*6 From the sole of the foot even to the head, there's no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil.* (In other words, they haven't been rubbed out. These terrible sores, these things that hurt, that no one has been there to take care of them, the Lord says. And why? Verse seven he says,)

*7 Your country lies desolate; your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence foreigners devour your land; (it is) it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners."*

And what the Lord is doing through Isaiah, is he's calling the nation of Israel to remember their covenant with God. (Deuteronomy 33) And their covenant with

God outlined how life would be if they walked according to the covenant that God established with them through Moses.

God said that they would enjoy great blessings, wonderful blessings. But he also told them that if they took that covenant and threw it behind their backs, if they went and served other gods, he said in that case I will tell you what will happen. And he outlined for them the curses. And some of the curses he's talking about here when he says in verse seven *"Your country lies desolate; your cities are burned with fire;"*

These are the opposite of what God promised if they were to walk in obedience and faithfulness to the Lord, their God, he says "in your very presence foreigners overrun the land and they devour it." In other words, they come and steal your grain at the time of harvest. They come and take whatever they want and you are helpless to stop them.

Verse 8 says,

*8 And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. (in other words, empty)*

*9 If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah."*

And you remember Sodom and Gomorrah, (Genesis 19:1-28) they are a picture throughout the course of scripture and used several times in the scriptures to refer to God's ultimate judgment of the wicked. And you'll remember that Sodom and Gomorrah, after God judged them, there was nothing left. There was absolutely nothing left.

You'll remember that Lot and his family were taken out of the city and brought to safety. But there was nothing left after God's judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. And so they are a picture of the ultimate judgment. And so Isaiah says here, were it not for the Lord allowing some of our survivors to live, we would be like Sodom. We would be like Gomorrah. We would be gone. There would be no Jews left upon the earth.

And so he says in verse 10:

*10 Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!*

Boy, that's a hard verse to read. Because God is calling his people Israel, as if they were the rulers of Sodom and the people of Gomorrah. In other words, he's saying your sin is no different. I wiped them out completely, but your sin is no different. He says,

*11 "What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I've had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.*

*12 "When you come to appear before me, who is required of you this trampling of my courts?"*

Now, this is an interesting statement made by the Lord, because these are the very things that God had commanded them to do in the old covenant through Moses. They were commanded to bring sacrifices. They were commanded to bring burnt offerings. They were commanded to bring rams and to burn the fat of beasts and so forth. And the blood of bulls and goats and lambs and that sort of thing.

So, when God asks this of his people, he's confronting them with the fact that in the midst of their sin, they are continuing to just go on with all of the things that God told them to do as if that's what made them okay. In other words, they're following their rituals. They're bringing their sacrifices. They're going to the place to sacrifice their offering up the blood, but they're not changing their lives.

In other words, by this time, Israel had become an empty religious nation. And I think you probably all know what empty religion is and what I mean when I use that term. Today it would be somebody who goes to church, maybe even packs their Bible into church if that's acceptable in the church that they go to. They might even lift their hands during the singing period and worship time. They might shake hands with people during the greeting time and say, God bless you. But their lives are a train wreck of sin.

And they're just going their own way, doing their own thing, whatever they want to do. And so their church attendance is a sham. It's emptiness. It's not real. That's what was going on in Israel at this time. And that's why God says, "who asked this of you?" Well, the fact of the matter is he had, but you see their hearts were far from him. And so now what's happening is empty. And that's exactly what he says in verse 13. Look what he says here:

*13 Bring me no more vain offerings;"*

We saw that word come up a lot in the book of Ecclesiastes. And we mentioned on several occasions that the word "vein" means "empty," all right? So that's what God is saying. He says, bring no more "empty" offerings.

He says your *"incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations-I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly."* (So they're coming together in solemn assembly, but there's iniquity throughout. And God says, I can't abide by it. I can't abide it. It's just I can't endure it. He says,)

*"Your new moons (In other words, the celebrations that went along with that) and your appointed feasts (and those are the feasts that God established through Moses. He says,) my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; (he literally says,) I am weary of bearing them."*

And what God is again saying here is that doing these, going through the celebration of these feasts, these new moon celebrations, all these other convocations of gathering, they've become an insult. They were a thing of joy by your forefathers. But now they're an insult.

Have you ever thought about that? Have you ever thought about the fact that we can actually insult God by living the way we want to live, however we want to live, and yet still kind of just playing the church game? Coming to church, talking to other people like "we're a Christian." Putting Christian memes, and sayings, and scriptures on our Facebook page or sending things to me. But all the while there's sin in our lives that we are completely unwilling to deal with.

Verse 15, he says,

*"15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood."*

*16 Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil,*

*17 learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause."*

And I love the beauty of verse 18, I have to tell you. And there's a song going through my mind as I read this to you, but the words go like this:

*18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are (right now) like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.*

And what God is saying here to the nation of Israel is forgiveness is waiting, if you would but take advantage of it. If you would but confess your sin and turn away from it, forgiveness is waiting.

I talk to Christians once in a while who seem so burdened by the fact that there's might be some sin standing between them and God. But you don't need to be burdened by it. Bring it to the cross. Find forgiveness there. There is forgiveness.

One of the most wonderful promises in the Bible is 1John 1:9 that says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Sometimes we have to go back to that passage and make sure it still says "all" unrighteousness.

Because I have people come to me once in a while and they think that what they've done is somehow beyond the scope of God's ability to forgive. And so we've got to go back to 1 John 1:9. And we have to underline it in their Bible, maybe even highlight it. And then we might even circle the word all.

And we have to ask the question, what does "all" mean? Does it mean everything? Yeah, it means everything. It means every sin, every possible sin. Forgiveness is waiting. So God says, come, let us reason, let us reason.

Do you understand that's something that only God can say to his children, to those who he created? Do you understand that the power of reason is a gift that God has given to mankind that is not given to those of the animal kingdom.

I love how modern science is trying to clump human beings in with any other mammal on the face of the planet. And they'll just say repeatedly, well, we're just another mammal. We're mammals just like whales. Or mammals, just like chimpanzees or gorillas, and we're mammals. And we're just another mammal.

Well, the fact of the matter is we are not just another mammal. We've been created in the image of God. And He's given us the power to reason. And that means to think through, to think about it, to consider our options and then to make a critical decision. It's called "critical thinking," but it comes because we have the ability to reason.

And so God is calling his people and saying, "come, let us reason together. It's a reasonable thing Christians to come to God for forgiveness. It's reasonable. Because here you are carrying around this burden that is literally breaking your life, and God says, it need not be. Forgiveness is waiting. Just confess it to Me. Turn away from it. He says, even though today your sin is as red as crimson, I will wipe them out. I will wash them away and your life will be white as snow. So, such a beautiful passage.

Back when I was in Seattle, I was working in Christian radio. And there was a song that we played on the radio quite often. This is back in the 80s so... Some of you probably weren't even alive. But it was called "Come Let Us Reason" by Roby Duke. And I used to love that song. And that's the one I hear in my head every time I read this passage from Isaiah chapter one.

Verse 19, he says,

*"19 If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;*

*20 but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."* (So your choice, you can eat from the best of the land, or you can be eaten by the sword of your enemy.)

*21 How the faithful city has become a whore, (your Bible may say harlot) she who was full of justice! Righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers.*

*22 Your silver has become dross, (which are the impurities that get into the melted silver) your best wine (is now) mixed with water.*

*23 Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not bring justice to the fatherless, and the widow's cause does not come to them.*

*24 Therefore the Lord declares, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: "Ah, I will get relief from my enemies and avenge myself on my foes.*

*25 I will turn my hand against you and will smelt away your dross as with lye and remove all your alloy.*

This is what the word that is used here in the ESV and also the New American Standard Bible. The NIV uses the word "impurities" because the word alloy... We think of alloy today most often as a, an amalgamation of one or more metals that are put together. And it's used in a positive sense today because we've



learned ways to make certain metals stronger by mixing them with others and they become an alloy.

But here. The word is used of those things that mix in with the heart of God's people from the outside, which is impure. And that's why the word impurities is a good one. And God is promising here to purge those impurities from his people.

Verse 26:

*26 And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."*

Did you notice here in this verse, verse 26. This is a very interesting one. Let's not skip over too quickly. Because God is saying here that he's going to discontinue the monarchy.

The monarchy began in Israel, not because of God's will, but because of the will of the people. You remember during the time of the final judge, who is Samuel, the people murmured that they wanted a king, just like the rest of the nations. (1 Samuel 8) And God said to Samuel, "it's not you they've rejected, it's Me. So give them what they want. Give them a king." But also tell them what life's going to be like with the king in place.

Well, the monarchy has been going on for a long time by this time in Israel. And yet God says here, prophetically, I'm going to discontinue the monarchy. And I'm going to bring back the judges. Because you remember the judges started off pretty good. They were godly individuals who allowed God to be the king and they were His instrument to bring judgment, and peace, and victory and so forth.

Now you might ask yourself, well, when exactly did God reestablish the judges? Well, essentially this took place after the Babylonian restoration. And it was fulfilled then in part as God restored those who had that same spirit and calling of the original judges. And I'm talking about men like Ezra and Nehemiah after that Babylonian restoration.

But this prophecy that is given here in Isaiah will be fully fulfilled during the time of the Millennial Kingdom, when Jesus himself will establish His throne in Jerusalem. And I believe that when the Bible says that "we will reign with

Him," that we will also be in a lesser role, if you will, of that kind of judgeship. We know that even the apostles will do that sort of a thing as well.

So this verse-verse 26, and this is the reason I've called it out to you, is because this is another example of a principle that we've seen in God's word repeatedly. And we've called it the "principle of double reference." And we're going to see it a lot through the course of Isaiah. And I'm going to call your attention to it every time.

Because the "principle of double reference" is where there is a prophetic word given that has a short-term fulfillment in a short-term future event, but also is in itself a foreshadowing, or I should say, the short-term fulfillment of that prophecy, is a foreshadowing of a longer sort of a situation of fulfillment, and a greater fulfillment in the far distant future.

Verse 27 says,

*27 Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who repent by righteousness.*

*28 But rebels and sinners shall be broken together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed.*

*29 For they shall be ashamed of the oaks that you desired; and you shall blush for the gardens that you have chosen,*

*30 For you shall be like an oak, whose leaf withers, and like a garden without water.*

*31 And the strong shall become tinder, and his work a spark, and both of them shall burn together, with none to quench them."*

Chapter one ends as you can see there with a rather stinging rebuke and a series of charges against the nation, the southern kingdom of Judah. But I want you to notice how in these first verses of chapter two, the tone very much changes and begins to speak of days to come when Israel will be exalted.

And in fact, it will be the apple of all the nations of the world. We're talking now about the time of the Millennial Kingdom. So just like that we get into chapter two and Isaiah begins to prophesy about things which are yet unfulfilled. So check out these first four verses particularly.

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

*2 It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,*

*3 and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

*4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."*

We know that this is yet future because it hasn't been fulfilled. This is speaking of a time when Israel shall be the flower of the world. The flower of all nations. This is a time, this is the Millennial Kingdom, which comes right after the tribulation period.

At the end of the tribulation, you'll remember Jesus returns to fight against the nations that have gathered to destroy Israel. He will completely destroy those enemies. And He will then establish His throne in Jerusalem and will usher in a 1,000-year period of time, which again we called the Millennial Kingdom, and it will be a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity.

It begins to speak of it here saying that the nations of the world will stream to Israel to hear the word of the Lord. And it says, he will judge the nations. He will settle their disputes. And notice that it says in that last part of verse four that war will literally go out of style. In fact, they will take whatever implements of war that still remain and they will begin to use them to raise crops to raise food.

So, it's a beautiful picture that God paints for us of this time of the Millennial Kingdom. What's particularly interesting is that Isaiah is not the only prophet that foresaw this period of time. It was also seen by other prophets like Micah. In fact, in Micah's prophetic writings it's very similar. Let me show you the first one from Micah chapter four. And there's a couple of slides here on this. It says here,

**Micah 4:1-3 (ESV)**

*It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and people shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."*

**Micah 4:1-3 (ESV)**

*For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations far away; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;*

Pretty fascinating, huh? But the Lord speaks through two of these prophets, a very important and very similar message about the coming of the Millennial Kingdom.

Now in verse five, the Lord begins to contrast that glorious future that he's just talked about with Israel's present rebellion. Look what he says in verse five and following:

*5 O, house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

*6 For you have rejected your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of things from the east and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines, and they strike (their) hands with the children of foreigners.*

*7 Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots.*

And by the way, this isn't saying that God has anything against horses. First of all, you've got to understand that in those days, horses and the amassing of horses was a sign of trusting in man. It was because a horse was like a weapon, almost like a weapon of mass destruction is considered today. The more horses a nation had, the stronger they were. And to amass horses was to take on a sense of invulnerability and to trust in self. Okay, so when God says the nation is full of horses, he's saying it's full of self-reliance, if you will.

Verse eight:

*"8 Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.*

*9 So man is humbled, and each one is brought low- do not forgive them!.*

Now, as we go on Isaiah begins to receive a revelation concerning the day of the Lord when judgment will fall upon the earth. Look what he says in verse 10:

*10 Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty. (He's talking to the wickedness of mankind now, because he's saying there's a day coming when God will judge the earth. And he says on that day, verse 11:)*

*11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.*

*12 For the Lord of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up- and it shall be brought low;*

*13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, (which were a picture of strength, and power, and pride ) lofty and lifted up; and against all the oaks of Bashan;*

*14 against all the lofty mountains, and against all the uplifted hills;*

*15 against every high tower, and against every fortified wall;*

*16 against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all the beautiful craft. (all the things that man puts his pride in)*

*17 And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.*

*18 And the idols shall utterly pass away.*

*19 And (the) people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth.*

I want you to see verse 19. Very important because there are times when Isaiah is prophesying just to the nation of Israel, but there are times when he broadens his prophetic scope to encompass the world. And verse 19 is one of them. Look

at it again, how it ends. It says, he's saying that there is coming a day when people will literally be in terror from the splendor of the majesty of God when he rises to do what, to terrify Israel? No, not uniquely, but to terrify the whole world earth.

What is Isaiah prophesying here? He's talking about the Great Tribulation. He's talking about the tribulation period that will come upon the whole earth. And you'll notice that he mentions people running and hiding in the clefts of rocks and caves and that sort of thing to protect themselves from the outpouring of the wrath of God. And this is very similar language to what we read in the book of Revelation. Let me show you a passage from Revelation, chapter six, beginning at verse 15:

**Revelation 6:15-17 (ESV)**

*Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"*

What a powerful passage from the book of Revelation that connects directly to what we're studying here in the book of Isaiah.

Verse 20:

*"<sup>20</sup> In that day mankind will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats, (they will literally cast these things away)*

*<sup>21</sup> to enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth.*

And then this chapter ends with this very simple, but yet powerful exhortation. Verse 22:

*<sup>22</sup> Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, For of what account is he?"*

This is one of the most interesting, and frankly befuddling realities in the universe that's being expressed in this single verse. And that is the fact that the sons of man, fear man, and yet they have no regard for their Creator. No fear of God is in their eyes, and yet they'll fear one another.

And it's such a befuddling thought because men are a mist, the Bible tells us. And we see that in reality. Our lives are like a mist. They're here today and they can easily be gone in the next moment. A life can be snuffed out so quickly. And therefore, to trust in such a one as a man or a woman, we're saying mankind, irrespective of gender is nonsensical.

So, God calls you and I to trust in him with all of our hearts, to lean not on our own understanding, but to trust him completely, utterly. Don't trust in man. Of what account is he? He has breath in his nostrils, and when his breath is gone, he's gone. Trust the Lord. Trust the Lord.

Now that the Lord has revealed here in Isaiah chapter two, the judgment is coming. He goes on now to speak in detail about the coming judgment to Israel specifically, and to the southern kingdom of Judah. And to outline further to them why this judgment hangs over their heads.

Isaiah chapter three:

*"1 For behold, the Lord God of hosts is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah support and supply, all support of bread, and all support of water;*

*2 the mighty man and the soldier, the judge and the prophet, the diviner and the elder,*

*3 the captain of fifty and the man of rank, the counselor and the skillful magician and the expert in charms.*

*4 And I will make boys their princes, and infants shall rule over them.*

*5 And the people will oppress one another, every one his fellow and everyone his neighbor; the youth will be insolent to the elder, and the despised to the honorable.*

*6 For a man will take hold of his brother in the house of his father, saying: "You have a cloak; you shall be our leader, and this heap of ruins shall be under your rule";*

*7 in that day he will speak out, saying, "I will not be a healer; in my house there is neither bread nor cloak; you shall not make me leader of the people."*

*8 For Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen, because their speech and their deeds are against the Lord, defying his glorious presence."*

Wow! Isn't that amazing? To speak of a nation falling because their speech, what comes out of their mouth and their deeds, the works of their hands are literally done in open defiance against the presence of the Lord.

And by the way, the word to "defy" means to "openly resist," or "to refuse to obey," to "openly resist, or to refuse to obey." And so because of that, God says, you've stumbled. Unfortunately, we're seeing the same stumbling in our own nation here in the United States of America. And in many other nations around the world there is a similar stumbling happening because people are defying, in word and deed, the presence of the Lord.

Verse nine:

*"9 For the look on their faces bears witness against them; they proclaim their sin like Sodom; (In other words, they parade it.) they do not hide it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves."*

But then interestingly, a word is given now in verse 10 for those who are grieved by what is happening in society, in their nation. Look what it says in verse 10, because this is a promise:

*"10 Tell the righteous..."* (And those, that means those who are in right standing with God.)

And by the way, we are in right standing with God through Jesus Christ. It's not a righteousness of our own made by good deeds, it is a righteous standing. Given to us, or if you will, imputed to us through Jesus Christ and what he did on the cross. You, if you're a believer, you have a righteous standing before God right now. So this promise is a promise from God's Word to all those who are righteous. He says,

*"that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds. (In other words, the outgrowth of their righteousness will come back to bless them. But he says in verse 11,)*

*11 Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him (in other words, very bad) for what his hands have dealt out shall be done to him. (So we see here that both the righteous and the wicked will reap what they've planted -either in their righteousness or in their wickedness.)*

*12 My people- infants are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O, my people, your guides mislead you and they have swallowed (you) up (the which*



is an idea by the way of confusing) *the course of your paths.*" (So he says, your leaders have swallowed you up and they've confused your path.)

The course of your path kind of reminds me of the Apostle Paul writing to the Galatians when he said, "Who cut in on you, you were running a good race, who cut in on you? (Galatians 9:7) You were doing so well; who brought this legalism into the church? Who cut in? Who cut you off in your path? Who confused your path?

Verse 13:

*"13 The Lord has taken his place to contend; he stands to judge peoples.*

*14 The Lord will enter into judgment with the elders and princes of his people: (Look what he says to them.) "It is you who have devoured the vineyard, (and he speaks of his people "like a vineyard") the spoil of the poor (in other words, the goods of the poor) is in your houses."*

He's confronting the leaders of Israel and specifically Judah here saying that you've devoured the poor of the land and all that they once had is now in your home. What he says, verse 15:

*"15 What do you mean by crushing my people, by grinding the face of the poor?" declares the Lord God of hosts. (So he charges the people with enriching themselves at the expense of the poor.)*

*16 The Lord said: "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks, glancing wantonly with their eyes, mincing along as they go, tinkling with their feet, (meaning that the little trinkets and bells and things that they would wear; anklets that would make a sound as they walked along in their prideful arrogance. He says,)*

*17 therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the heads of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will lay bare their secret parts.*

*18 In that day, the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents; 19 the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarves; 20 the headdresses, the armlets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets; 21 the signet rings and nose rings; 22 the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags; 23 the mirrors, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils.*

*24 Instead of perfume there will be rottenness; and instead of a belt, a rope; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a rich robe, a skirt of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty.*

*25 Your men shall fall by the sword and your mighty men in battle.*

*26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; empty, she shall sit on the ground."*

And then, because the very first verse of chapter four ought to really be the end of chapter three, we're going to read that first verse of chapter four which says,

*"1 And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach."*

Now Isaiah is talking about a time that is yet in Judah's future when they will be conquered by the Babylonians. They will be carried off into exile. And all the finery that they enjoyed, and all of the rejoicing, and all the idols that they worshipped along with their pagan neighbors, will be completely taken away. Their gold and silver will be gone. Their fine clothes will be gone. Their rejoicing will be gone. And that took place in history. God was good to His Word, and he speaks it here.

When we come back next Wednesday, Lord willing, we're going to pick up chapter 4 with verse 2, and we will continue on with our study at that time.