

## Isaiah 2:1-22

### “Hope And Horror”

Hope & horror, *both* are headed down the prophetic pike for this planet. The one that applies to you depends upon which side of the line you take your stand. Ladies & gentlemen let's understand one thing. W/God, there's no such thing as “neutral ground”. You're either *for* Him or *against* Him. You either *trust* Him or you don't. You either *love* Him or you don't. You're either *saved* or you're *not*... At the end of the day there are no shades of grey as it pertains to things like God's justice, judgment, sin & salvation.

To those who've *believed & received* J.C. – hope. (A concrete reality, a guaranteed certainty of coming good, the likes of which we're unable to truly comprehend. Everlasting life, everlasting love, a fullness, a peace, a joy unspeakable & full of age abiding, never ending glory). To those who've *rebelled & rejected* J.C. – Horror. The terror of the Lord, unrelenting torment, humiliation & condemnation. God's righteous judgment will be meted out. It's God's *heart* that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance. This is why there's such urgency placed upon you & me as ambassadors of Christ. As though God were pleading through us: we implore others on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God! Believe on the Lord J.C. & be saved...

The prophecy of Isaiah that's before us in Ch 2 will carry on through Ch 4. These 1<sup>st</sup> couple of prophecies are pointed at Jerusalem & Judah... Some of Isaiah's prophecies are pointed to the northern kingdom of Israel, some are aimed at surrounding nations, some are given to individuals... But these 1<sup>st</sup> couple are for Jerusalem & Judah.

### Vs 1

What Isaiah is telling us here is that the way these things were revealed to him was in some kind of vision. This was a word that he “saw”.

### Vs 2-3

If this sounds somewhat familiar to some of you, it's because not too long ago we studied the book of Micah & these words are repeated in that passage as well. & If you remember right, I told you then that Micah was a contemporary to Isaiah. Their prophecies “crossed paths” so to speak. So it doesn't surprise us that God would bear witness in one w/what He said through the other. It would only establish, emphasize, underscore & confirm His word to the nation.

But we note that the Lord says that what will happen (pertaining to this passage) will come to pass “in the latter days”. & To get straight to the point, in this context, the term “latter days” is a reference to the time when J.C. will reign upon the earth.

It's a time we refer to as the "millennial reign" or the 1,000 yr reign of J.C. over & upon the earth. A time of unparalleled peace/prosperity. A time of righteousness & justice upon the earth. Fear will have no place & violence will not be tolerated. We'll see more descriptions later on in the book of Isaiah. [Ps 72 speaks of it](#), [Jer 23:5,6 mentions it](#), [Jesus refers to it in Luke 19:12-27](#). (& There are other passages. But I just want you to be aware of the fact that the millennial reign of Christ isn't some obscure, or vaguely alluded to implication in the Bible. Scripture is clear on the matter).

& If you'll allow me to digress for just a moment, there's a very interesting pattern that we find surfacing in scripture. It's a 6/1 pattern. For instance, God finished creation in 6 days, on the 7<sup>th</sup> there was rest (6/1). In the law, God told His people they were to work for 6 days, the 7<sup>th</sup> was a day of rest (6/1). **Even when they were gathering manna, they were only to gather it for 6 days. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day they were to gather double & God would sustain it so that it didn't rot & they were to do no work on the Sabbath. If they had a Hebrew servant. They could only have them work for them for 6 yrs. On the 7<sup>th</sup> they were to go free. They could sow their land for 6 yrs. The 7<sup>th</sup> they were to let it rest...**

If you follow the Biblical timeline, the earth has been under the curse of sin approximately 6,000 yrs. It's interesting that the Bible speaks to a 1,000 yr reign of Christ whereby righteousness will cover the earth as waters cover the sea (6/1)... Has the Lord obligated Himself to fulfill that pattern? No, but it's exciting to think through because when we read here of what will come to pass "in the latter days" & we do the math... That puts us right on the cusp of it all. **& When we look at all that's happening in the world today in light of what the scriptures teach regarding what will be happening in the world just prior to the coming of J.C. It's hard to draw any other conclusion outside the fact that we can't be far away. Now is not the time to be lulled to sleep, but to watch & be ready. Jesus said that He would come at an hour that no one would expect, so just be ready.**

But what we're reading of here is the fact that when the Lord establishes His kingdom upon the earth. That *Israel* will be the leading superpower of the world & that Jerusalem will be the world capital & the Temple will be kind of like the capital building. (The mountain of the Lord's house). The reference to mountains here would be to various nations. & The mountain *of the Lord's house* (Israel) shall be established *on the top* of the mountains & will be exalted above the hills.

**"& All nations (every nation upon the earth) shall flow to it." "Many people shall come & say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord (the nation of the Lord, Israel)**

“To the house of the God of Jacob” (the Temple) & *He* (speaking of the Messiah, Jesus) will teach us *His* ways, & *we* shall walk in *His* paths.” Here’s what He’s saying. When Jesus reigns upon the earth, people will realize that God’s revelation is foundational for their lives. That people from all over the world will be flowing into Israel, going to the Temple (which will be rebuilt) to listen to Jesus as He teaches them the word & ways of God. Can you imagine that? They’ll *want* to learn it (“He will teach us”) & live by it (“we shall walk in His paths”).

In Isaiah’s day, the Jews were abandoning God’s word & God’s ways to follow after the pagan gods & pagan ways of worship around them. But Isaiah is saying, “The day is coming when the Gentile nations will turn from those things & follow after the True & Living God of Israel.”

But one of the things I want you to pick up on & see here is the fact that it’s always been in the heart of God to reach *all* of mankind w/His word & the hope of salvation by grace through faith in J.C. The Bible is clear, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*<sup>1</sup> There will be an endless stream of people, coming & going in & out of Israel & the word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem.

**Vs 4**

& This is one reason why there will be such prosperity when Jesus reigns over the world. Today, I’m all for a military budget. If there aren’t people in place w/the ability to hold certain world leaders in check through military might, terrible things would take place. (Way more so than they do today). But last yr alone the U.S. had a military budget of \$157.7 billion. China \$209 billion. Russia \$65 Billion. Now, imagine all those resources being converted to agricultural development, education, parks/playgrounds. No need for nations to develop military forces... Nation won’t lift up sword against nation. & It’s not that there won’t be any more conflicts between nations or individuals. It’s that they’ll be dealt w/decisively, justly & swiftly. They won’t have a chance to escalate. “He shall judge between the nations, & rebuke many people.” Jesus, either Himself personally, or through those who reign w/Him (namely His church) will mediate, settle the issue & that will be that.

<sup>1</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [In 3:16]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Listen, when we speak of a righteous rule, that doesn't mean that everyone on the earth will be righteous. People who are born into this time will still need to believe on the redeeming work of J.C. upon the cross to be saved (& countless no doubt will). *But war, armed conflict isn't going to be tolerated. Ps 2 tells us that Jesus will break them w/a rod of iron & dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. There will simply be a zero-tolerance atmosphere for violence & any kind of armed conflict. Nations will dwell in peace & the Prince of peace will see to it.*

## Vs 5

Remember Vs 18 of Ch 1. It begins, "Come now, & let us reason together," says the Lord. It's a Vs stirring us to consider the way we're going versus the way we *need* to go. This kind of takes on that same hue. As Isaiah was writing these words, Judah/Jerusalem was walking contrary to the Lord. Venturing out in darkness, in pagan practices, in idolatry.

*But the day is coming when every nation will be streaming into Jerusalem, longing to know the word & ways of God. Wanting to lead lives pleasing to God, being blessed of God. & Isaiah is saying, "We have the light of the Lord w/us right now! O come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!" He paints this glorious picture of the Messiah's reign & says, "Let's live in the light of that right now!" Remember the point of prophecy? If this is what *will be* how should we be living *presently*? Our lives should be ordered & in line w/God's word.*

God gives us this revelation. The result should be inspiration/motivation to honor Him right now! The apostle John said it like this, *"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him."*<sup>2</sup> He continued in Ch 3, *"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."*<sup>3</sup> Knowing that we'll see & be w/Jesus *eternally* should serve to purify us & motivate us to walk in His light *presently*.

*Vs 5 brings people to a crossroad of sorts. Vs 2-4 is coming. We can choose to accept it or reject it. To accept it is to receive the hope of eternal life through faith in J.C. To reject it... to not follow *after* the Lord is to be found fighting *against* the Lord.*

<sup>2</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (1 Jn 2:28-29). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (1 Jn 3:2-3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## Vs 6-9

Why wasn't Judah walking in the light of the Lord? Because they were following after the ways of the world, pagan practices, they were trusting in their vast prosperity, the might of their military & were given over to idolatry.

During the reign of king Ahaz, he appealed to the king of Assyria for military help (which he got). Then he went & visited the king of Assyria & took note of a particular altar that he liked. So he sent to Urijah the priest back in Jerusalem & had him build an altar like the one he saw, had the altar Solomon made moved & required the people to sacrifice on this new "Assyrian style" altar.

But why would the people of God model their worship after people in the world? God has shown us in His word how to worship Him. & Believe me it's not compatible w/the ways of the world. People like to think that we all worship the same God, we just take different paths to Him. Some worship through eastern mysticism, transcendental meditation, Hinduism, Buddhism... Or like the Philistines they go through mediums for spiritual advise, looking to the tarot cards or trying to contact the dead.

When God says, "The are pleased w/the children of foreigners", that's not an "anti-immigrant" statement. God has nothing against other cultures & other customs. He's talking about falling into their worship of false gods & pagan practices.

When He says, "Their land is full of silver & gold, there's no end to their treasures." It's not an "anti-wealth" statement. God is not against wealth or riches. In fact, He may entrust some w/great wealth & resources. But it's a rebuke to those who *trust* in riches rather than trust in the Lord. – We talked about this last week. How riches can tend to make us relax our standards of godliness. We don't seek God like we used to, we "got it good". One might think that they would be humbled & honored & careful to seek the Lord & bless the Lord when God entrusts them w/wealth. Too often it's just the opposite. People drift away, spend lavishly on themselves & don't put their resources to work for the Kingdom of God.

Same holds true for military might. We would hope to say, "Thank you God for giving us the security of a strong military." But instead, people trust their military strategies, their weapons & nuclear capabilities to keep them safe. David said, "*Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.*"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ps 20:7]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

“Their land is also full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands.” Listen, I haven’t specifically stated it, but I trust you’re picking up on the parallels between what we’re reading here & what’s happening in our own culture/country. *We’re not given over so much to little carved trinkets, but we (as a people) worship the work of our own hands just the same. Worshiping the things we’ve made & accomplished rather than worshiping the One who made us. Americans like to worship technology, the most innovative vehicles, fame & fortune.*

But again, it’s not a rebuke against hard work or accomplishment. God is pleased w/both. It’s when we go from working hard for the glory of God to worshiping the work of our own hands... *that’s* the problem.

“People bow down, & each man humbles himself.” In other words, the problem people have isn’t w/worship. People *know* how to humble themselves. The problem people have is in *what* or *whom* they worship. *People find it easy enough to bow down & exalt the object of their choosing, but they won’t bow down & humble themselves before the Lord. Listen to these observations & see if sounds like it could be written of the U.S. today. “Material wealth, military might, exalting achievements & accomplishments of man...”*

They probably attributed all they had to the worship of their idols. (Meaning, we must be doing it right). It fed into their pride/self-confidence. So Isaiah says, “Do not forgive them.”

Now I want to say this. The word “forgive” here is the word “nasa” (nawsaw) & it’s translated “forgive” in various places. But it’s also translated, “regard”, “carry”, it’s the same word translated “lifted up” in Vs 12. So, it seems to me that Isaiah is essentially saying, “they’ve humiliated themselves, brought themselves low in worshiping these idols, these pagan gods, don’t lift them up.” Having sown to the wind, let them reap the whirlwind.

*Ok. Now we slingshot into the future. The Ch starts w/the glory of the Messiah’s reign prophetically, what will come Vs what was happening in the nation currently. Now, Isaiah returns to the latter-day scene & how God will cleanse the earth in judgment which will usher in the forementioned glory.*

### **Vs 10-18**

Hope & horror. He speaks in Vs 10 of the terror of the Lord. Enter into the rock, hide in the dust. The *pride* of man shall be humbled, the *arrogance* of man bowed down.



“The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day”. To which we say, “Even so, come Lord Jesus.” –

We note in Vs 12 the phrase, “The day of the Lord.” You’ll find this phrase, threaded throughout scripture & what you need to know about it is that it doesn’t refer to a specific *day*. It refers to a general era in time. A time that will be “the Lord’s” time. The idea is that now is the day (era) of man, but man’s day will end & the day of the Lord will dawn... Today we say things like, “Back in the day” referring to an era in the past. Same type inference here. The phrase points to an era in time, not a 24 hr period.

But it’s coming. & It’s gonna come (notice) categorically upon *everything* proud & lofty. *Everything* “lifted up” there’s that word (nawsaw). If you want to read of this “day” in greater detail you can read through Matt 24, Rev 6-19. But nothing is left out. Every nation, every high tower or fortified wall (military) every accomplishment in which man prides himself. Every ship, all the pleasant imagery. Every arrogant achievement will be brought to nothing & (Vs 17) again, “The Lord alone will be exalted in that day.”

### Vs 19-21

People will be fleeing into caves & bomb shelters, throwing everything they considered valuable away, it’s only slowing them down. We read in **Revelation 6:12-17** (read).

### Vs 22

Wow... what a sobering reminder. God is shining light on the frailty of human life. Don’t put your trust in man to save you. There are none who can protect you from the wrath of God. Kings, presidents, politicians (political parties). They’re all one missed breath away from death... Think about that.

It’s such a strange sin that lures us to give more account, place greater trust in man who depend on something as small as their next breath for life... rather than God who will shake the earth mightily & judge the earth in righteousness. Of what account, of what credit will man be to you in the day of the Lord? Sever yourself from man, tether yourself to J.C.

Isaiah leaves us w/a choice. Salvation (walking in the light of the Lord). Or terrifying humiliation, condemnation, & destruction. There’s no middle ground. Let’s not trust in man, let’s surrender our lives fully, making peace w/God by trusting completely in J.C.

**Prayer Points:**

God, we thank You for the hope You've provided in Your Son J.C. in Whom we place our trust. Keep us awake, watchful & ready for His appearing & help us to stay busy about Your work until You're ready to bring us home. Be glorified in our lives.

There's no middle ground before God. You are w/Him or against Him. Saved or unsaved, walking in darkness or in the light. If you've not given your life to Christ, then you're in darkness until now. But that can change right here, right now. Turn from your sin, believe on Jesus who died for your sin & rose again the 3<sup>rd</sup> day so that you could be justified, pardoned of guilt in the sight of God.