

The Beauty of the BRANCH

By Pastor Matt Black

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Lord's Day Evening

Isaiah 4:2

Introduction: Open your Bibles to the book of Isaiah chapter 4. The title of tonight's message is "The Beauty of the BRANCH."

[Read Isaiah 4:2-6]

Review of ISAIAH CHAPTER 3: FALSE LEADERSHIP AND FALSE BEAUTY

After the message of judgment in chapter 3, we have a message of hope here in chapter 4.

Concerning the Men

If you remember, the middle portion of chapter 3 (verses 12-15) concerned the men of Judah and how they were not faithful in leadership, in stewardship, or in servanthood. They were allowing the women to rule over them (verse 12). They were very materialistic and hoarding the resources of the Lord (verse 14). They were not servants for the Lord, but were lazy while everyone else did the work (verse 15). I think we learned from this men that we need to be a loving but firm leader of the home. We need to be faithful in our tithes and offerings—and that is your responsibility men—not your wife's. If the finances of the home or the leadership of the home is out of control it is *always the man's fault*. You might say, well my wife is a very controlling person. Any saved woman with a loving and firm leader can and will submit to God's proper order of the home. Then of course, we learned about servanthood. Men, you must come home to help your wives. You must know what it is to have a long day at work, and come home exhausted, but ready to work in the home along side your wife. Do you know how to load the dishwasher, change diapers, cook, clean, or whatever needs to be done? You are not a true leader if you are not a servant first. If you think that a proper order of God's home is having your wife be your slave, you do not understand the love of Christ.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Again, Peter instructs the husbands to "dwell with *them* [YOUR WIFE] according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (**1 Peter 3:7**).

Concerning the Women

Then last week we touched on the latter half of the chapter which concerns the unfaithful women of Judah. Let me summarize the main points of what we covered in verses 16 through 26 of Isaiah chapter 3.

1. The main issue being covered is that of the immodesty of the heart, which results in the immodesty of the apparel and pride. These women were sacrificing modesty and discretion on the altar of fashion. They wanted to

draw attention to themselves. Of course, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

2. The main point of the point of the passage is that modesty is not primarily an issue of clothing, but an issue of the **HEART**. It is a heart issue. If you draw attention to yourself ladies, it is very dangerous. Your beauty belongs to your husband. Verse 18 of chapter 3 has a key word in it that summarizes the problem—God promises to “take away the bravery” that these women had been using with their clothing which actually was coming from their heart. The word “bravery” in verse 18 if you recall has the idea of “a bold beauty.” It is a beauty that flaunts itself. So, do you flaunt your beauty ladies? Do you flaunt the form of your body by the clothing that you wear. We learned that the New Testament gave an even fuller explanation in I Timothy—

1 Timothy 2:9-10 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in **modest apparel**, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

So women should have modest apparel, which has the idea of an orderly (modest) long flowing garment (apparel). I like the last part of this verse where it says women should adorn themselves with a seriousness and shamefacedness. The word “shamefacedness” has the idea of “a sense of shame or honour, modesty, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others, and a respect.”¹

3. Let me say further, that **LEGALISM** is just as wrong or WORSE than immodesty. What is legalism? It is to believe ladies that you are more spiritual than someone else because of what you wear. Or men, because you wear a shirt and tie, and someone else comes with no tie, that you are more spiritual. If you think that way I can tell you that you are not more spiritual—in fact you are KILLING any spirituality that you have.
4. Having said that, it is very important that we know the history of our modern culture. For 1500 years, there was a certain distinction between men and women. If a woman wore man’s clothing, it was an exception, like when the wife was chasing a pig while her husband was away plowing the field. It was definitely more modest to wear her husband’s trousers than for her to go chasing around that pig in a dress. Again, let me say that as a general rule women need to keep the distinction, but there is an issue of Christian liberty in this. The easiest thing in the world to do at this point would be to say “This article of clothing is wrong in all circumstances.” The only problem with that, is that it almost always becomes a legalistic standard, so as always, you must go to the Lord and please Him with your wardrobe.
5. I came across an article by the well known journalist, recently deceased, of the Chicago Tribune, Mike Royko, who reportedly was not a religious man at all. The title of his column that day was “On Fashion.”
“Year after year, a handful of suspicious-looking characters who call themselves clothing designers issue their commands:

¹ Online Bible Greek Lexicon, word 127, aidwv aidos.

Wear your dress short and wear boots and look like a hooker [street walker]. . .
Now dress like a gypsy fortuneteller.
Now look like a farm wife.
Now wear spike heels.
Now show your thighs.
And every time the pimps of fashion give the word, all these enlightened female persons obediently trudge to the clothing store."²

Very interesting thoughts from an unregenerate man. Very perceptive. I hope as you ladies have grown in the Lord, you have stopped following the fashions of the world. That goes for the men too. As I have said before there is nothing spiritual about being dowdy, but a sharp, clean-cut, modest outfit is always a good testimony for the Lord.

Remember, YOU are accountable before the Lord for the way you dress. You should always dress for Him no matter what occasion. Modesty is an issue of the HEART. Let God clothe your spirit with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Also, there are two good verses when we touch on subjects that shouldn't be, but sometimes can be controversial.

Psalm 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

Proverbs 13:10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

So the answer is that we all strive to have a right heart before the Lord and not against each other. If you think clothing alone makes you more or less spiritual, there is a heart problem. If we have a right heart before the Lord, there will be peace in your heart.

There is never any contention with a humble contrite heart.

Having said that, let's get into the meat of what we want to cover tonight in Isaiah chapter 4.

ISAIAH 4: THE BEAUTY OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD

So after seeing the false beauty in Chapter 3—here you have the perfect picture of men and women full of themselves—now in Chapter 4, we see the true beauty—the Beauty of the Lord. Here is the crux of the whole matter. You want good leadership in the home? You want the ladies of our home and congregation to honor and reverence the Lord? Well here it is—adorn yourself with the presence of God. We need to please God in all we do!

2 In that day This is the DAY of the LORD. Here we have the coming of Christ in this verse. The "Branch" is a term that refers to Jesus Christ, who is branched or sprouted from Abraham and David. Notice by the way in 3:8 and 4:1, that the Day of the Lord referred to judgment, and now the Day of the Lord refers to God's

² "On Fashion," Chicago Sun-Times on June 8, 1979.

presence. What is the difference? The difference is that for unbelievers, the Day of Christ is for judgment, and for believers, the Day of the Lord is for comfort and forgiveness. The difference has to do with how we are related to "the Branch"—the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the seed of Abraham and David. The Day of Christ will be a general judgment of the saved and lost. He will give ultimate salvation to us who believe on that day, and the lost will be damned forever.

(2) shall the Branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious,

This verse was fulfilled when Christ came to the earth, and also will be fulfilled ultimately when He comes again. Another verse that is similar is Isaiah 9:2—

Isaiah 9:2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

The idea of the "Branch" also is that it is a sprout that comes down from the tree of David that has been cut down. The nation of Israel when Christ comes is cut down—it has only a puppet king, and it is just a shadow of its glory. At that time in history, a sprout, a branch grows from the stump of Israel, and he rules and reigns in the hearts of His people. We see this in both the book of Jeremiah and in the book of Acts. First Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 23:5 speaks of this time when the Branch of the LORD is revealed, "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

Then we have the main interpretation of the "Branch" by Peter at Pentecost. Turn over to Acts 2:29

Acts 2:29-36

29 Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch **David**, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the **fruit** [BRANCH] of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up **Christ** to sit on his throne; [REMEMBER JEREMIAH 23:5—"that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper"] 31 He seeing this [RAISING UP CHRIST TO SIT ON THE THRONE OF DAVID] before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 **This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.** 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 **Until I make thy foes thy footstool.** [THIS IS THE LANGUAGE OF A RULING AND REIGNING KING AND SOVERIEGN] 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and **Christ**.

Of course even the title "Christ" or "Messiah" refers to the KING. He is the "Anointed One" as David was anointed king by Samuel.

So the Day of Christ in a sense is right now. Christ is ruling and reigning in the hearts of His people.

Notice also the Branch is called **beautiful and glorious**. We do not have time to study it tonight, but if you look at other passages (Isaiah 60:9, 19; Zechariah 3:5). We find that these titles of beauty and glory belong to the LORD Jehovah alone, and so here we clearly see Christ as God the Son in the Old Testament.

Notice here I want to emphasize that Israel at this time had a fake **beauty**. The men thought they were leaders because they were demanding their way and acting like children—but this is only a fake beauty of the leadership. The women had that worldly attire—again a false beauty. Beauty comes from the Lord!

And then you see the word “glorious.” The Branch, Jesus Christ is not only that which is beautiful about the children of God, but it is also what is **glorious**.

So that which we should glory in is not our position men, nor our apparel women, but

2 Corinthians 10:17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

(2) and the fruit of the earth This is amazing. Here the Divine BRANCH, the one with the attributes of deity is called “the fruit of the earth.” The idea is that the BRANCH is both fully God and fully man. This is not a spiritualization of the text, but has credibility when you look at the words of

Hebrews 7:14, “For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”

Literally, it says the “Lord BRANCHED out of Judah.” That is the earthly lineage was of Judah, but Christ’s heavenly lineage was divine!

Isaiah himself repeats this idea through his prophecy. Look at

Isaiah 9:6-7, “For unto us a **child is born**, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God**, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

So here you have the Divine Branch who alone is beautiful and glorious becoming the “fruit of the earth.”

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Romans 1:3-4 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the **seed of David according to the flesh**; ⁴ And declared *to be* **the Son of God with power**, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

(2) shall be excellent and comely The future glory of God’s people is not to be found in the ornaments or material decorations in outward fashions,

(2) for them that are escaped of Israel. The idea here is that a remnant will be saved.

Isaiah returns to this idea in Isaiah 6:13, "But yet in it *shall be* a tenth, and *it* shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance *is* in them, when they cast *their leaves*: so the holy seed *shall be* the substance thereof."

There is a remnant that will be saved.

Conclusion: So what is the application of verse 2?

1. Clothe yourself in the beauty of holiness. The presence of the Lord should be our beauty and fashion.
2. Let the zeal of the Lord motivate you to win souls. Spurgeon said "Save the elect and elect some more."

Paul says

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Closing Hymn: 187 He is Lord