

A Garden That Hath No Water

Isaiah 1:19 – 2:22

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~ The prophet Isaiah probably isn't making many friends or influencing people in our Spiritual Safari. Our last report was just not nice; and this report won't be much better – although this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God will, at least, offer a small ray of gentle hope from the Lord Jesus Christ. We received the main message from chapter one in that last report and, if you have not read it, I suggest you go back and do so now. God brought serious charges against His Own people in a court on the world stage. At this point in chapter one, the case against Israel is complete; and they have been found guilty. God is now going to reach out and attempt to reason with them by providing a directive verdict of acquittal. That offer of redemption and salvation is their only hope against impending destruction. God's invitation is still open in this desperately dark and dangerous hour as you read this report and I type it. Jesus said, "*he who cometh to Me I shall in no wise cast out.*" Frankly, we are utter fools to decline God's offer....

I

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

~ This basically sums up the two aspects of the message Isaiah brought to the nation. We have the government of God and the grace of God presented here. The remainder of this chapter reveals the Lord attempting to woo the children of Israel back to Himself; but it all comes with a warning. As we read on, the oak trees and gardens speak of rank idolatry the nation had fallen into. Most people today misrepresent God by erroneously thinking He loses His temper when He judges; and that He flails on His people in tangents. Well, that's not an accurate picture of God's judgment. God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. The true

perspective is that our sins are as a wick in a candle; consuming that which gives it life. When judgment comes, it arrives in and of itself. It's a natural process for sin to bring consequences upon the perpetrator. If you put the spark to sin, fire shall surely follow. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man shall sow, that shall he also reap – and that means every single time – no exceptions....

21 How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

22 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

23 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

26 And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

28 And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

29 For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

31 And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.

II

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

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*” concern the Great Tribulation period and the kingdom age that follows. Chapter two through chapter five constitutes a single prophetic announcement. Wherever a prophet says, “*in that day*” – it means the Great Tribulation period and the Millennial Kingdom to follow. Although Isaiah specifically calls out Judah and Jerusalem, I think it is made clear he is speaking to all twelve tribes of the nation Israel. God always considered them as one nation; and He intends for them to be brought together again in that day. Now, we’re not talking about the church here. There is no possible way that this can be made applicable to the church. Paul said the church was a great mystery. Isaiah knew *nothing* about the church. The church didn’t come into existence until the Day of Pentecost; even Simon Peter and John didn’t fully understand the church concept until, at least, very late in Jesus’ earthly ministry. Today, God is using the church – the body of Christ – to witness to the world. The church will be removed from the world someday in the rapture, and then the Great Tribulation period begins; but this looks *beyond* that time, even further down in history, when God begins a new dispensation after the age of grace, and moves in an entirely new way once again. After all of that, Christ will establish the millennial kingdom and we will all go into eternity.

Romans 16: 25now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the

commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever ~

If Isaiah had known about the church, then it wouldn't have been a mystery up until the time of the apostles in the early church. See, it helps to actually know the *ENTIRETY* of Scripture; so that common sense can be applied to the interpretation of eschatology. Let's respect basic factual premises and understand that when the prophets speak of Judah, Jerusalem and Israel – they mean the literal and physical real estate over there – in Israel. We're not talking about Florida or southern California or wherever you are – unless you are reading this in Jerusalem, of course! Even if you are reading this in Jerusalem, though, it still doesn't mean today. When the prophets use figures of speech – which they will – they always make it abundantly clear that they are using symbolism and analogy. Friends, we are going to have to understand this or we simply cannot understand prophecy properly, correctly and completely.

So, the last days the prophets speak of, and the last days of the church, are two entirely different things. The last days of the church speak of a time of spiritual apostasy – which is heavily upon us today. Paul made this perfectly clear in the Pastoral Epistle to Timothy. Paul says, *"...in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith."* Does that mean they lose their salvation? No, it means they were never saved in the first place. Let's just make sure we are clear here: the *"last days"* spoken of by the prophets and the *"last days"* of the church are not the same *"last days "* – they are *not* synonymous. They do have an interlude of overlapping; but they do not refer to the same period of time. Again, this is critical to comprehend for a right dividing of Scripture concerning prophecy.

Whenever we read of a *"mountain"* in prophecy, we're speaking of the kingdom, the government of God, authority, and the reign of Christ on earth. Daniel will spell that out in no uncertain terms when we get his book. It is also defined without question in Revelation; and I do not mean to be tedious, so we'll wait until we get to those books to develop the concept. For now, let's suffice it to say that the earthly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ will be high above any and all kingdoms of this earth. Actually, all

kingdoms will become His and *IN THAT DAY* He will become the King of kings and Lord of lords. The physical nation Israel is the most sensitive little strip of land in the world today; and the reason the current occupation of the land is so precarious and hotly-contested is because it is the place the Lord has preordained to be the political and religious center of this world during the Kingdom Age....

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.

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 pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

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

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.

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:

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

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

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

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.

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:

13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,

14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up,

15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,

16 And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.

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.

18 And the idols he shall utterly abolish.

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.

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;

~ The Great Tribulation period is a time of judgment, of course; but, although it is another trial period for mankind, many people will also be saved. Joel makes it clear that people will beat plowshares into swords *in that day*. Here, in Isaiah, he speaks of the time when that has passed, and these people are beating their swords into plowshares. We live in a day of beating plowshares into swords – but not as it will be in the Great Tribulation period – which we are heading to very quickly after the rapture.

The idea today of disarming a nation or even individuals is, in my estimation, absolutely contrary to the teaching of the Word of God. Jesus said, *“a strong man armed keepeth his house.”* Well, that just happens to be the only way we can ever have peace today. It’s what we call law and order – and I know many people do not like that phrase; but if you want peace and safety in a sinful world, then the rule of law and authority must be exercised equitably.

We live in a dangerous world, friends. Man is demanding anarchy today as he rails against government, defies the police, disrespects other people, and empathizes with nothing they can protest against. We have to realize our system of societal order and law is broken. When one mixes guns, crime, murder, drugs, alcohol, and technology into one element, a very bad result occurs; it simply cannot be otherwise. Only when Jesus is physically on the throne, ruling in Jerusalem, will we be safe to take the locks off of our doors. Only then will we be able to walk the streets alone at night. There will be war no more; and we won’t need to get guns off of the streets — because there won’t be any need for them. But that isn’t today. Mankind’s politics and legislation cannot achieve peace and safety on this earth. An ungodly world system *of any kind* is pure madness. The United Nations is an asinine, nonsensical joke; they continually promise peace, but are the first ones to commence battle. And I fully understand having to fight for freedom, but our hypocrisy has rendered us impotent at global governance, and the only accomplishments contemporary politics has achieved have been to establish and enrich some of the worst dictators in history.

We do not wax political in this Spiritual Safari; but the child of God who is a reasonable, thinking person, contemplating truth with the mind of Christ, understands we live in a lost, evil, sick world — led by lost, sick, awful people. The wealthy oppress the poor, our leaders are saturated in sexual perversion, they all lie pathologically. If we think we’re going to attain to the universal brotherhood of man, and everyone is going to smile and hold hands while helping each other out, then, may I say this kindly? — You’re woefully naïve and gullible. Society is not there anymore, friends. Utopian dreams are not a possible equation with sin ruling in the hearts of men. Man today has an overwhelming desire to rule other people; and that, in

and of itself, is a horrible ambition. That's what brings war, hate, envy, jealousy, strife — and murder; make no mistake about that.

In view of coming world-events, the child of God should be prompted to walk in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the only way to achieve peace in this present hour. If we leave God out of our life, we will *NEVER* attain a peaceful life; because that would be impossible. The Rock in verse ten of this chapter speaks of Jesus. The proud man who honestly but erroneously believes he can rule himself and ignore God is going to be crushed and ground to powder. The pride of man's secular society is going to be turned to utter shame and humiliation. Pomp and circumstance will turn into embarrassment, regret, and sorrow. The idolatry of false religion is going to be wiped away like crumbs from a table.

Modern society is poisoned by covetousness, perverted television, the filth of corrupt politics, dysfunctional government, fraud in the political economy — not to mention the scourge of false religion. Well, the Lord is going to be exalted, and all of those institutions will ultimately cease. God is not given His proper place today in *ANY* identifiable strata of society. Man was never a caveman in our history; but, he's sure going to be one in the future when Christ comes — because those people are going to flee for caves. That's what Isaiah says — and he said it right here in the **Word of God...**

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.

~ Don't place your confidence in man today, friends. We're nothing but a vapor of breath. If you stop breathing, you'll be dead in less than ten minutes. Every time we exhale, it may be our last. We are one heartbeat away from being subtracted from the census and ceasing to exist. Place your confidence and life in the hands of the Lord Jesus and be saved. All you have to do is recognize that you are a sinner who desperately needs a Savior. When you make that admission, then the Lord can finally begin a good work in you that He will continue to carry out through eternity. Christ is the *ONLY* One Who is *ALWAYS* worthy of our trust, praise, and worship.

He will never let us down when we turn to Him. God can make a way when there is no way; and will never leave us nor forsake us. God wants to bless us with mercy as He works all things for His glory. Do you know Him? ~

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

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