

PM Isaiah 2 Learn his Ways, Walk in his Paths

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[0 : 00] God to Isaiah chapter 2, the second chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah. And that is found on page 685 of the Church Bible.

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

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, 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 the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 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. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

[1 : 46] O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. 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 hands with the children of foreigners.

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.

Their land is filled with idols. They bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made. So man is humbled, and each one is brought low.

Do not forgive them. Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty.

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

[3 : 18] 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.

Against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up, and against all the oaks of Bashan, against all the lofty mountains, and against all the uplifted hills, against every high tower, and against every fortified wall, against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all the beautiful craft.

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.

And the idols shall utterly pass away, and 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.

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, 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.

[5 : 10] Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?

Amen. Let us pray. Turn your attention to the passage that we read together, just a few moments ago, from Isaiah chapter 2. The first line of this second chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, the word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, reminds us of how chapter 1 begins.

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

And when the two introductions are taken together, what we're given here is a wide-ranging preview of this prophetic Old Testament book.

Much of it focuses on the days of Uzziah and the other kings, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, who are mentioned in chapter 1, verse 1.

[6 : 36] But the vision is so wide-ranging that it also includes what verse 2 of chapter 2 calls the latter days.

So this book extends its scope and theme from the days in which Isaiah lived under these kings of Judah.

And it stretches from that period right through to a period in the future that he refers to in verse 2 of chapter 2 as the latter days.

So the book of the prophet Isaiah deals, yes, with Jerusalem and with the tribe of Judah, but it also anticipates events that will take place in time to come.

And it anticipates the Zion, the Zion that is to come. We should also notice that the opening verses of chapter 2 are connected to the blessings promised in the final verses of chapter 1, especially chapter 1 and verses 24 to 27.

[7 : 53] There we read, 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.

I will turn my hand against you and will smelt your dross as with lye and remove all your alloy. And I will restore your judges as at the first and your counsellors as at the beginning.

Afterward, you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed by justice and those in her who repent by righteousness.

But now the vision clearly relates to a time far off in the future from Isaiah's standpoint in history to this period of the latter days.

And in that period of the latter days, Isaiah has been given a vision of one holy mountain. This mountain of the Lord and this mountain of the Lord will reign supreme in the world.

[9 : 10] Now I want you to notice how on the one hand, the vision that Isaiah saw here is exclusive. The Lord's mountain, this one mountain, the Lord's mountain, is supreme and without rival.

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.

Now this teaches us something very important about God as he has revealed himself in the pages of the Old Testament scriptures.

The Lord, as the Old Testament constantly reveals, is not one of many gods. He is not some kind of tribal God or deity who belongs only to one people.

the people of Israel but who has no power or authority over the other nations of the world. This is not the God of the Bible.

[10 : 31] No, the God of the Bible is the one living and true God who is without rival, who is without peer.

No one can compare to him. He is God alone. As Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the most powerful man in the world at that time, confessed when his reason returned to him.

Isn't that interesting that we're told that in Daniel chapter 4? When my reason returned to me, he confessed these words. these are the words of a man who thinks straight, who has been given understanding, who is a most reasonable and rational person, not some kind of madman or religious fanatic.

This is a man who sees truth as it truly is and he confesses, I blessed the most high and praised and honoured him who lives forever.

For his dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom rules over all. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say to him what have you done?

[12 : 10] And this is what I mean when I say that there is something very exclusive about the vision that Isaiah saw that God gave to his prophet.

It is the same exclusivity that we see in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is not a saviour or one of many possible saviours.

He is the way and the truth and the life exclusive.

He is the only way he is the only truth he is the only life no one he says comes to the father except through me.

There are no other exceptions. It is only except through Christ that someone can come to God the father. And the apostles when they preached to the people of Jerusalem were not being arrogant by saying to their fellow countrymen God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago and he said through Moses that he will raise up a prophet like me from your brothers.

[13 : 46] You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you and it shall be that every soul that does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.

That's an amazing statement. God said through Moses and Moses declared to the people of Israel that one day God would raise up a prophet from among them who would be like Moses except greater than Moses.

but who would be like Moses. You must listen to him and this is what God said through Moses and which Moses told to the children of Israel faithfully every soul that does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.

That is exclusive. The apostles declared God having raised up his servant sent him to you first to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.

My friends if you do not listen to Muhammad it's really no big deal. if you do not follow the Hindu scriptures you're not sinning.

[15 : 38] If you do not embrace the teachings of the Buddha your life will not be harmed in any way whatsoever. If you do not follow the wisdom of Confucius and act accordingly nothing bad will happen to you as a consequence.

But if you do not listen and obey the prophet like Moses whom God would raise up according to the word of God you're going to be destroyed.

Why? Because there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

The vision is exclusive. this mountain of the Lord's house is going to be established and it's going to be supreme.

It's going to be above all. But another thing to note about Isaiah's vision is that it is not only exclusive but it is comprehensive.

[17 : 08] It's comprehensive in its scope. look at the second part of verse 2 or the last part and all the nations shall flow to this mountain of the Lord's house and many peoples verse 3 shall come and say come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord.

God has a word of hope and salvation not just for the children of Israel but for all the peoples of this world.

For people of every nation. His saving work is to be known worldwide for it comprehends it takes in it includes men and women and boys and girls from every tribe and language and people and nation just as God promised it would to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12.

I will bless you God promised and God did bless Abraham and in you God says all the families of the earth shall be blessed my friends the blessing of God which has been unfolded and unwrapped in the pages of the scriptures and which includes pardon and peace and adoption and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and ultimate glorification is to be offered in the message of the gospel to all and it will be received and experienced and enjoyed by all whom the Lord our God will call out of every nation of this world and as it says in the book of Acts after report of the missionary work of the apostles and the work of the spirit through the preaching of the gospel as many who were appointed to eternal life believed it's

God's purpose and God's purposes cannot fail through the preaching of the gospel through the witness of his people this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the nations and then the end will come and out of those nations the Lord will draw all those appointed to eternal life and they will put their faith and trust in the Jesus of whom the gospel speaks aren't these words wonderful that we find here in this Old Testament prophet returning to these first five verses of Isaiah chapter 2 we also notice the consequences of this work of God among the nations in the latter days in words that have become almost proverbial in the English language the prophet portrays universal peace we read 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 what wonderful words these are especially reading them on a day like today with all the tensions about to boil over in the

[21 : 02] Middle East these words are full of hope full of beauty hope and beauty that this fallen sinful ugly world so desperately needs and yet we must not lose sight of Isaiah's message here nor of the Bible's message as a whole for these words come in a chapter and indeed in a whole book

that combines a message of judgment upon sin with a message of hope because of the grace of God and that should teach us something very important Isaiah the Lord's prophet is not shy in denouncing the injustice and the wickedness of his day but at the same time he never loses sight of the fact that our ultimate hope is not in political reform but in the final intervention of the

God of heaven you see man's salvation does not lie within himself or with his own solutions and resolutions and acts of parliament and decisions of the United Nations and so forth man creates his own problems that's true but man cannot solve his own problems and do we not see this so clearly in the politics of our age we've had a general election in our own country the media is full of reports and stories related to the campaign trail in the United States because they're having their presidential elections in November this year and do we not see this acted out every time there's a general election in this country or an election taking place in some other country as well empty meaningless slogans promises promises promises but in four years time or whatever the length of time it is between parliaments the same problems I guarantee you will be with us and we will hear the same promises made perhaps in different slogans and different soundbites and different words but it will be the same old same old same old promising everything but powerless to deliver and on and on it goes the problems are too great they perplex the leaders of every nation utopia by very definition is a place that doesn't exist it is nowhere that's what the word utopia means it does not exist anywhere in this world it cannot be ushered in it is not the result of a party political manifesto it doesn't exist anywhere in this world because we live in a fallen and sinful and rebellious world occupied by sinful rebels against their creator and even if the

Labour Party or the Nationalist Party or the Conservative Party or the Democratic Party or the Republican Party win a landslide victory and every seat in the Senate and in the House of Representatives or in the Houses of Parliament is filled with a single party's members they still won't be able to solve the problems that we ourselves have created you see the world needs to know that God says put not your trust in princes in a son of man in whom there is no salvation when his breath departs he returns to the earth on that day his plans perish that sets it in context doesn't it but in contrast blessed is he whose help is in the

God of Jacob whose hope is in the Lord his God who made heaven and earth the sea and all that is in them who keeps faith forever who executes justice for the oppressed who gives food to the hungry and so on as Psalm 146 tells us now you will notice I trust that these opening five verses of Isaiah chapter 2 also point forward in the text because before the latter days that we've been thinking about in chapter 2 verses 1 to 5 the Lord tells us through the prophet that there is another day in store the Lord has another day I wonder do you see that look at verses 6 to 22 and especially verse 12 of chapter 2 where we read 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 in other words the prophet Isaiah knows because God has revealed it to him that before this latter day period comes the Lord has another day and it's a day of judgment judgment is coming upon Israel judgment is coming upon Judah it's on its way it's on its way and what is going on in the nation in the days of these kings of Judah that are mentioned in the first verse of the prophecy the days of

[28 : 33] Uzziah Jotham Ahaz and Hezekiah kings of Judah what is going on in the nation is an indicator that God has already in some measure abandoned his people look at verse 6 of chapter 2 you notice how abruptly the chapter divides at this point 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 hands with the children of foreigners and so on in other words in the heart of this covenanted nation to God the children of God the Israelite people have adopted the religious superstitions of the east and they now practice divination tradition just like the

Philistines who live to the west of them in other words the people of God have their hearts set on idolatry wherever they can find it they have rejected the Lord they've turned their back on God's word and they have adopted the thinking and the worship and the practices of the godless nations around them and what is more from these verses we can discover that material blessings economic prosperity have made them unbearably arrogant look at verses 7 to 9 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 their land is filled with idols they bow down to the work of their hands to what their own fingers have made so man is humbled and each one is brought low do not forgive them but notice also that when the judgment of the

Lord falls in verse 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 on that day some of the people we are told in verse 10 and verses 19 to 21 go so far as to hide among the rocks and caves fleeing the invading armies whom God will bring on his people as part of his temporal judgments on Israel enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of the Lord and from the splendor of his majesty that's what verse 10 says and later on it says and 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 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 because they cannot save to enter the caverns of the rocks and the cliffs of the cliffs from before the terror of the Lord and from the splendor of his majesty when he rises to terrify the earth a truly terrible judgment is coming says Isaiah and it shall create sheer terror in the hearts of all mankind and all will want to escape from the coming judgment now you've read these words tonight but do they not also ring a bell in your mind because these words of the prophet Isaiah remind me of words spoken by the apostle John in the book of Revelation and if you turn to Revelation chapter 6 and verses 12 to 17 and compare the two verses you can see that what Isaiah prophesied concerning a temporal judgment brought about by God on the people of

Israel is a real event but it is also a prophetic advertisement or indication of a greater final judgment that is coming upon the world when he opened the sixth seal I looked and behold there was a great earthquake and the sun became black as sackcloth the full moon became like blood and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale the sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up and every mountain and island was removed from its place 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 and 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 my dear friends it's the testimony of the bible god's infallible word of truth that a day of judgment is coming this is what the apostle

[35 : 10] Paul preached to those wise and learned men in Athens on Mars Hill that God now commands all people everywhere to repent because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed and of this he has given assurance by raising him from the dead my dear friends when in the splendor of his majesty he rises to terrify the earth there will be no place for you or me to hide and I have to say that the history of Israel recorded for us in the pages of the Old

Testament is a standing testimony and witness to the fact that God is a God both of judgment and salvation and in the second chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah we see God's salvation and God's judgment at work and we've got to ask ourselves if God acted in such righteousness fulfilling his promise to save and keeping his word to judge in the days of Israel how much more will he act in the same manner when the day of the Lord comes and as we think about

Isaiah's message to the professing people of God in the 8th century BC can we not say that much of the professing church in the west today in the 21st century AD stands under similar judgment is it not true in the west today that their land is filled with silver and gold and there is no end to their treasures and yet we are not a people characterized by great humility and zeal for the Lord's glory and so the message for our world tonight is exactly the same as the message that God gave Isaiah to preach to ancient Israel verse 22 the last verse of chapter 2 stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath for of what account is he later in the prophecy chapter 45 verse 22 Isaiah will declare the words of God turn to me and be saved all the ends of the earth there's the exclusivity turn to me and be saved turn to no one else turn to me and be saved and here's the comprehensiveness all the ends of the earth turn to me for I am God and there is no other I want to finish then sharing the resolve of those spoken of in the first verses of Isaiah chapter 2 these people who said to one another come come not go go but come because I'm going and I want you to come with me so come let us come together and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob why do we want to come that he may teach us his ways and that we might walk in his paths in other words it's not enough just to hear the invitation you've got to respond to the invitation so let's finish on this note come we want to learn his ways from God himself that he might teach us his ways that we might walk in his paths and where is this mountain

of the Lord to be found where is the house of the God of Jacob where does God meet with man it is in Jesus Christ in Jesus

[40 : 54] Christ the one mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus who died on the cross on Calvary's hill that he might bring us to God come then oh come from every land to worship at his shrine and walking in the light of God with holy beauties shine come that he might teach us his ways and that we might walk in his paths have you come will you come will you come with us or will you refuse will you be left behind to face the unbearable judgment of God when he rises in his splendor to terrify the earth oh come come with us to worship at his shrine and walking in the light of God with holy beauties shine may God bless his word to us we're going to sing including a with whoever may or may come his or his heart or