

## A Trek Through Isaiah 04 - 2:5 - 4:1

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August 20, 2023

### Context

In the second part of the author's preface: what God's people were, and what they would be

<b><u>Author's Preface (1:1 - 5:30)</u></b>		
A comprehensive failure 1:2-31	The ideal lost and found 2:1 - 4:6	Grace exhausted 5:1-30

### 2:5 - 4:1 Judah's current reality

2:5-9 God's people rejected

The prophet encourages Judah by the example of the Gentiles.

2:5 Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of Yahweh.

- Contrast Judah's current reality with v3 Gentiles willingly come to learn Yahweh's ways
- Judah's present course will bring destruction

Judah is rejected by God

2:6-8 For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob, Because they are filled with influences from the east, And they are soothsayers like the Philistines, And they strike bargains with the children of foreigners. Their land has also been filled with silver and gold, And there is no end to their treasures; Their land has also been filled with horses, And there is no end to their chariots. Their land has also been filled with idols; They worship the work of their hands, That which their fingers have made.

- Judah is abandoned for four reasons.
- V6 Full of the world.
  - Full: filled to capacity.
  - Full of foreign influences
  - Full of fortune-telling
  - Full of bargains with unclean foreigners while rejecting their own heritage.
  - Exactly what Israel had been warned against by Moses and the prophets
  - Contrast the ideal when the Gentiles will come to Jerusalem to learn the ways of Yahweh.
- V7 Full of silver and gold
  - Trusting in riches.
  - No end to their treasures: Desiring more and more.
- V7 Full of horses and chariots. Trusting in military power.
- V8 Full of idols. Worshiping created things.
  - Idols. Heb elilim: worthless ones
- HENRY points out how Judah had denied their God:
  - He separated them to Himself but they ran after the nations.
  - He gave them His word but they turned to diviners.
  - He wanted them to trust in Him but they put their trust in wealth and military power and desired them insatiably.
  - He was their God but they filled their land with idols, using the silver and gold that He had given them to make images which they worshiped.
  - He exalted them to be over His creation but they debased themselves by worshiping created things.

They will all be humbled

2:9a So the common man has been bowed down, And the man of importance has been made low...

- Consequence: all Judah humbled
- Contrast v2-4: by an act of grace, Yahweh will exalt Zion to the highest place above the whole world so that she can teach the nations His ways.. But Israel sought to exalt herself through the ways of the world, hence Yahweh will humble her.

The prophet's indignation

2:9b Do not forgive them.

- Cry of anguish
- Not like Jonah who was certain that God would forgive the Ninevites but didn't want Him to (Jon 4:2)
- Isaiah wants his people to be saved but is certain that God cannot forgive them because of His word: Exo 34:5-7 "Yahweh, Yahweh...who will by no means leave the guilty unpunished..."
- Isaiah was forgiven after he acknowledged his guilt before Yahweh. But there is no repentance in Judah.

2:10-21 The day of the LORD.

- Answer to the prophet's cry in v9b

A day of reckoning is coming

2:12 For Yahweh of hosts will have a day of reckoning...

- when men are called to account.

Yahweh will appear and reveal the helplessness of man

2:10 Enter the rock and hide in the dust From the dread of Yahweh and from the splendor of His majesty.

- Yahweh appears and men try to hide
  - As Adam and Eve in the garden (Gen 3:5)
- Dread. Of His judgment.
  - As Isaiah: Woe is me (Is 6:5)
- Splendor of His majesty
  - Men who were seeking to exalt themselves are faced with the One who is truly exalted
  - Job 42:6 "... I reject myself, and I repent in dust and ashes."
    - Job realized his worthlessness

Human pride will be humbled

2:12-17 For Yahweh of hosts will have a day of reckoning Against everyone who is proud and high And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be made low. And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, Against all the oaks of Bashan, Against all the high mountains, Against all the hills that are lifted up, Against every lofty tower, Against every fortified wall, Against all the ships of Tarshish And against all the desirable craft. The loftiness of man will be bowed down, And the men who are high will be made low;

- A day of reckoning
  - When all wrongs will be righted.
- The pride of man will be humbled
  - V12b Against everyone who is proud and high And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be made low.
  - V13-16 All that man has exalted above God:
    - Cedars...oaks...mountains...hills. Majestic things from nature.
    - Lofty tower. Edifices of man.
      - As Gen 11:4 (Tower of Babel):
    - Fortified wall. Military power.
      - Mic 5:11 And it will be in that day," declares Yahweh... I will...pull down all your fortifications.
    - Ships of Tarshish. Commerce.
    - Desirable craft. All things of pleasure.
    - Loftiness of man. The problem is with the people, not with the things.

Yahweh will be exalted

2:17 ...And Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day,

Idols will be cast away

2:18-21 But the idols will completely vanish. Men will go into caves of the rocks And into holes of the ground Before the dread of Yahweh And the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble. In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats Their idols of silver and their idols of gold, Which they made for themselves to worship, In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs Before the dread of Yahweh and the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble. Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; For why should he be esteemed?

- Idols are things outside of God that people worship: depend on for righteousness.
- When God appears, people will realize their uselessness and cast them away.
- They will no longer be able to look to their own images of God to give them righteousness.

Man is nothing

2:22 Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; For why should he be esteemed?

- Whose breath of life is in his nostrils. Mortality.
- Exhortation to Yahweh's people: Compared to the living God man is nothing

### 3:1 - 4:1 Judgment on Zion

- Before the day of the LORD

### 3:1-11 Disintegration of society

Everything necessary for civil society will be removed

3:1-4 For behold, the Lord, Yahweh of hosts, is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah Both supply and support, the whole supply of bread And the whole supply of water, The mighty man and the man of war, The judge and the prophet, The diviner and the elder, The commander of fifty and the highly respected man, The counselor and the wise craftsman, And the experienced enchanter. And I will make young men their princes, And capricious children will rule over them,

- For. Re v22. Consequences of regarding man rather than Yahweh
- Removal of everything necessary for a civil society.
  - Supply and support: masculine + feminine = totality.
- Lists what is removed
  - All necessities (bread & water) v2a
  - All kinds of competence: military, administrative, prophets, elders. V2b-3
  - Mature leadership. V4
- CALVIN notes the comprehensive description of a well-regulated state: necessities, military, governance, prophecy, mechanical arts. All these are from God and their removal is an indication of God's judgment on a nation.
- Haggai 1:5-6 So now, thus says Yahweh of hosts, "Set your heart to consider your ways! "You have sown much, but bring in little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a bag with holes."

Anarchy will result

3:5 And the people will be oppressed, Each one by another, and each one by his neighbor; The youth will overwhelm the elder And the dishonorable against the honorable.

- Oppressive relationships.
- Insolence against elders
- HENRY God removes the spirit of unity and justice from among the people. Also He removes the spirit of the young honoring the old and the people honoring the honorable among them.

No leaders can be found

3:6-7 When a man grasps his brother in his father's house, saying, "You have a cloak, you shall be our ruler, And these ruins will be under your hand," He will protest on that day, saying, "I will not be your healer, For in my house there is neither bread nor cloak; You should not appoint me ruler of the people."

- Society is in ruins: leaderless and ungovernable.
- The people seek a leader but all refuse.
- You have a cloak. The qualification for leadership. Because most are too poor even to have adequate clothes.

Contrast what is intended for Zion.

Two reasons for the judgment

First: Judah has become an enemy to Yahweh

3:8 For Jerusalem has stumbled and Judah has fallen, Because their tongue and their deeds are against Yahweh, To rebel against His glorious presence.

- Has stumbled...has fallen. Down to an earthly level. Re 2:9 humbled...brought low.
- their tongue and their deeds. by words and deeds.
- Against Yahweh. Have become His enemies.
- Rebel against His glorious presence. To His face.
- HENRY God would not hurt them if they did not provoke Him
- Jeremiah 25:6 and do not walk after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will bring no evil against you.'

Second: Judah has brought the evil upon themselves

3:9 The expression of their faces answers against them, And they declare their sin like Sodom; They do not even conceal it. Woe to their soul! For they have dealt out evil on themselves.

- Answers against them. They condemn themselves
  - 2 Pet. 2:14 describing false teachers: They have eyes full of adultery and unceasing sin.
- They declare their sin. Boasting of their sin.
  - Like Lamech in Gen 4:24 If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."
- Woe to them.
  - HENRY "Those that are past shame (we say) are past grace, and then past hope."
- Brought evil upon themselves.
  - Pr 11:3 ...the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.

What they sow they will reap

3:10-11 Say to the righteous that it will go well with them, For they will eat the fruit of their deeds. Woe to the wicked! It will go badly with him, For what he has dealt out will be done to him.

- Both the wicked and the righteous will reap what they sow.
  - Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, this will he also reap.
- CALVIN God is able to distinguish between the good and the bad: wellness for the good, misery for the wicked, so He may reward each appropriately.
- 2 Pet 2:9 speaking of righteous Lot in wicked Sodom: ... then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

Zion's leaders are condemned 3:12-15

Yahweh laments over the condition of His people

3:12 O My people! Their taskmasters are infants, And women rule over them. O My people! Those who guide you lead you astray And swallow up the way of your paths.

- O My people! Sorrow
- My people. 2x. Not disowned.
- Their taskmasters are infants. Weak capricious leaders.
- Women rule over them. Harem.
- CALVIN God's judgment shown in weak leaders and in weak people willing to submit to them.

Yahweh confronts the leaders

3:13-15 Yahweh takes His stand to contend, And stands to judge the peoples. Yahweh enters into judgment with the elders of His people and His princes, "It is you who have consumed the vineyard; The plunder robbed of the afflicted is in your houses. "What do you mean by crushing My people And grinding the face of the afflicted?" Declares Lord Yahweh of hosts.

- Stands to judge. Courtroom scene. Yahweh confronts the elders and princes of his people. They had a special responsibility to care for His people..
- Consumed the vineyard. Plundering the poor. As keepers, they should have tended rather than plundered.
- in your houses. The spoil taken from the poor is a witness against them.
  - As Abel's blood witnessed against Cain in Gen 4:10
- Crushing...grinding. Violent oppression.
- declares the Lord Yahweh of hosts. With the authority of the sovereign Lord.
- HENRY: The LORD Himself was conducting the proceedings so there would be no escape. The charges would be proved by the evidence. The judgment had already begun with weak rulers over them.

Zion's women are condemned 3:16 - 4:1

Their behavior displays their disregard of their God

3:16 Moreover, Yahweh said, "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty And walk with outstretched necks and seductive eyes, And go along with mincing steps And tinkle the bangles on their feet

- Haughty. Much pride and concern about their own looks and getting attention for themselves.
- Outstretched necks...seductive eyes ...mincing...tinkling.
  - Looks and behavior that despise their God.
  - Ps 14:1 The wicked fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
- Like the strange woman in Pro 7:10-18 And behold, a woman comes to meet him, Dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart. She is boisterous and rebellious, Her feet do not dwell at home...she seizes him and kisses him And with a brazen face she says to him: ..."Come, then, let us drink our fill as lovers until morning; Let us delight ourselves with the pleasures of love.
  - Dressed as a prostitute
  - Wily of heart
  - Loud and wayward
  - Bold face
- Contrast 1 Timothy 2:9-10 Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, with modesty and self-restraint, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly clothing, but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women professing godliness.
  - Respectable apparel...modesty...self-control...good works.
  - proper for women who profess godliness. Showing a heart that fears Yahweh.

They will receive an appropriate punishment

3:17-24 Therefore the Lord will smite the skull of the daughters of Zion with scabs, And Yahweh will make their foreheads bare." In that day the Lord will remove the beauty of their anklets, headbands, crescent ornaments, dangling earrings, bracelets, veils, headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, perfume boxes, enchanted charms, finger rings, nose rings, festal robes, outer tunics, cloaks, money purses, hand mirrors, undergarments, turbans, and shawls. Now it will be that instead of sweet perfume there will be the smell of rot; Instead of a belt, a rope; Instead of well-set hair, a plucked-out scalp; Instead of fine clothes, a donning of sackcloth; And branding instead of beauty.

- HENRY: number and variety of ornaments indicates the extent of their pride. The consequences fit the sin. All the finery is to lure men but the men are gone.



The city will be punished

3:25-26 Your men will fall by the sword And your mighty ones in battle. And her gates will lament and mourn, And deserted she will sit on the ground.

- The view widens to the city. "Daughters of Zion" may personify the spirit of the city.
- Sit on the ground. A slave
- Jeremiah describes this in Lam 1:1-5 How lonely sits the city That was great with people! She has become like a widow Who was once great among the nations! ...The roads of Zion are in mourning ... All her gates are desolate...Her adversaries have become her masters; Her enemies are complacent; For Yahweh has caused her grief Because of the greatness of her transgressions...

Judah's culture will break down completely

4:1 And seven women will 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!"

- Cultural chaos and total desperation.
- Most of the men have been killed
- Women take the lead, willing to share the men, willing to provide for themselves.
- Concern is to avoid the reproach of men. Still no fear of Yahweh.

#### Applications

- Forgiveness
  - In 2:9 Isaiah cries out, "Do not forgive them." but in 2:5 he says, "Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of Yahweh." How do we reconcile these two statements?
  - Our culture today is like Judah: full of pagan influences, joining themselves to ungodly causes, full of material riches, depending on their own strength, full of idols. How do we "not forgive" while keeping the great commission: to go and make disciples?
- Fear of man
  - 2:22 says, "Stop regarding man". Jesus said the same thing in Mt 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
    - What are some ways that we fear men today?
    - What is the cure for this?

#### References

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