

Holy Trinity Bible Study - Isaiah Lesson #3

Primary Sources:

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb

Motyer – The Prophecy of ISAIAH, J. Alec Motyer

The Day of the Lord (2:6–22)

Chapter 2

- 6 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.
- 7 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.
- 8 Their land is filled with idols;
they bow down to the work of their hands,
to what their own fingers have made.
- 9 So man is humbled,
and each one is brought low—
do not forgive them!
- 10 Enter into the rock
and hide in the dust
from before the terror of the Lord,
and from the splendor of his majesty.
- 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 in that day.
- 12 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;
- 13 against all the cedars of Lebanon,
lofty and lifted up;
and against all the oaks of Bashan;
- 14 against all the lofty mountains,
and against all the uplifted hills;
- 15 against every high tower,
and against every fortified wall;
- 16 against all the ships of Tarshish,

and against all the beautiful craft.
17 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.
18 And the idols shall utterly pass away.
19 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.

20 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,
21 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.
22 Stop regarding man
in whose nostrils is breath,
for of what account is he?

Reading: **The Message of Isaiah pages 46-48**

Questions to Consider

1. What is the focus of the remainder of chapter 2?

“The judgment aspect of the message is dwelt upon at much greater length.”
Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 46

2. What is the reason for God’s unresponsiveness? (6a)

“At first, somewhat recklessly, Isaiah blames God: You have abandoned your people (6a). But a more sober perspective soon returns. If the LORD has in fact abandoned them it is not without just cause. Zion was once ‘full of justice’ (1:21)”
Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 46

3. What is the judgment on Zion? (6-8)

Judah is full of “divination, unholy alliances, and idolatry (6-8).”
Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 46

4. In what have the people of Judah put their faith? (7)

“The people trust in their wealth and their military might rather than in the living God (7).

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 46

“The irony is savage: people, unable to face life unaided, seek help in earthly resources and human ingenuity. The repetition of hands and fingers focuses attention on the absurdity: the human creating the divine!”

Motyer – The Prophecy of ISAIAH, J. Alec Motyer, page 55

5. What happens when Men depart from the Lord (9)?

“When human beings depart from the Lord – no matter what they depart to – they progressively lose their true humanity. Their dignity, the image of God, is humiliated. This (so is a particle of consequence) is the inevitable outcome. Only in the Lord does humankind remain human.

Motyer – The Prophecy of ISAIAH, J. Alec Motyer, page 56

a. Do the people of Judah deserve forgiveness? (9b)

Verse 9 says “So man is humbled, and each one is brought low— do not forgive them!”

“In do not forgive them this idiom is used negatively. Isaiah is not commanding the Lord not to forgive but saying that forgiveness is unthinkable: ‘and for sure you will not forgive them’.

Motyer – The Prophecy of ISAIAH, J. Alec Motyer, page 56

6. Do we deserve forgiveness?

7. White is at the heart of Judah’s problem? (11)

“The hub of the problem is pride (11), and it is not Judah’s problem only; it is a universal disease, and one to which, alas, none of us is immune.”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 46

8. What is the ultimate outcome of pride?

“Such pride can eventually have only one outcome: a confrontation with God in which the proud will be finally undone.”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 46

9. What is the expectation of the people of Judah?

“Many of Isaiah’s contemporaries looked forward to the day of the LORD as the time when he would step in and destroy Israel’s enemies, just as he had done long ago in the days of Moses and Joshua.”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 47

“...this confident expectation was grounded in arrogance rather than faith, for Israel and Judah had taken on the ways of the surrounding nations and were therefore just as

deserving of judgment. In fact they were more guilty than others because of the greater privileges they had enjoyed.²⁶ This is a most sobering thought, and one that we ourselves would do well to ponder.

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 47

FOR US:

“Interest in the last things – the second coming of Christ and events associated with it – has always been, quite properly, a strong dimension of our evangelical tradition. But our excitement about such things has not always been accompanied by the concern to amend our lives that it should have been. We are in danger of being ‘caught napping’ because we have sat far too light to the solemn warnings that our LORD has given us.”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 47

10. Who is Isaiah’s warning of judgement for?

“Isaiah warns that the day of the LORD will be a day of terrible judgment for Judah in particular (6 – 11) , but also for the whole world (12 - 22) .”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 47

11. On the Day of the Lord, what is the only thing we can trust in?

“Everything in which people have trusted instead of trusting in the living God will be brought down: trees and mountains, fortifications, ships and money (12-17). Even religion will prove worthless on that day if it is man-made (18-20), for man-made religion (represented here by idols) is the supreme expression of human arrogance.”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 47

12. What is significant about the imagery Isaiah uses of caves and crevices. (19,21)

People know that the man made things cannot save them. Only God.

“The idolater is no stronger than his idol and the idol no less helpless than he. Throw away is an expression of the idolater’s disgust and the idol’s lifelessness as a mere disposable object.”

Motyer – The Prophecy of ISAIAH, J. Alec Motyer, page 58

13. What will be revealed on the Day of the Lord?

“There is therefore a sense in which it is right to long for the day of the LORD, because it will mean the final triumph of God and his purposes. What may be apprehended only by faith now – that the LORD is supreme ruler of the world – will then be plain for all to see.”

Webb - The Message of Isaiah, Barry G. Webb, page 48

14. What is the final appeal of Chapter 2? (22)

Put not your trust in the things of man but rather the things of God

“The positive call for commitment to the Lord (5) is balanced by its negative counterpart to cease relying on man and what he can do. Such reliance has been the connecting thread of verses 6–21: reliance on the validity of human insights (6b), human resources (7), human ability to manipulate the divine (8) and human achievement (15–16). It is not man, however, that has to be faced but God and not man’s future but the day of the Lord. It is not man, however, that has to be faced but God and not man’s future but the day of the Lord. Against this neither man nor his gods have any substance. Therefore they should stop trusting in man.²⁹ Who has but a breath in his nostrils is ‘in whose nostrils is breath’. Breath is not a metaphor for transience but points to human life as derived... But the gift of breath implies a giver and points to the wisdom of trusting, rather, the one who is the source of life.

Motyer – The Prophecy of ISAIAH, J. Alec Motyer, page 58