

The Book of the Prophet ISAIAH

Chapter 4

Theme: Though God would judge Judah severely, glory days were coming by His replanting of Israel.

Outline:

- 1 Transitional Warning of Judgment
- 2 Judah the Branch Would Flourish
- 3-4 God Would Sanctify His Elect Remnant
- 5-6 God Would Defend and Protect His Church

Preparatory Reading: Isaiah chapters 1-3 and chapter 63.

Related Links:

- A. *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah (outline)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/isaiah-introduction.pdf>.
- B. *Overview of O.T. Prophets (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/old-testament-prophets-slides.pdf>.
- C. *Chronological Table and Notes for Prophets* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/prophets-table-with-notes.pdf>.
- D. *The Prophets of God (sermon outline)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/prophets-of-god.pdf>.
- E. *Isaiah 3 Notes for Haughty Women* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/isaiah-3.pdf>.
- F. *Proverbs 3:11 about Chastening* ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/03_11.php.
- G. *Proverbs 3:12 about Chastening* ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/03_12.php.
- H. *Repentance Works for God's Mercy* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/repentance.pdf>.
- I. *Much More about the Book of Life* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/book-of-life.pdf>.

Introduction:

- A. The first verse ties chapter 4 tightly to chapter 3; we trust God's providence for this chapter division.
 - 1. It is easy to criticize the chapter and verse divisions at times, but such distrust rejects providence.
 - 2. God has put His divine stamp of approval on the Bible with these divisions, we need not hate them.
- B. This chapter ends a message for Judah and Jerusalem in chapters 2-4 separate from chapters 1 and 5.
- C. What prophetic design – Isaiah opened and closed with future blessings enclosing deserved judgment.
 - 1. This was Judah – the scepter would never depart from it – so there are constant reminders of mercy.
 - 2. Other warnings to other nations did not have such mercy and glorious blessings attached to them.
- D. It helps to see in many or most places that regathered from Babylon to Jerusalem stretches to Messiah.
 - 1. The end of 70 years of punishment in Babylon is also the start of the 70 weeks of years to Christ.
 - 2. Sometimes it is difficult to separate prophetic mingling of natural blessings and spiritual blessings.
 - 3. The rebuilt temple gave immediate comfort to the Jews, but it foretold of Messiah (Haggai 2:6-9).
 - 4. We do not want to separate Isaiah 2:1-5 from 4:2-6 and make them very different from each other.
 - 5. Look past Zerubbabel, or you will be confused by troublous times, Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi, etc.
 - 6. There is no doubt God blessed the regathered Jews in Judah and Jerusalem e.g. Zechariah 4:6-10.
 - 7. There is no doubt God had great intentions by another Zerubbabel e.g. Isaiah 2:1-5; Hag 2:21-23.
- E. Figurative, metaphorical language must be understood or you will be lost. Use Isaiah 13 to learn it.
- F. Prophecy and progressive revelation should emphasize Messiah and spiritual truth, not physical Israel.

1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.

- A. This first verse of chapter four clearly connects to the last verses of chapter three.
1. The reason for the sex ratio reaching 7 females to 1 male is war (Isaiah 3:25-26).
 2. This was part of God's overthrow of Jewish society by removing men (Is 3:1-5).
- B. *In that day* must refer to the prophesied event and time of judgment of chapters 2-3.
1. The phrase, *in that day*, is three times in chapter 2, twice in chapter 3, twice here.
 2. A description of desolate women connects perfectly to the conclusion of chapter 3.
 3. The preceding warning was clear – the men would be killed leaving desolate women.
 4. Slightly prior in chapter 3 is a warning Jerusalem was ruined and had fallen (Is 3:8).
 5. God promised to take away men, and this verse states conditions after it happened.
- C. Birth rates by God's decree usually provide at least one man per woman even with wars.
1. God has ordained that there are usually 106 males born for every 100 females born.
 2. Boys and men take risks, fight wars, and work risky jobs; the population ratio is 102.
- D. However, due to God's decree to remove the men, there would be a surplus of women.
1. Remember God can judge a nation or people any way He chooses, as in this case.
 2. He not only neutered men and overthrew their authority, but he killed them by war.
 3. Jeremiah recorded that Jewish widows were increased above the sea sand (Jer 15:8).
- E. Though polygamy occurred often in the Bible, most women do not like sharing a man.
1. God did not intend polygamy, as creation and revelation prove (Gen 2:18; Mal 2:15).
 2. God did not intend polygamy, but men sought sex inventions (Gen 4:19; Eccl 7:29).
 3. God did not intend polygamy, but he protected wives (Ex 21:10-11; Deut 21:15-17).
 4. God did not intend polygamy, but he did not count it adultery (Gen 20:6; II Sa 12:8).
 5. This was one of David's sins that God overlooked as with other men (Deut 17:17).
 6. If a man thinks polygamy quite a fantasy, he has not properly loved one woman yet.
 7. If a man think polygamy quite a fantasy, he does not trust God or understand love.
- F. However, women in this situation would be different due to necessity and male scarcity.
1. Seven can be used indefinitely in the Bible for many (Lev 26:28; Proverbs 24:16).
 2. Ordinarily, and contrary to modern thought, a single woman is an anomaly and curse.
 3. A virgin was counted a reproach among them – a token of contempt of men and God.
 4. Yet, and never forget the whole counsel of God, Anna remained single to her praise.
 5. To avoid shame in that culture (and most), several or many women would beg a man.
 6. God ordered food and clothes (Ex 21:10-11), but they offered a prenuptial exception.
- G. Note also – these haughty, self-centered, sexually-forward women had little conscience.
1. To be single was humbling, and humility was something they did not have or desire.
 2. Thus, even with judgment around them, they still sought public esteem as a woman.
 3. Not content with one husband before, they were now desperate to share with seven.
 4. They should have repented by fasting and prayer, but they still sought female esteem.

2 In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

- A. When reading Isaiah, especially his judgments, or other prophets, look for hope of glory.
1. He inserts offers of forgiveness, statements of fairness, and promises of hope often.
 2. A Jew might have been discouraged by all the judgment, but future hope was there.
 3. They knew the covenant promises, and these insertions reaffirmed His faithfulness.
- B. *In that day* is not to be understood of one literal, 24-hour period or the day of Isaiah 4:1.
1. To avoid confusion and unnecessary details, first admit this is not a 24-hour period.
 2. Then carefully admit the day of judgment (Is 4:1) is not the day of blessing (Is 4:2).
 3. The day here could only follow the earlier day when their sins were purged (Is 4:4).
- C. What is *the branch of the LORD*? It is beautiful and glorious. It deserves our inspection.
1. It could be Messiah the branch – Jesus our beautiful and glorious Lord and Savior.
 2. Messiah = branch (Isaiah 11:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Ezek 17:21-23; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12).
 3. Messiah = rod, stem, root, plant (Isaiah 11:1,10; 53:2; Ezekiel 34:29; Luke 2:4; Romans 1:3; 15:12; II Timothy 2:8; Revelation 5:5; 22:16).
 4. This is an easy solution based on convenience, cross-references, and sound of words.
- D. What is *the branch of the LORD*? It is beautiful and glorious. It deserves our inspection.
1. It could be the church or nation of Judah's elect restored to Jerusalem after Babylon.
 2. Branch = plant or vineyard of His people and kingdom (Is 60:21; 27:6; 61:3; 5:1-7).
 3. We choose this *branch* to fit the immediate parallel of *fruit of the earth*, like a plant.
 4. We choose this *branch* to fit the immediate reference to *those that escaped* Babylon.
 5. We choose this *branch* to fit the following context of purified people by judgment.
 6. We choose this *branch* for daughters of Zion (Is 3:16), blood of Judah (Is 1:15; 4:4).
 7. We choose this *branch* since there is no single male named or identified in context.
 8. We choose this *branch* since it fits what follows – the vineyard of Judah (Is 5:1-7).
 9. We choose this *branch* of beauty and glory as opposite Judah's ruin and fall (Is 3:8).
 10. Context must always be far more important than convenience or cross-references.
- E. God would purify His people in Babylon and bring back a scion branch to plant a nation.
1. It would be beautiful and glorious compared to the rebellious idolaters taken captive.
 2. The nearby preceding context described burning replacing all their beauty (Is 3:24).
 3. The nearby following context describes purification by the spirit of burning (Is 4:4).
 4. The overall condition and favor of Judah and Jerusalem would be greatly improved.
 5. The drastic change in God's favor is elsewhere (Is 27:1-6; 60:18-22; 30:18-26; 45:8).
- F. *Fruit of the earth* should be understood as an exact parallelism to *branch of the LORD*.
1. Both describe the same thing – the vineyard of His elect Judah back from Babylon.
 2. The purified remnant of Jews that would escape Babylon would enjoy its prosperity.
 3. God raised up His shepherd Cyrus to start it, and Zerubbabel and others finished it.

- G. It helps to see in many or most places that regathered to Jerusalem stretches to Messiah.
1. The end of 70 years of punishment is also the start of the 70 weeks of years to Christ.
 2. Sometimes it is difficult to separate God's natural blessings from spiritual blessings.
 3. The rebuilt temple gave immediate comfort, but it foretold Messiah (Haggai 2:6-9).
 4. We do not want to separate Isaiah 2:1-5 from 4:2-6 and make them very different.
 5. Look past Zerubbabel, for there were troublous times, Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi, etc.
 6. There is no doubt God blessed the regathered Jews in Judah e.g. Zechariah 4:6-10.
 7. There is no doubt God had plans by another Zerubbabel e.g. Is 2:1-5; Hag 2:21-23.
 8. The branch, plant, vineyard here would be given to Gentiles (Is 2:2; Matt 21:40-46).

***** *God Would Sanctify His Elect Remnant – Verse 3-4* *****

3 And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:

- A. The restored city would be unlike the city of evil that God had destroyed by Chaldeans.
1. This is the restored city by what went before about *escaping from* judgment (Is 4:2).
 2. This is the restored city by *left, remaineth, and written among the living* in Jerusalem.
- B. This would occur when God was done purging His people by judgment and His Spirit.
1. Nonrestrictive phrases may be located anywhere, and verse four could be after *pass*.
 2. How would they be called holy? By washing and purging of judgment and burning.
- C. Again, and the repetition is not frivolous or vain, but do not neglect Messiah's kingdom.
1. There is in Isaiah's inspired eye (and should be in ours) more than just Zerubbabel.
 2. The verse is true to some degree about the returnees from Babylon, but more to us.
 3. The verse should include elect in Jerusalem saved in Judea Petra and by a shortening.
 4. We make this leap easily, for Gentiles and Paul require it (Is 2:1-5; Heb 12:22-24).
 5. Further, the context here of the truly holy requires more than regathered reprobates.
 6. The number/names of the truest objects of this passage are those written in heaven.
 7. The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi indicate problems.
- D. Written among the living in Jerusalem starts at Zerubbabel and goes to the book of life.
1. It was true that the Jews kept catalogs of persons by family, tribe, and so forth, etc.
 2. But such a list of names is not the same with being holy, which reduces the number.
 3. Not all that traveled back to Jerusalem were elect, regenerated, holy, or converted.
 4. Ezra and Nehemiah would be angry with many of them for their spirits and lives.
 5. Malachi's final assessment of the nation is the opposite of holy on many levels.
 6. Mt. Sion and heavenly Jerusalem Paul wrote of had names written (Heb 12:22-24).
 7. *For much more about the Book of Life ...* <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/book-of-life.pdf>.
- E. This would occur when God was done purging His people by judgment and His Spirit.
1. Holy = righteous, as Isaiah also described His people in a similar passage (Is 60:21).
 2. Holy people is totally opposite the character of the Jews (Is 1:2-24; 2:6-22; 3:1-26).

3. God has a holy people that He makes holy legally by Christ and vitally by the Spirit.
 4. He then uses a variety of means to convert them, which results in practical holiness.
- F. We must seek quality over quantity, those written in God's book rather than our book.

4 When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

- A. Timing here – *when* – means it was prerequisite to being the holy of Jerusalem (Is 4:3).
- B. God's dealings with His children (not enemies here) are profoundly wonderful to know.
- C. The Lord (Adonai, not Jehovah) washed away filth and purged away blood from Judah.
 1. This washing and purging are practical by timing, description, and means of them.
 2. God's cleansing work of His elect remnant was implied early on (Isaiah 1:9,25-27).
 3. The *timing* is the captivity in Babylon and then escape from it to Judah (Isaiah 4:2).
 4. The *description* is filth of the women (Is 3:16-26) and murder of rulers (Is 1:15,21).
 5. The *means* is by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, not by Messiah.
- D. What is the washing and purging by *the spirit of judgment*? It is Spirit use of chastening.
 1. It is God's righteous judgment – for the good of souls – administered by the Spirit.
 2. If the lowercase *spirit* bothers you, read the Bible (Isaiah 11:1-2; 30:1; 34:15-16; 40:7; 42:1; 44:3; 59:21; Gen 6:3; Neh 9:30; Ps 51:11; Joel 2:28 cp Acts 2:17; etc.).
 3. When God chastens His people, it gives holiness and righteousness (Heb 12:10-11).
 4. There is nothing like rape by Babylonians and a long trek to humble haughty women.
- E. What is the washing and purging by *the spirit of burning*? It is Spirit chastening by fire.
 1. It is God's righteous burning – for the good of souls – administered by the Spirit.
 2. We want His refining fires to burn up junk in sinful lives (Mal 3:1-5; Zech 13:9).
 3. God and precious metals are refined by fire for purity (I Peter 1:7; I Cor 3:13-15).
 4. The Holy Spirit has never administered too much, and He guides refining perfectly.
- F. For those that resist the Holy Ghost, He can turn to be an enemy of sorts (Isaiah 63:10).

***** *God Will Defend and Protect His Church – Verse 5-6* *****

5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.

- A. We understand the context to set this scene as God's favor on those back from Babylon.
 1. These elect and holy children of God are described as *them that are escaped* (Is 4:2).
 2. The *beautiful and glorious replanting* of Israel was *after purging* (Is 4:2-4; 1:25-27).
 3. Do not be too literal to miss the view extending to the N.T. kingdom (Isaiah 2:1-5).
 4. The end of 70 years of punishment is also the start of the 70 weeks of years to Christ.

5. God's prophets did not want the Jews content without seeing Messiah (Hag 2:6-9).
6. Paul taught spiritual Zion and heavenly Jerusalem as Israel's goals (Heb 12:22-24).
7. Look past Zerubbabel, for there were troublous times, Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi, etc.
- B. When Jehovah creates, the result is beautiful, glorious, excellent, and comely (Is 4:2).
 1. While true of creation in Genesis 1-2, His spiritual creation is even better (Eph 2:10).
 2. Compare a similar description of creating Jerusalem in a new way (Isaiah 65:17-25).
- C. Those described here are God's elect, purged of sin, and holy before Him (Is 4:2-4).
 1. He would protect them in their private lives, called here their *every dwelling place*.
 2. He would protect them in their public lives, called here their *assemblies*.
- D. The *cloud and smoke by day* and *flaming fire by night* brought vivid memories to Jews.
 1. He showed His glory to His church after Egypt (Ex 13:21-22; 14:19-20; 40:34-38).
 2. This perpetual presence of God for His church was highly regarded (Num 9:15-22).
 3. It was recalled in Israel 550 years later (Ps 78:14) and 1100 years later (Neh 9:12).
 4. It was used by other prophets for defending the same restored church (Zech 2:5).
- E. All the glory (beauty, excellent, comely) described in this context included His defense.
 1. God would not only make the replanted branch of Israel glorious, but perfectly safe.
 2. Glory brings with it a greater attraction for violence by wicked men, but not here.
- F. Isaiah made similar comparisons to restored Jerusalem elsewhere (Is 27:1-6; 60:18-22).
- G. God has preserved His elect and His church; He has not and will not lose one of either.
 1. Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail against His church (Matt 16:13-18).
 2. Jesus sitting in heaven preserved His church and saints from Rome (Rev 12:10-17).
- H. Do you see the perfect safety we have in Jesus from harm (Jn 10:27-30; Rom 8:28-39)?
- I. Do you appreciate His pavilion in time of trouble and His nearby angel (Ps 27:5; 34:7)?

6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

- A. We understand the context to set this scene as God's favor on those back from Babylon.
 1. These elect and holy children of God are described as *them that are escaped* (Is 4:2).
 2. The *beautiful and glorious replanting* of Israel was *after purging* (Is 4:2-4; 1:25-27).
- B. Due to the context of verse 5, we want to see this promise for both His church and saints.
 1. The Spirit gave us *every dwelling place* and *her assemblies*, which allows latitude.
 2. We can see and trust in His shelter for His churches and individual believers as well.
 3. Jesus saved His churches and children from pagan and papal Rome (Rev 12:10-17).
 4. For those objectors that ask about martyrs – they were given the highest opportunity!
- C. Tabernacle = Tent = Pavilion = shelter and safety from heat, enemies, storms, and rain.
 1. Isaiah used similar language elsewhere for our comparison to it here (Isaiah 25:4-5).
 2. There are slighter problems in life, which we may call heat, but a tent provides shade.
 3. There are enemies in life, when we will need a place to hide; a tent provides refuge.
 4. There are greater, sudden problems in life, which are storms, but a tent is a covert.
 5. There are greater, gradual problems in life, which is like rain, but a tent is a covert.

- D. Learn how God has a pavilion with a secret place to hide those in any trouble (Ps 27:5).
1. David knew that a time of trouble justified a fabulous metaphor about a tabernacle.
 2. A pavilion is a king's tent or other large and stately tent rising above all the others.
 3. Prudent men hide themselves from trouble (Pr 22:3), but our prudent God hides us.
 4. The secret of His tabernacle, tent, or pavilion is His private place for intimate care.
 5. He not only protects from threats, He also establishes our lives on a solid foundation.
- E. Learn how God is both sun and shield, grace and glory, for the righteous (Ps 84:10-12).
1. David knew a lowly doorkeeper in God's tabernacle was better than any other tent.
 2. Because God Jehovah is a sun (provides life/light) and shield (defends from danger).
 3. Because God Jehovah will give you grace (lovingkindness) and glory (promotion).
 4. No matter your need, God surely can and always will provide for the very obedient.
 5. If you trust in God – this God Jehovah of heaven's armies – you will be most blessed.