



Isaiah 3-4

Tape #7243
Isaiah 3-4
By Chuck Smith

The duty of the prophet was to give to the nation the warnings from God, concerning the impending judgments that would come upon that nation that would forsake the Lord, and the ways of the Lord. During the time of Isaiah's prophesies, there began that decline of the nation of Judah, that was to ultimately bring the death of the nation, their being carried away into captivity to Babylon. It wasn't to happen during Isaiah's lifetime but the seeds were to be planted. It was gradually going down. There would be moments when it would level off, even come up a bit under Hezekiah's reign, things improved. But upon the death of Hezekiah, his son Manasseh took the nation to its deepest depths of depravity.

So Isaiah is prophesying concerning the judgments that were coming upon the nation during the time that Ahaz was the king in chapter three, who was a very wicked king, a very poor leader. It was through him, and during the time of his reign that they were besieged by their enemies, 200,000 of them were carried away captive into Israel, and the northern kingdom. They began to experience a real drought of strong leadership. So he begins chapter three by declaring...

For, behold, the Lord, [There is Adonai, Lord as a title.] the Lord of hosts (3:1),

There is Yahweh, the name of God. So Yahweh is Lord, He's the Adonai. But His name is Yahweh. So, "Behold, the Adonai, Yahweh of hosts"...

doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff (3:1),

Now the stay and the staff are the same Hebrew word, only one is in the feminine, and the other is in the masculine, and they are translated differently just to indicate that there is a slight difference between the feminine and masculine gender. But the word is supply, and in using both masculine and feminine gender, it is speaking of the complete supply. Its sort of an emphasis. So the Lord is gonna take away from Jerusalem, and Judah their whole supply of...

bread, and their whole supply of water (3:1).

There will come a drought. The drought will lead to the slack in the production, or in the growing of their wheat, and thus there's to be a shortage of water, which will bring upon the shortage of bread. But not only will there be the shortage of bread and water, the basic staple of life, but mighty men, or...

The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, the prophet, the wise man, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, the honourable man, the counsellors, the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator (3:3).

The craftsman actually, the cunning craftsman, and the eloquent orator. Now God is speaking of this gap that's gonna take place in leadership. The real lack of good, strong leadership. The mighty man, the powerful leader, the man of war, the judge, the prophet, the prudent, the ancient, or the wise and the ancient, and even there will not be a man who is able to command fifty men. The captain of fifty would be an army captain, who had a platoon under him, and even that man will be taken away. A man who's capable of leading fifty.

And I will give instead [he said] children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them (3:4).

The idea is that they will be ruled over by inexperienced novices. Men who know nothing about real leadership.

And the people will be oppressed (3:5), [That is always the case when you have poor leadership, it brings, and they bring oppression upon the people. Because, they begin to use their power for their own benefit, and for their own personal gain. When a person has a position of power, but he perverts that to his own personal gain, then you have oppression by the people who are being ruled. They are being oppressed. So, "the people will be oppressed".

every one by another, every one by his neighbour: the child will behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable (3:5).

"You're gonna have a problem with juvenile delinquency, you're gonna have a problem with the children, you're gonna be having a problem with the wicked people, because they're gonna rise up against

the honourable.”, or the honest people. So, a condition of anarchy is going to sort of take over. There will be a lot of lawlessness. There will be a disregard for the laws, and a, a chaos that always results from anarchy. The streets will not be safe. There will be those who will prowl the streets, making it unsafe for others. There will be such a leadership gap that they’ll be looking for anyone to stand up, and to lead them against the evil.

A man will take hold of his brother of his own house, and of his father, and he’ll say, You have clothing, you be our ruler, and you take charge in trying to stem the ruin of the land: And in that day shall he swear, saying, [I am not] I will not be a healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: don’t make me a ruler of the people (3:6-7).

No one wants to take responsibility at this point. Things are gonna be so bad that no one is gonna want to take the responsibility for what is happening, and what is going to happen. This seems to be much the condition that we’re facing right now, at the present time in the United States, as they know that something has to be done. We have come to the place of complete desperation as far as government is concerned. Something has to be done concerning this humongous national debt. We cannot any longer, continue this deficit spending by the government. It’s got to come to a stop, and they realize that. They also realize that the only way that they can cut the deficit spending is to cut out some of these programs of government spending on nonessential things, and perhaps some essential things, but there has to be a real cut in our spending. Plus, we’re going to have to increase taxes.

Now, nobody wants to be responsible for cutting, and nobody wants to be responsible for the increasing of taxes. The democrats are insisting on all of these welfare spending programs, they’re unwilling to cut those. But they are also unwilling to take the responsibility for the raising of taxes. Of course, Bush, when he was elected president said, and promised, he would not raise our taxes. When he was challenged on that, and they said, “You know, you can’t go on like this. You’ve got to do something about the deficit spending!”, he said, “Read my lips! There will be no increase in taxes!”

But one thing about being a politician, promises are one thing in a campaign to get votes, but they don’t want to be responsible. They don’t want the people to say, “Look, under republican president, the taxes were increased.” Yet, it has, it has become a necessity for survival of the government. No one wants to be responsible, so there’s a new cut, so that we can say, “Look the greedy republicans have cut the welfare for you old people! They won’t give you the Medicare and all, anymore!” And, “You make the cuts!”, “No! You make the cuts!” “You increase the taxes!”, “No you increase the taxes!” So no one wants to take responsibility for the cuts, or no one wants to take responsibility for the tax increase.

So this was the kind of thing that was happening in Israel at this time, as they were going down the tubes. No one wanted to take responsibility for leadership. “Don’t lay that on me! I’m not going to, I don’t want the responsibility of this! I don’t want to take the responsibility of, of making those necessary kind of decisions that are going to create unpopularity.” So, as they’re trying to get anybody to step forward, grabbing his brother and saying, “Look you’ve got clothing and all in your house. You become our leader!” He said, “No way! I’ll not be a healer, for in my house I have neither bread nor clothing. Don’t make me a ruler over the people!”

Now, Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen (3:8):

There is really national calamity and disorder. The Lord tells us why Jerusalem is ruined, and why Judah is fallen, because they’re against the Lord.

We read in the scriptures that, “righteousness exalted a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”. Now that’s sort of a grid that you can put over history, or any period of history. You can see that in nations where there is righteousness, where there are moral values, where there is an honoring of God, that nation is exalted. Where a society is a godless society, you will find that the nation is weak, it’s a reproach. Sin is a reproach to any people.

So the nation of Judah, which was God’s people, they were to be God’s witness upon the earth. They were to be a light unto the Gentiles. To show the Gentiles the benefits that will accrue to a nation that has God at the center of national life. A nation that will honor God, and worship God, will be blessed of God, and that was to be the beacon to the world of a nation honoring God. But they had turned from God. Thus they became the example of what happens to a nation that turns its back upon God, and tries to rule God out

of its national life.

In the beginning of the nation, when God brought them out of Egypt, they were so excited about God! He was at the heart and the center of the national life. The tabernacle that was built was put in the center of the camp, and the twelve tribes were encamped all around about the tabernacle. But the tabernacle was in the center of the camp, and all of the openings of their tents was towards the center of the camp, so that when they walk out of the tent in the morning, they would see the cloud above the tabernacle, and they would be conscious of the fact that God was in the center of the nation.

They were excited about what God was doing for them. They were excited about the establishing of a nation under God! They were excited about the land that God had promised to them, that He was taking them, that they might inherit this land that He had promised unto Abraham. It was a nation that was focused and centered in God. God said that, "You wrote upon your walls, and you wrote upon your tents, and you've hung little things on the camels that said, 'Holiness Unto the Lord!', and you were excited about worshipping God, and serving God!"

But as they were established in the land, as they began to prosper in the land, a land that was a fertile land, a land that valleys were filled with grain, the mountains with trees. A land that was well watered, flowing with milk and honey. Producing abundantly, as they began to be prosperous in the land, they began to lust after other things. They began to turn to other gods, and they forsook the true and the living God. They began to worship the other gods. The gods of sensual pleasure, the gods of intellectual pursuit, the gods of power and possession, and thus they began to speak against God.

their tongues and their doings are against Yahweh (3:8),

First of all, their tongues. They began to speak against God, and soon it was followed by their actions. They, in their actions, turned against God.

Again I would recommend to you a book, "The Light and the Glory", in which you get a true perspective of the beginning of our nation. The first attempts at colonization of the world were utter failures. Because those who came over to colonize had come over for wealth, and for riches. To sort of rape this new land, and it entered, it ended disastrously.

It was not until the pilgrims came over with a totally different motivation. They were motivated to establish a nation under God, in which they would be granted that total freedom and liberty of worshipping God, after the dictates of their own conscience, and not after the dictates of a government. They did not want a government church, or a government regulated church. They wanted to worship God as we worship Him, in freedom and in truth, without the government dictating to them which church they should go to. But their basic desire was to get a place where they could worship God freely. That was their motive of establishing the colonies.

Thus in the framing of the constitution, that was one of the paramount issues, in establishing this government. That they establish it in such a way, that always would the religious freedoms be exercised in the ability to worship God after their own heart, and after their own conscience.

Now, they weren't seeking to establish the freedom to smoke marijuana as a religious ritual, or to chew peyote beans or whatever, I mean, that isn't the kind of religious freedom that they were seeking.

You see, in England they were burned at the stake, because they dared to speak out against the abuses in the church, because they dared to make a translation of the bible into English. Because they dared to speak forth the truth, they were persecuted, they were put to death, they were burned at the stake. Thus they wanted to establish a nation where you could speak the truth without suffering from it. Thus, the freedom of speech. But they weren't thinking of using every kind of foul, filthy word. That was not at all the idea! That wasn't the intention of creating a freedom for a man to use all kinds of filthy, blasphemous language! That wasn't in their mind or heart at all when they established that bill of rights, and established the freedom of speech. It was the freedom to speak out against the evils of our society! To speak the truth of God, that's the freedom of speech that they were seeking to protect.

They established Thanksgiving day as a religious holiday. A day to give thanks to God for the way He provided, and preserved them. They sort of inculcated the thoughts and the ideas of God, within the basic framework of the constitution. The preamble to the constitution, tells their real purpose and desire.

They wanted it to be a nation that would be a witness and a light to the world. As Israel was to be. So that as the world saw the blessing, and the strength, and the power, they would recognize how a nation who has God at the center of the national life, is a blessed nation, is a prosperous nation, is a strong nation.

In the first public schools in the United States, the Bible was used as a text book. Just this past week, a judge has ruled that a Florida teacher can no longer read the scriptures, it is a violation of our constitutional law, according to the interpretation of this judge. He doesn't know his American history. It's a perverse kind of an interpretation of the constitution. Otherwise, how is it that in the early public schools, they used the bible almost exclusively as their text book.

Our first major colleges were established by the church, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, even USC was established by the Methodists, as places where young people can go, and learn about God. But oh my, how far we have fallen, speaking against God, and then doing things against the Lord to provoke Him. The eyes of His glory. God said...

the shew of their countenance does witness against them (3:9);

Sin leaves its mark upon a person's face. You remember when Cain killed his brother Abel, and God brought him into judgment for it. God said, "I will put a mark on your face." It left its mark. Sin always leaves its mark. Isn't it beautiful to look at a little baby, a little child, and see the face that is unmarked by sin? What's more beautiful than a child's face? What's more innocent, and beautiful than looking in the face of a little child? I love it! I just love it. I'm captivated by it. But unfortunately, by the time they reach their teenage years, if they are living a life of sin, it begins to leave its mark. You can watch the young people as they walk by, and you can pick out those that are living a pure, holy life, and you can pick out those that begin to have a froward look, as sin begins to leave its mark upon them.

The older you get, the more distinguished those marks become. You can look in the face of a derelict, and no one has to say, "He's a derelict." He doesn't have to hang a sign around him that says, "I'm a derelict." You can see it in their face. Sin leaves its mark. "You can be sure your sin will find you out." It will find you out in your countenance. God says that, "Their countenance, the show of their countenance does witness against them."

and they declare their sin as Sodom, and they hide it not (3:9).

They used to say that they were closet homosexuals. That is, they were rightfully embarrassed and ashamed by that kind of activity, and thus they tried to hide it. Now they are seeking to display it. Proudly, arrogantly, declaring it, parading down the streets, hanging up signs, demonstrating, advocating! What used to be a shame, hidden in the closet, is now done in open.

It used to be for a woman to drink was considered so socially unacceptable that if they drank, they would only drink within the privacy of their homes. Closet drinkers. But that has all changed. It's become the glamorous thing. Hollywood has helped to make it so.

The same was true of a woman smoking a cigarette. It used to be only a, only the prostitutes, and the, the totally loose women would smoke in public. Then Hollywood came along and made it a very glamorous thing. Smoking by women became an open kind of a thing.

But that's what God is talking about. Rather than being embarrassed or ashamed because of their sin, they began to flaunt their sin before others. As Sodom, they didn't seek to hide it. The men of Sodom were beating on the door of Lot's house, and saying, "Send out those two men that came into your house that we might sodomize them!" The whole city, the men of the city were there gathered at Lot's door! They were brazen, they were open! They were members of "Act Out"! They were going to forcibly sodomize the angels of God that had come to judge the city, and to bring God's judgment upon it. So God said...

Woe unto their soul for they have rewarded evil unto themselves (3:9).

That is, they are bringing upon themselves, the reward of evil. What is the reward of evil? Death. The wages of sin is death. They're bringing destruction upon themselves. Sin always destroys. There is, in sin, a destructive nature.

Now God doesn't want you to destroy yourself. So those things that God said you should not do, are things that if you do them, they will destroy you. They will destroy your health, they will destroy your relationships, they can destroy your family, they can destroy your marriage, and they can destroy you

physically. So God forbid a person to do those things that are destructive. People say, "Oh the law of God, man that's so heavy, I can't handle that!", well, God was only seeking to protect you. God, in His love laid down the rules for a good, healthy life.

God, in creating the human body understood the characteristics of the human body. In creating the immune system in the human body, He understood completely the immune system that he had created! Marvelously designed the immune system so that your body is able to identify a foreign protein that's introduced. Your body is able to identify foreign objects, and it isolates them, and it analyzes them, and it builds up an immunity to them. It's a marvelous mechanism of the human body, this immune system, and your body's ability to create immunities against the foreign proteins that are introduced. God created it, but God in creating it, knew that there were limitations to the immune system's ability to function.

When the male sperm is introduced into the body, it is a foreign protein, and the body creates an immunity to it. Now within a monogamous marriage, your body creates the immunities to each other, so that there is no real danger from the sex act. But, if you're involved as homosexuals often are, with multiple partners in an evening, night after night, all of this foreign protein that is being introduced into the body, the immune system, because all of it is different in its makeup, the immune system has to start building up defenses against all of it. Each one separately.

What happens is that you overwork the immune system, the immune system begins to break down, and that's exactly what AIDS is, the breakdown of the immunal system of the body. It is the natural consequence of that kind of activity, and God knew it, and that's why God said you shouldn't do it. It was to preserve you. When God made us with the capacities of reproduction, He intended that these be used for the purpose of the replenishing of the earth, or the perpetuation of the human race. But we have changed the natural use of the body into unnatural uses, and as Paul said, you begin to suffer the consequences of those actions. You receive the reward, which is meet, or which is inevitable to those actions. So here, same thing is being declared.

They are receiving the reward of the evil that they have committed themselves (3:9).

Evil has its own consequences. Now to this nation, that is faced with this horrible dilemma, to this nation that is about as far down as you can go. There are still within the nation, those who are hurt, upset by what's going on. They are walking in fellowship with God, and to look around and see all of the filth, and all of the defilement, they're just, they're ripped up inside. Hearing the news of what's going on, it just is ripping them up. It's like they're standing alone against the whole tide of evil. Elijah thought, "I'm the only one left that's really interested in spiritual things." As he had fled from that wicked queen Jezebel, and God said to him as he was hiding in a cave, "What are you doing here?" He said, "Lord, they have killed all of your prophets, and I'm the only one that is left! And they're out to kill me! Lord, you're just about out of prophets! I'm the last one, and they're after me!" The Lord said, "I have reserved unto me seven thousand in Israel, who have not bowed their knees to Baal."

God had His remnant. God always has His remnant, those who in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, are seeking to serve the Lord, and to live a righteous life. Their hearts are vexed by what's going on in the world around them, and so God said to Isaiah...

Say to the righteous, it will be well with him (3:10):

God's judgment is gonna fall. The nation's gonna go down, they're gonna be carried away captive by their enemies. "But to the righteous, just say, 'It will be well with them', I will take care of them. I will watch over them. I will preserve them. Because they have held to me, and held to my name, I will hold them in the hour of calamity that is coming." "Say to the righteous, it will be well with him."

for they shall eat the fruit of their doings (3:10).

The fruit of righteousness in a person's life. The fruit of it is good, it's sweet. To live a righteous life produces great fruit, pleasant fruit. It has its rewards. Living a good life has its rewards. The fruit of a good life. And God said, "Say to the righteous, 'You'll partake of the fruit of a righteous life'." If you decide to live a righteous life, live for Jesus Christ. Give your life to Him, follow after Him. The fruit of it will be good, it will be pleasant. It will be joyful!

As I go with my wife to visit our grandchildren, who have to be the delight of our lives, they're the

greatest thing that God has ever invented that I have known of, so far. Absolutely glorious! As we go to visit them, and as we share together the joy of taking them to Toys-R-Us, or Chuck "E" Cheese's, and as we just have that sheer delight of having them with us, and taking them different places, my heart goes out to those broken homes, where you cannot share that same kind of joy mutually, with the children. If I had another wife who was not the real grandmother, she would be so upset every time I'd say, "Let's go see the grandkids!", "Why do you want to go down there?" You know, and it'd be, it would be pressure, it'd be a difficult thing, and that would be hard. But because they are our grandchildren, when I say, "Let's go see the grandkids!", she'll say, "I'll be ready in ten minutes!" That's something for my wife! But, oh the rewards of righteousness!

But woe [He said] to the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands will be given to him (3:11).

The, the reward of the evil that he has done will be given unto him. So, "Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." If you sow to the flesh, of the flesh, you're gonna reap corruption, if you sow to the Spirit, then of the Spirit, you're gonna reap life everlasting. The mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life, and peace, and joy. "Say to the righteous, 'It's going to be well with you.' You're going to enjoy the fruit of righteous life. Say to the wicked, 'Woe because you're gonna reap the rewards of wickedness'." But God goes on to say...

As for my people (3:12),

And the interesting thing, God is still calling them His people, though they have turned so far from Him. God just has a hard time releasing a person. God's love is so great, He is very reluctant to let them go, and even in this condition, says, "My people". He said...

children are their oppressors, women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee to cause thee to err, and to destroy the way of your paths. The Lord stands up to plead, and the Lord stands up to judge (3:12-13).

"There are men that are leading you astray. They are leading you into the paths of wickedness!" I look today at, at the forces, as those people that have been put on pedestals, the, the stars, the rock stars and all, who lead the people to err. To destroy the way of your righteous path. Perhaps many of you got a letter from Burt Lancaster this last week, pleading for funds for the ACLU, touting them as the only organization in the United States, that is seeking to watch over our freedoms, to guarantee our freedoms. Watching over to guarantee the freedom to have all kinds of filth, and pornography, flooding the marketplace. Where's Joe McCarthy when we need him? He said that Hollywood was filled with communists, and people who are out to pervert our nation. They made fun of him, they drove him to an early grave. But there was a lot of truth in what he was declaring. These are the people that are molding the morays for the future. These rock groups that are advocating all of the violence, all of the sex, the incestuous relationships, and these things that, don't get me on that!

The Lord stands up to plead. Here's God pleading with the people even in this condition. But if they do not hearken to the pleading, then He turns Judge.

And the Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard (3:14);

The vineyard is God's people over in chapter five, verse seven, "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant, and He looked for judgment, but behold, there was oppression. And He looked for righteousness, but there was only a cry because of the unrighteousness." So here were the leaders, they ate up the people, they took advantage, and...

the spoil of the poor is in your houses (3:14).

They, they use their, their offices to enrich themselves. The oppressive taxes, they took from the poor to enrich themselves, and so, "the spoil of the poor is in your houses".

What do you mean by beating my people to pieces, and grinding the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts (3:15)?

"What do you mean by this, this oppressive ruling? Beating down the people, grinding the faces of the poor." Now the Lord speaks against the daughters of Zion.

You know, whether or not some of these social scientists want to admit to it, there is a difference between men and women. If you don't know the difference, I feel sorry for you! There's a difference in our make up. Boys are naturally drawn to mechanical things, and little girls are drawn to dolls. I would feel, I would be worried if my little grandsons were wanting dolls when we go to Toys-R-Us. They always go to one department, and my granddaughters go to the other department. My granddaughters go where all the dolls are, and my grandsons go where all the mechanical things are, the guns, and the, you know, these mechanical things. Because there's a difference, there's a difference.

For the most part, a man's nature is much coarser than that of a woman. Rugged, coarse, tough, just man's nature. So we move in a rather narrow spectrum. We can be up, we can be down, but we're not very up, and we're not very down. We sort of move in a narrow spectrum, we're coarse.

Now on the other hand, a woman has a very fine emotional temperament, much finer than a man. Much more emotional, lives more in the realm of emotion. She is capable of emotional highs that are much higher than that of a man. But because of the broader spectrum, when she's down, she can be much lower than a man. So she moves in this higher spectrum of highs and lows, that is broader than the man.

My wife is capable of much broader spectrum of emotions than I am. My kids never like to tell me something, because I don't react. They like to tell her. They get a reaction. I say, "Oh that's nice." She says, "Oh, oh, oh really? That's wonderful!!" Just a difference. But when she gets down, she can get way down, I have to lift her up.

Now because of this, when women become immoral, they really sort of set the moral standards. A man is always, it seems, gonna be pushing in the realm of sex. It's up to the woman to establish the lines. To draw the lines, and to create the standards, hold the lines, against this constant pressure of a man. But when a woman becomes immoral, loose, then they are capable of lower degradation. When that happens, the nation is really down the tubes. So God addresses...

The daughters of Zion who became immoral who walked, [He said] they were haughty, and they walked with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, [They were walking in as sexy a way as they could.] and making a tinkling [They had the bracelets.] around their feet. [Seeking to draw attention to their ankles, and their legs.] Therefore the Lord [He said] will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will uncover their secret parts (3:16-17).

Actually what happened is that when they were taken captive, they were stripped of their clothing, and they were led away naked. Shameful, embarrassing thing.

In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, their earrings, the necklaces, or their bracelets with the crescents, [Little crescent ornaments.] The chains, and the bracelets, and the necklaces, The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, the headbands, the tablets, and the earrings, The rings, and the nose jewels, Their changeable suits of apparel, their mantles, and wimples, and their crisping pins, Their mirrors, and their fine linens, their hoods, and their veils. And it shall come to pass, that instead of a sweet smell [the perfumes] there will be a stink; instead of a girdle, there will be a rope; [The clothes will not be the fancy girdles, but they'll tie you around with ropes.] and instead of well set hair there will be baldness; and instead of a stomacher the girding of sackcloth; and the burning instead of beauty (3:18-24).

Judgment will fall upon the women. But also...

Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate and sit on the ground (3:26).

Judah is going to fall.

Chapter 4

And in that day [Because so many men have been killed in war] seven women will take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, we will wear our own apparel, only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach (4:1).

In that culture it was a reproach for a woman not to bear children. They looked upon the basic purpose of a woman as to bear children, and not to be able to bear children was considered a reproach. So, "Seven

women would take hold of one man, and say, We'll eat our own bread and all, but we want children, take away our reproach!" Horrible days was to come.

Now in verse two of chapter four, he goes from this day of God's judgment and this day of calamity, to another day. A day yet future. Suddenly the whole scene shifts to another day. A marvelous day. A day that lies out in the future, a day of hope, a day of blessing, a day of glory.

Now this was always the promise of the scriptures. There is to be that ultimate glory for the people of God, for the righteous. God has prepared a glorious day, in which the earth will be transformed, in which righteousness shall cover the earth, as waters cover the sea. A day in when the Lord Himself shall reign, and the glory of God will cover the earth. But before that the day of judgment is coming. The judgment of God against the unrighteousness, and against sin. But they never spoke of those horrible days of judgment, but what they didn't look ahead beyond that dark day, to the glorious day of the Lord that is going to come.

This is true today. Things are dark right now, but they're going to get worse. We're gonna go through a time of horrible carnage, horrible wars, horrible cataclysmic events, horrible judgments of God are gonna come upon the earth. But, it will be followed by the glorious day of the Lord that he speaks about here. The day when Jesus comes again, to establish God's righteous kingdom over the earth. So, looking beyond the suffering, and the judgment to the day that God has promised. So...

In that day [Far different than that of verse one, "In that day"], shall the branch of the Lord (4:2)

Who is Jesus Christ, the Branch of Jehovah. In several places in the old testament, the Messiah is referred to as the Branch of Jehovah. He is referred to as the Branch of David. We'll be getting to this as we move on through the prophets of the old testament. He is the servant, the Branch, in Zechariah. His name is the Branch, again in Zechariah. So, again, the Branch of the Lord.

in that day will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and delightful for them that have escaped of Israel (4:2).

A great judgment is gonna be yet coming upon the nation of Israel. The bible refers to it as the time of Jacob's trouble, this is the time just prior to the coming of the Messiah. Jerusalem is again going to be overrun by their enemies. The Antichrist will establish his center of worship in Jerusalem, in the rebuilt temple. He will make war against the Jews. They will have to flee to a place that God has prepared to preserve them in the wilderness of Jordan. But those that do survive, those that come through that great period of tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble, the fruit of the earth then will be excellent and delightful for them that are escaped of Israel.

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 (4:3):

Jerusalem will become the religious capital of the world. Jesus will set up His headquarters in Jerusalem, there on mount Zion, and the earth will gather together, the people of the earth will gather together to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

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. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a covering, a defense (4:5).

So that glorious day when the presence of God will be there in Jerusalem. The cloud, and the pillar of fire, these were the symbol of God's presence among God's people of Israel, when He brought them out of Egypt, and through the wilderness there was that pillar of fire by night, the cloud by day, so that they were constantly reminded of the presence of God. There within the holy of holies of the tabernacle that Moses built, there was that Shekinah, the, the, the luminescence, there was, it was, would be dark, but it was illuminated by just the glow of the presence of God. The Shekinah is that glow of God's presence, and it was there in the holy of holies of the tabernacle. There was that cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night, which were, was that constant reminder of, a person from Israel go out of their tent at night, they'd see the fire of God above the tabernacle. They were reminded of God's presence in the midst of His people. What a glorious time of history that was for that nation!

So, "The Lord will create on every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and

smoke by day, and the shining of the flaming fire by night, for upon all of the glory shall be a defense.” That will be a canopy over them.

And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covering from the storm and from the rain (3:6).

God will protect His people, He will shield them from all storms and adversities and all. So a glorious day of the Lord, in that day when the Branch, Jesus Christ, the Branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious, fruit of the earth there in Zion.

So next week we get into this parable of the vineyard, very thought provoking as you get into it. Then the six woes that God pronounces upon Israel, and then Isaiah’s vision, and call to serve the Lord in chapter six. Great, great stuff for next week! Study it over, you’ll be delighted with it as you read it, and we’ll study it next Sunday night.

Now to the righteous, the message of God, “Though things are bleak and are going to get worse, it will be well with you.” God will reward you for your commitment to Jesus Christ, and He’ll take care of you, and He will provide for you, and He will see you through. So go forth in the joy of the Lord, with that determination to commit yourself fully to living a life that is pleasing to God. A life that is honoring to Him. May the Lord bless you and give you a beautiful week, as you live in fellowship with Jesus.