

## **The Book of Isaiah**

### **Overview – R2372; R3451**

How was this message given to Isaiah?

It is a single vision given by Divine inspiration over a long period of time.

Some consider this book to be “the Revelation” equivalent of the Old Testament.

Isa. 1:1 “vision” (Strong's H2377; a dream, revelation)

Like Isaiah, many other Old Testament prophets received particular messages from God via a “vision.” (Examples: Obadiah 1:1; Nahum 1:1, Habukuk 2:2; Dan. 7:2; 8:1,2)

The Bible empathizes the importance of these “visions” to the people of God.

Prov. 29:18 “Where there is no vision [H2377] the people perish [H6544].”  
(H6544: to let go, let loose, to let loose restraints.)

During what time period did Isaiah write this book? What was going on in Judah at that time?

The book was written during the time from near the end of Uzziah’s reign to near the end of Hezekiah’s reign. (approx. 777 BC - 717 BC) [See Vol. 2 – B42; B50-51]

Judah was in a low state, having departed from the true worship of Jehovah.

What other Prophets were contemporary with Isaiah? Why so many in a relatively short period of time?

Amos (Amos 1:1)

Hosea (Hosea 1:1) – Like Isaiah, Hosea prophesized during the reigns of four Kings of Judah.  
(Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah)

Micah (Micah 1:1) – He prophesized during the reigns of three Kings of Judah.  
(Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah)

The Lord must have had very important, and repeated messages to give to Judah during that time period. Detailed considerations of Isaiah, and parallel accounts from these other prophets, will bring this out.

After Hezekiah's reign, there were still seven more Kings of Judah which followed.  
(2 Chronicles chapters 32, 33 and 36) Most of them were evil Kings.

What do we know about Isaiah's father Amoz?

He is only mentioned as the father of Isaiah, nothing else.

Some say he was related to the Royal family, but there is no mention of this in the Bible.

The only reference is in the Talmud (tractate Megillah 15a) where he is referred to as the brother of King Amaziah.

How would you describe the basic message of the Book of Isaiah? Who is it intended for?

It is more than merely the inspired message – the Word of God – that Isaiah received.

It is a comprehensive message of rebukes and exhortations appropriate to Isaiah's own day and nation, with sublime glimpses of the glorious future Kingdom of God.

1) As stated in chapter 1:1 it was primarily intended for “Judah and Jerusalem” – the 2-tribe Kingdom – at that time.

2) Prophetically it applies to future generations of Jews, especially at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent.

3) Prophetically it applies to spiritual Israel, primarily at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent.

Isaiah himself is a symbolic picture:

1) Of Jesus, the head of the Isaiah class. [See Isaiah 61:1 with Luke 4:16-21.]

2) Of the sanctified throughout the Gospel Age. [See Isaiah 6:8-10 and R4787]

## Chapter 1

1:1 *“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.”*

Which Kings of Judah reigned during Isaiah's lifetime? What was Isaiah's relationship to them?

Isaiah was a sort of liaison between the LORD and the Kings. (Isa. 7:3)

Prophets were prominent before the people, and therefore Kings paid attention to them also.

Kings would inquire of Isaiah. (Isa. 37:5 and context)

Uzziah (Isaiah chapter 6; 2 Chron. 26:22 and context) Isaiah was a historian, writing a record of the acts of Judah's Kings (such those of King Uzziah).

Jotham (no specific information is given)

Ahaz (Isaiah chapter 7)

Hezekiah (Isaiah chapters 36-39)

Isaiah was reputed to be Hezekiah's tutor. [R2379]

There is more about the interaction between Isaiah and Hezekiah than any of the others.

See 2 Kings 18:9-11 for timing of the 10 tribes being taken away.

1:2-4 *“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. (3) The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. (4) Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.”*

What is the nature of the rebuke here, and to whom does it apply? What in particular is the meaning of verse 3 and the symbolism of the animals there? What lessons are there in verse 4?

Jehovah gives a testimony that he cared for Israel, but they rebelled.

This testimony is given to “heavens and earth.”

The figure of speech meaning to all. [See also Deut. 32:1 and many other places.]

Symbolically to the Nominal systems and Christendom entire.

There is an application to Natural Israel and to Spiritual Israel, Nominal and True.

Other prophecies later in the Book of Isaiah verify this application.

2 Kings 17:6-23

The two animals mentioned are *not* noted for their intelligence, and do not have a moral sense, yet they manifest more intelligence than the professed people of God. [R4044 : page 247]

Used as beasts of burden. (Luke 13:15; 14:5)

The Ox knows his Master and obeys him.

The donkey knows his place of food, and goes there to eat.

Comparison to Israel and later to the Nominal Church:

Like “stiffnecked” animals – 2 Kings 17:13,14; etc.

They were both disobedient, and did not “eat” what the Lord provided.

Because of unfaithfulness both were rejected, and lost their respective favor.

Another symbolic application:

The Ox (Bullock) could represent Jesus. [Ox knows his Master (creator) Prov. 8]

The Donkey could symbolize the true Church. [Emphasis on the place of food.]

The Donkey was a sign of Royalty. (See Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:2; John 12:12-15)

There is a symbolic connection between Jesus and the Church in Gen. 49:10,11.

Judah [Jesus] binds his foal and donkey to the vine.

The suggestion is that the foal and donkey represent the true Church.

Verse 4 shows this problem started with earlier generations by referring to them as “the *seed* of evildoers” and “*children* that are corrupters.”

Do we accept things just because those who went before us did?

What is the source of our food? Do we properly appreciate both the source and the food?

1:5,6 “*Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. (6) From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*”

What is the logic behind the question: “Why should you be stricken any more?” What is the significance of the diseased condition here and the lack of treatment? [R3451]

It suggests the uselessness of any further chastisement – *in this context*.

Romanian: “What’s the use of any further punishment?”

They were already under the ultimate penalty of death (twice in fact).

God would not continue to give punishment if there was no further chance of reformation.

Discipline is a sign of genuine care. (Heb. 12:7 and context)

Israel (Judah) was rapidly approaching her final “seven times” of punishment. (2,520 years)

Lev. 26:14-38 (“final” in one sense, but there is still hope for the future – verses 41-45)

2 Chron. 36 – especially verses 11-16 (until there was no more remedy)

The phrase “*you revolt more and more*” in Romanian is: “*you insist on apostasy.*”

The mention of both head and heart is significant.

Unsound Head = lack of intellectual appreciation of the Law/Truth.

Unsound Heart = lack of the love and spirit of the Law/Truth.

The entire body is unsound, with untreated wounds, bruises and sores. The treatment was available, but the Jews ignored it

Normal reaction to disease is to treat it.

An untreated disease or wound becomes worse.

Natural Israel failed to deal with problems of idolatry, immorality, etc.

Nominal Spiritual Israel did the same.

See Ezek. 8:16-17 and context as applying to both.

The image of a body is significant.

The Jews lost the possibility to be the “body.”

The Nominal Church also lost that favor.

Only the “remnant” class of both Natural and Spiritual Israel received that favor.

What is the application beyond literal Israel (Judah) at that time? (Jer. 51:9 and context)

1:7-9 *“Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. (8) And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. (9) Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.”*

When do these verses apply and how? What do the symbols of a cottage and a lodge signify? What is the “small remnant” of verse 9? Why does God use the terms “Sodom” and “Gomorrah” in speaking to His people? [R3451]

The literal application took place about a century later. The symbolic application also applies to Christendom.

2 Chron. 36:11-19 – fulfillment upon Natural Israel

Romans 11 also applies to Natural Israel at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent.

Isa. 1:8,9 – “the daughter of Zion” and the “remnant” also applies to Spiritual Israel.

Applies consistently in Isaiah to the faithful remnant. (i.e. Isa. 52:1,2)

(See: R1648; D23)

The contrast between Zion and Jerusalem is also consistent.

Zion = spiritual Israel.

Jerusalem = Natural Israel.

A cottage in a vineyard and a lodge in a garden refer to temporary structures.

The faithful remnant are left in a difficult position.

The picture is generally for the watcher of the vineyard or garden, a lonely place.

Cottage [H5521] – Isa. 4:6 [tabernacle]; Ps. 31:20 [pavilion] – apply to a faithful remnant.

There was a remnant at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent among Natural Jews, and at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent among Spiritual Israel.

If not for the remnant class, the result would have been total destruction. (2 Kings 19:30,31)

Their sinful condition is compared to Sodom and Gomorrah.

(Isa. 13:19; Jer. 23:14; Ezek. 16:49)

Similar results follow for the great majority, but the Daughter of Zion remnant is not like Sodom and Gomorrah.

The destruction is complete, as indicated in Isa. 50:40.

1:10-17 *“Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. (11) To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. (12) When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? (13) Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. (14) Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. (15) And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. (16) Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; (17) learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”*

What is the judgment message in these verses? What is the suggested remedy? [R3451]

The symbology of Sodom and Gomorrah continues for comparison.

Rom. 9:29-32 – Most Jews tried to do the works of the Law, but lacked its spirit and faith.

Their superficial keeping of the Law was not from the heart.

They had a compromising spirit and hypocrisy. (Luke 18:10-14)

Their offerings were unacceptable, because not done from the heart.

This was true not only for Natural Israel, but for symbolic Babylon too.

See: Mal. 1:7,8; Jer. 6:15,20; Ps. 40:6; Ps. 51:16; 1 Sam. 15:22; etc.

They overlooked pre-existing problems when bringing gifts to God. Matt. 5:23,24

Verses 16 and 17 gives the remedy, which they failed to make use of.

Your deeds are evil. (Jer. 23:14; Amos 4:11,12; Jer. 50:40; Ezek. 16:49; Isa. 13:19)

Do good to others (three things mentioned) especially for the oppressed.

There is still time to repent:

At the time of Isaiah, this refers to the future fall of Jerusalem.

At the first advent, this refers to their rejection of Messiah, etc. (until Matt. 23:37,38).

During the Gospel Age this applies to symbolic Babylon (until Jer. 51:9).

1:18 *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”*

Why does God appeal to reason in this verse? How does this verse connect to the preceding context, especially verse 16? [R3451]

In light of the previous verses, there is still time to repent and use reason. Be humble. Open your hearts and minds. You can be cleansed, and then receive the promised blessings. This is the hope God gave them.

God reasoned with Job. (It took some time, but the process brought Job to the right conclusion.)

As stated earlier in verse 3, even the Ox and the Mule manifest greater powers of reason than either the natural Jews or Nominal Spiritual Israel.

If the Jews had done better at keeping the spirit of the Law, they would have been more acceptable to God. They trusted too much in their own works, the temple, etc.

If Nominal Spiritual Israel had better appreciated the precious blood of Jesus, as superior to works without faith, indulgences, etc., they would have been more acceptable to God (clean).

In order to “reason together” harmony with the Word of God is a prerequisite.

Psalm 51 shows the proper attitude and procedure.

Verses 16-19 show the result of a proper attitude, that then sacrifices would be acceptable.

Exod. 12:22 regarding hyssop.

Notice the strong contrast between scarlet and snow; crimson and wool. (See: F193,194 poem.)

1:19-31 *“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: (20) But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. (21) How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. (22) Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: (23) Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. (24) Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: (25) And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: (26) And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. (27) Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. (28) And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed. (29) For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. (30) For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. (31) And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.”*

Different groups are shown here as in other places:

Natural Israel (verse 19, 21, etc.) [R1358, R1943-4]

Ezra 9:12

Jer. 3:6-18 contains many key parallel thoughts.

Harlotry, adultery, leading to divorce

Idolatry as a form of symbolic adultery (stones and trees, etc.)

Call to repentance

Verse 17: future Kingdom

Spiritual Israel (see R1944, page 44, par. 4)

The Nations in Armageddon (civil powers) [See Volume 4]

Babylon the Great – the harlot (verse 21-24, etc.) as well as Natural Israel.

Rev. 14:8; Rev. 17:4; Jer. 51

Corruption by the leadership (princes)

Money / “Gifts” = bribes (Exod. 23:8; Deut. 16:12-19; 2 Kings 16:8-18)

Doctrine (watered down)

2 Thess. 2:3,4; 1 Cor. 3:17; Jer. 49:13; Jer. 51:37; Rev. 19:2

The World of Mankind in the Kingdom (A67; R1648-9; R3451-4)

Verses 22,25 regarding purging away dross and “tin” (impurities)

Applies to Natural and Spiritual Israel (R1943-4)

Prov. 25:1,4 (regarding the “men of Hezekiah”)

Ezek. 22:18-22

Zech. 13:9 – the “third part” will be brought through the fire.

Q712:2; R3634 first question and answer

Israel, and eventually the World of Mankind

Mal. 3:3 (purging the spiritual seed)

In verse 19 the concept is of willing obedience, not forced.

Contrast this with the rebellious attitude in verse 23. (Hos. 9:15; Isa. 65:2)

Hebrew Targum adds to obedient – “*to my word*”

This concept is true not only for Natural Israel but for Spiritual Israel as well.

Free will enters in. Choice is offered. Consequences will come either way.

Consider lessons in the temptation in Eden, the book of Job, etc.

The Adversary constantly tries to turn mankind against God.

What contrasting consequences are given in these verses?

Are there promises in these verses that are not dependent on obedience? If so, why?

There are some promises from God that are not conditional. (verses 26-28)

Exod. 18:12-27; R4201: page 203

Pictures of the Kingdom:

Verse 26 – Judges restored (Ancient Worthies) [Exod. 18:21-22]

1 Chron. 23:1-5 regarding the symbolic application of the sons of Levi

Gershon – the World of Mankind (rescued)

Kohath – the Ancient Worthies (comrades or allies)

Merari – the Great Company (biterness)

Verse 26 – Counsellors (the “greater than Moses” – the Christ Head and Body)

Verse 26 – The city of righteousness, the faithful city (the New Jerusalem)

Verse 27 – Zion (the Spiritual seed)

Verse 28 – The destruction of the disobedient

Verses 29-31 – The followers of false religion will be ashamed.

Idol worship in groves of sacred oaks

The sacred oaks will lose their leaves. (no more professors of false religion)

There will be no water (Truth) there any more.

The “strong man” and all his works will eventually be burned up. (Matt. 12:29; Rev. 20:10; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21)

We are reminded of the blessings and cursings pronounced in Leviticus. Also the Jewish Double.

In spite of all these harsh judgments, God intends these punishments as purging and cleansing experiences. Eventually a complete reformation will be accomplished for the Natural Seed under the Mediator, via the Ancient Worthies, in the Earthly Kingdom.

In this chapter an important theme regards two distinct classes:

1) Those who repent and reform

2) Those who are destroyed

This distinction applies to the various literal and symbolic groups.

Not every detail applies to all the symbolic groups. Some are specific to one group, some to another.

## Chapter 2

2:1 *“The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.”*

Notice the difference between this and Isaiah 1:1 – what if any is the significance?

1:1 “the Vision” – lists the kings implying a specific audience.

2:1 “the Word” – does not list the kings implying a different audience.

Zech. 12:7 – the tents of Judah (Natural Israel) have priority. Mankind must come to them.

What does Jerusalem represent in this verse?

The Jerusalem *“which is above”* is “our mother” (Gal. 4:26)

The *New Jerusalem* is also spiritual. (Rev. 21:2)

In the book of Isaiah, Jerusalem (by itself) consistently applies to Natural Israel. (Isaiah 2:3; 4:3,4; 8:14; 24:23; 40:2,9; 52 [entire chapter]; 62:1,7; etc.) See also Zech. 8:20-23.

Judah represents the people, in contrast with Jerusalem which represents the government.

2:2 *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.”*

Exactly when “in the last days” will this prophecy be fulfilled? (French: in the after times.)

A far-reaching perspective regarding the end of this order and the full establishment of the Kingdom.

Isa. 46:10 uses the same word translated “the end” which here uses “the last.” (Strong’s H319) – after the Armageddon climax.

The following verses show this to be when the Church is complete, the Kingdom is fully established and the New Covenant is in operation. (Ps. 99:2)

Isaiah is referring to what was said to Jacob in Gen. 49:1.

See also: Acts 2:17; 2 Pet. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:1; Dan. 10:14; Dan. 2:28 for a broader meaning of “the last days.”

What is the significance of the expression: “the mountain of the Lord’s house” in verse 2?

The Kingdom of God.

What is the meaning of the contrast between “the mountain” and “the top of the mountains” plural?

The phrase “in the top” is from Strong’s H7218 – sometimes translated as “the head” (Zech. 6:11; Jonah 4:8) or “the chief” (Ezek. 38:2,3).

The top of the mountains shows the highest rulership, head, chief, above all other kingdoms.

Mountains are bigger governments, kingdoms of this world, like the empires.

What is symbolized by the hills and the nations?

Hills are smaller governments.

Nations represent the peoples (not governments). (Strong’s H1471: masses of people)

In what way will all nations **flow** unto the kingdom?

The flow direction is upward (uplifting to righteousness), rather than the present downward direction of mankind into sin & degradation).

The people will be attracted to the new arrangement, but it will require effort on their part.

The word “flow” is from Strong’s H5102: to sparkle, be cheerful, figuratively to assemble.

See also Rev. 17:15 regarding waters representing peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.

2:3 *“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”*

Who are the “many people” in verse 3?

All the people, the masses of humanity. (This ties in with Micah 1:1; 4:1-3.)

Similar to the nations in verse 2 and 4 (Gentiles – *Goyim*) but with a slight difference.

The nations must humble themselves. Psa. 25:9

“Go up” relates to “flowing up” in verse 2. Also showing the effort required. (See Strongs H5927.)

Why is the mountain of the Lord called the house of the God of Jacob?

Natural Israel will have a prominent place in the Kingdom.

The phrase “the God of Jacob” could refer to the Abrahamic promise repeated to Jacob.

Jacob as a symbol consistently applies to Natural Israel.

What is the meaning of “ways” which are taught and “paths” in which to walk?

Those under the Kingdom arrangement first be taught, and then put that teaching into practice.

Psa. 72:6 – *teaching* – rain coming down, like water flowing. (See Strongs H3384.)

Living waters mentioned to the Samaritan woman.

Rev. 22:17 – living waters.

Regarding Zion and Jerusalem:

These symbols, especially when used together, have a consistent meaning throughout the book.

What is the meaning of “the Law” out of Zion?

Psa. 2:6; Psa. 9:11; Psa. 50:2 all show the spiritual phase.

Heb. 12:22 in N.T. same concept

What is the meaning of “the word of the LORD” from Jerusalem?

The earthly phase.

Jer. 3:17; Zech. 14:17-19

2:4 *“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”*

Who is the judge in verse 4 and what is the work of judging and rebuking?

The Judge is Jesus (together with the Church).

Jesus: Isa. 11:1-4; Micah 4:3; Matt. 28:18; John 5:22

The Church: 1 Cor. 6:2,3

Jesus with God’s authority: Ps. 72:1,2; Ps. 96:13; Ps. 98:1,9

The “Day of Judgment” involves many aspects.

First against systems, governments, kingdoms, wrong principles, etc. (destructive)

Under the Mediator the “Judge” will be as in the period of the Judges. (constructive and corrective) [H8199] Also see: Isa. 26:9; Acts 17:31.

Among = between (as a mediator)

Nations = “foreign” peoples

Rebuke = correct, reason

See: Isa. 28:17; Matt. 25:31-46 (all nations)

Biblical concept of Purgatory under the Mediator [R1468]

Purging, cleaning up, for the World of Mankind

At-one-ment – bringing man back to God by bringing them to perfection

Is there a difference between “nations” and “many people” in this verse?

Nations is a more generic term for non-Jews. (Also can show unity on a governmental level.)

People = compatriots (tribal unity in an ethnic sense)

Zech. 8:22

What is the practical application of the remainder of the verse?

Today vast amounts of money are spent on war related items.

In some countries more is spent on war than on food.

In 2020 global military spending was nearly 2 trillion dollars.

In the U.S. military spending was 778 billion dollars, while total expenditures for food were 1.69 trillion dollars – in one of the wealthiest countries.

Implements of war will be converted to peaceful, constructive tools. (Micah 3:9,10; 4:3)

See Joel 3:9,10; Psalm 46:9 and context.

Peace will rule instead of wars and violence of every kind.

*Isaiah 2:2-4 compared to Micah 4:1-3.*

Although both prophets give identical statements in these verses, Micah's prophecy (1:1) was "concerning Samaria and Jerusalem", whereas Isaiah's prophecy was "concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

Why does Micah's prophecy refer to "Samaria"?

Judah represents Natural Israel.

Samaria could represent the world of mankind.

The prophetic statements in both cases apply to the blessings of the Kingdom.

Compare with Micah 4:3 – "judge among many people" and "rebuke strong nations"

This is the reverse of Isa. 2:4

Both "people" and "nations" require judging and rebuke.

2:5 *"O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD."*

A summary statement to this point.

Both "come" and "walk" have the same root word: H1980, but the complete Hebrew shows a difference. The first word is the invitation and the second is the follow-through.

Come = לָּכוּ [leku]

Let us walk = וְנִלְכֶּה [wenelekah]

House of Jacob = Natural Israel. (Isa. 48:1)

The time is after Armageddon and Jesus manifests himself. (apokalupsis)

Showing Israel as the blessing nation. (Gen. 12:3; Isa. 42:6; Gal. 8,16,29)

2:6 *"Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers."*

Jehovah has forsaken the house of Jacob. The reasons follow.

"Thy people" – Natural Israel (Isa. 48:1)

The "house of Jacob" = "the house of servants" (Heb. 3:5)

Favor was removed from them.

Nominal Natural Israel

Nominal Spiritual Israel. (Rev. 18:2 – Babylon)

"From the East"

"Eastern ways" – "Full of idols" (Romanian)

They imported superstitious and forbidden practices from the East.

“Soothsayers...Philistines”

Claiming powers of divination. (See 1 Sam. 6:2 and context.)

Deut. 18:10; 2 Kings 21:6; 2 Chron. 33:6

“Please themselves” with the children of strangers – “strike hands” with pagans.

Making covenants, leagues and friendships with pagan nations.

This included marriage with non-Jews.

Babylon the Great did the same things.

2:7 *“Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots.”*

They accumulated earthly resources and military might, taking them away from reliance on Jehovah. Prosperity has great dangers. (For both Nominal Natural Israel and Nominal Spiritual Israel.)

They lost their focus and vision and became proud. (Deut. 8:12-14,17)

Isa. 31:1-3 – Don’t go to the world (Egypt) for help.

Deut. 17:16,17 – They openly disobeyed the Lord’s counsel and made up their own rules. This fits both Nominal Natural and Nominal Spiritual Israel again.)

Deut. 17:18-20 – The kings did not keep this commandment. Their desire for a king became a snare to them. (1 Sam. 8:7-20)

The picture of Manasseh shows both the corruption, repentance, and eventual recovery of mankind. (2 Chron. 33:1-20)

The symbolic significance:

Horses = doctrines

Chariots = organizations

Again, this applies to both the Nominal houses.

Micah 5:7-15 parallels to Isa. 2

The remnant, horses, chariots, soothsayers, idols, etc., are to be destroyed.

God’s vengeance is to be executed against the heathen.

2:8 *“Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.”*

Their idolatry was “the work of their own hands.”

The love of money.

Trusting in their own military might.

2:9 *“And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.”*

Most translations show that the judgment is upon all classes, and they will all be brought low and humbled. (French and Romanian translations also show this.)

See verses 11 through 17.

Rev. 19:18

This could refer to the idolatry of verse 8 and signifies that all classes of society were involved.

Could also indicate a mere *show* of humility for the worship of Jehovah.

God’s patience with them was worn out and they were to be cast off as a nation.

Regarding Mystic Babylon they are also cast off forever as a system.

Pride and arrogance has to be remedied by humbling experiences. Again Manasseh pictures these eventual results of the judgments – against Natural Israel and mankind in general.

2:10 *“Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.”*

Enter into the rock – Reliance on self, earthly institutions, etc., as in previous verses. (See Judges 6:1,2)

The rock singular could be Babylon the Great. Hide thee in the dust could be smaller groups:

See verse 19 and Hos. 10:8; Rev. 6:15,16. Hiding for fear, seeking protection.

2:11 *“The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.”*

Humbling the proud, recognizing Jehovah as God. (Zeph. 3:11,12 and context) “The wisdom of the learned will prove futile in the time of trouble.” [EBC] Parallels to verses 9, 12 and 17.

The “day of the Lord” and “in that day” as expressions:

These same phrases occur in verses 12,17.

Jewish thinking applies this to a time when Jehovah’s judgment would be manifest.

“In that day” appears over 105 times in the O.T. and 43 of those are in Isaiah.

Ezek. 21:26,27 – the ultimate destruction of Satan’s empire prophesied.

“The distress of nations” in all its phases – the day of the Lord’s wrath.

Ezek. 7:19; Zeph. 1:18; Jas. 5:3 – gold and silver valueless

Isa. 2:21; Rev. 6:16; Isa. 34:2,6; Jer. 7:32-34; Jas. 5:5 – The end of the present order. (Armageddon) Including special experiences for natural Israel. (Jer. 16:16)

Anything which takes away from reverence and obedience to God must be overthrown.

Jesus used the term “Father” while Jews did not. (LORD = Jehovah)

***“For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon...”***

Everything that is going to be destroyed in the time of trouble. (Joel 1:15; 3:14; Isa. 13:6,9; Ezek. 30:3; Obad. 1:15)

It's a day of darkness. (Ezek. 30:3; Amos 5:18-20)

A day of vengeance. (Isa. 34:8; 63:4; Jer. 46:10)

Nevertheless it is also a day of announcing blessings for all. (Isa. 61:1-3)

A day of wrath against all nations, especially Christendom. (Isa. 34:1-6)

A day of anarchy – every man's hand against his brother. (Isa. 9:19)

Also involves natural Israel. (Isa. 51:17-20)

Zeph. 1:1-18 mentions many categories.

2:12 *“every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:”*

[See comments on verse 11 regarding the proud and lofty.]

However, there is hope for the humble.

2:13 *“all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,”*

Isa. 33:9 [Lebanon and Bashan mentioned together – also Isa. 33:9; Zech. 11:1,2.]

Cedars of Lebanon – Ecclesiastical powers (Cedars were used in the Temple.)

[Lebanon = white mountain]

Judges 9 – the parable of the trees.

Oaks of Bashan – Political powers (NOT used in the Temple.) [East of Israel] (Isa. 1:29)

[SM737:2]

2:14 *“all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up,”*

High mountains – Larger kingdoms of this world

Hills – Smaller kingdoms of this world

None are exempt. The judgment will come upon all the kingdoms of this world.

2:15 *“every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,”*

High tower – Human organizations / those in positions of power

The warning alarm was sounded from the towers.

Isa. 30:25 – Towers were the place of those who sounded the alarm.

Human organizations.

Could also show the kings, rulers and others who are in such places of prominence. [R1379 is a letter written *to* Brother Russell, but he printed it and did not object to the thought.]

Fenced (fortified) wall – Civil power (especially military)

Towers and walls: cities, towns, established locales, protecting their territory. (Compare with Ezek. 38:11,12.)

Zeph. 1:14-18 – regarding the “great day of the LORD”

Verse 16: A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and the high towers.

Verse 18: Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them. (Isa. 2:20)

2:16 “*all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.*”

Ships of Tarshish

Commerce and trade with many countries.

The Western World (Chistendom), traders. [See: Ezek. 38:13.]

Riches: 1 Kings 10:22; 22:48; 2 Chron. 9:21

Ezek. 27:25 – bringing riches to Bablyon (Rev. 18:11-15, 17-19)

The shipmasters, etc., all need to be humbled.

The Euphrates must be dried up. (Rev. 16:12)

1 Chron. 1:4-7 – The lineage of Tarshish as a person was through Japheth.

Settled in Europe.

The father of Tarshish (Javan) was a merchant in people and brass. [See Dan. 8:21; 10:20; 11:2 in the Hebrew.]

Psa. 48:4-7 – “a woman in travail” (Ships of Tarshish are broken with an east wind.)

This context is probably talking about the same thing as in Isa. 2:16.

Here it could be Jesus who does this. [Hosea 13; Rev. 16:12]

Pleasant pictures (bad translation)

French: “all things that are pleasing to the eye” (from a fleshly standpoint)

[H7914] “Sloops” – smaller beautiful ships or “impressive watercraft” [See: Hos. 13:15]

### **Consequences:**

2:17 “*And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.*” [See comments on verse 11.]

French: “*loftiness*” pride of heart. Compared to “*haughtiness*” which is an outward expression of pride.

Modern day application – pride in governments, institutions, etc., arrogance.

People in positions of power must be brought down.

A dependency upon such things which must be broken. Looking to the Lord is necessary.

2:18 *“And the idols he shall utterly abolish.”*

Romanian: *“will die”* – a final end.

Like wood put in the fire.

There will be no further trust in them.

French: *“disappear”*

Anything which diminishes, replaces or substitutes for the true worship of God is an idol.

Can be literal or symbolic.

The status of *“idol”* will be done away with.

Example: the incident with the Ark of the Covenant being taken by the Philistines.

Zech. 13:2 – Even the “names” of the idols will be forgotten. (what they stand for)

Sometimes the word abolish is translated “changed” or “renewed” which fits with the thought of such false worship or devotion being changed to the true worship.

2:19 *“And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”*

The class mentioned in the preceding verses.

Seeking protection (Hos. 10:8; Rev. 6:15,16)

Holes of the rocks – (natural caverns carved out by water which has now disappeared)  
Larger earthly institutions (plural) of any kind, including religious. Seeking refuge or protection because of their fear. [See: Luke 21:25-27.]

Caves of the earth – smaller [H4247 – excavated, H6083 – “dust”] – (compare to verse 10)  
smaller groups of any kind, including civic organizations.

In contrast with verse 15. When the “high towers” and “fenced walls” fail, the people will seek protection from more of a hidden or secret position. [B139]

In the Time of Trouble (shaking the earth – society).

“He” that ariseth to shake terribly the earth is Jehovah through Jesus. [Dan. 12:1; Heb. 12:25 and context; Hag. 2:6,7; Ps. 98:1] (Rev. 16:18 – the Earthquake ties in with the final shaking.)

2:20 *“In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;”*

Ties in with verse 18. Ezek. 7:7,19

Idols of silver and gold – Jas. 5:1-6

A sequence is shown in the connected Scriptures. This verse shows the attempts of the rich to placate the lower classes that they treated unfairly.

Ezek. 7:19 is later when their silver and gold become totally worthless.

Moles and bats – They live in darkness, don't use vision, live in large groups and are despised animals. At this time the rich will see the trouble and will desperately try to please the lower classes (French Revolution parallels). Moles and bats are unclean animals under the Law.

[D148,149; D298]

2:21 *“To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”*

Similar to verse 19, but using different Hebrew words. [H5366; H5585 + H5553]

See: Rev. 6:15,16. (Human inventions thought to be a place of refuge)

Those who go into the two places are the same as in verse 20 – the rich.

Clefts of the rocks – “holes” or “crevices” – smaller (similar to verse 19) [Obad. 1:3; Ezek. 24:6; 26:14]

Tops of the jagged rocks – “overhanging cliffs” [two words in the Hebrew]

What type of “fear of the LORD” is this?

In the Time of Trouble (shaking the earth – society).

“He” that ariseth to shake terribly the earth is the same as in verse 19.

2:22 *“Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?”*

ISV, NIV, etc. for better wording.

*“Cease ye from man”* – Stop putting your trust in human-based solutions, inventions, and philosophies. [Evolution Higher Criticism, etc.]

*“Whose breath is in his nostrils”* – Whose life is a mere breath, which when it ceases he dies. [See Barnes notes.]

*“Wherein is he to be accounted of?”* – “Why hold them in esteem?”

Jer. 9:4,5,8,23,24; 10:8; 17:5,9.

The imagery in Isaiah is found in many other prophecies, both Old and New Testaments.

### Chapter 3

*3:1-4 For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water; (2) The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, (3) The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator. (4) And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.*

Natural Israel: Judah represents the people, in contrast with Jerusalem which represents the government. Applies to the 70 years of desolation as well as the 1845 years of disfavor.

Compare to chapter 3:16-26 and chapter 4 which applies primarily to the Nominal Church “in that day” – at the end of the Gospel Age.

At another level Judah corresponds to Christendom (the people) and Jerusalem corresponds to the Nominal Church – Babylon the Great (the seat of power).

The symbology in Zech. 12 is somewhat different than in Isaiah.

Take away: Removed or turned off.

The Jews will lose all support from their friends as well as from their resources.

A literal application applies during the 70 years of desolation and during the Gospel Age period of disfavor.

Bread and Water = literal resources, but at a symbolic level Jesus is the bread which they rejected. (John 6:35) The water is the Truth which they rejected.

“Supports” in verses 2-4 include such things as competent rulers.

Those things which will be removed, taken away.

Every stay: support, protection or sustenance (2 Sam. 2:19; Psa. 18:18)

Staff: a walking stick [H4938]

Isa. 36:6 – Egypt being the world powers, Israel’s trust in them will be removed.

A total of 15 items are mentioned that are taken away, including:

The prophet and the prudent. (Ezek. 22:28)

Artificers = workmen, especially those that made their idols. (Isa. 40:19,20)

Three items mentioned in Isa. 9:6 are also found here: mighty men, captain (prince) and counsellor.

The “children” and “babes” mentioned in verse 4 are given to them.

Both are related to rulership.

They are given over to the immature, lacking in knowledge and wisdom.

Resulting in bad government

Resulting in bad defenses

Also see verses 12-15 regarding the symbols given here.

*3:5-7 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable. (6) When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand: (7) In that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be an healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.*

Internal conflict, contention, turmoil, lost of respect for authority and the rule of law – anarchy.

In vain will a solution be sought to restore order.

Applies at three levels:

The trouble which came upon Natural Israel when the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple was destroyed and the 70 years of desolation followed.

The 1845 years of disfavor for the Jews during the Gospel Age.

The Great Time of Trouble upon Christendom in the Harvest.

*3:8-9 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory. (9) They shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.*

In this verse, as in other places, Judah corresponds to Christendom (the people) and Jerusalem corresponds to the Nominal Church in the larger prophetic picture.

The judgment from the LORD is stated as the cause behind this state of affairs.

Natural Israel sinned in word as well as in deed. So did the Nominal Church.

“They have brought disaster [Divine retribution, judgment] upon themselves.”

Flagrant violation of God’s laws (as with Sodom, they hide it not).

LGBTQ is accepted, taught in schools, and even given legal protection.

Political agendas, ultra-liberal anti-religious sentiments, praising immorality, etc.

Openly acknowledging and at the same time rationalizing, justifying and validating the wrong course, with no acknowledgement of guilt.

Special application to the “hour of temptation.” (1 Pet. 4:4; 2 Pet. 2:13,14; Jude 1:7,8)

Isa. 31 parallels, especially verse 3

Egypt = the world powers and their worldly ideas. [C316]

“He that helpeth (protecting) shall fall.” (“fall” = be ruined as in Isa. 3:8)

“He that is holpen (being protected) shall fall down.” (“fall down” = fallen as in Isa. 3:8)

“Fail together.” (“to end, to cease, to perish” [H3615])

Isa. 31:3 – Those who help = Egypt – the world powers. Those who are helped = Natural Israel – looking to the world for help.

Possible link of Isa. 31:4,5 to Zech. 14:2,3 for future discussion.

3:10-11 *Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. (11) Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.*

Both classes will be rewarded according to their deeds. (Just retribution upon the wicked.)

Then the just will prosper. Deut. 11:26-28.

In Israel the rebels will be purged out and the remnant will be delivered and blessed.

3:12-15 *As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. (13) The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. (14) The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. (15) What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.*

Connection with verse 11 (“the wicked”) – Ps. 9:5; 37:10; Isa 11:4; Ezek. 18:20

“My people” applies to Natural Israel and the people of Christendom.

Isa. 9:13-16 – the root cause is given, the leaders (as in Isa. 3:12)

The leaders cause the people to err.

The people follow the leaders instead of the LORD.

Mic. 4:2 – the “ways” (principles) and “paths” (course of life)

“Children” – immature leaders with no experience or other qualifications.

“Oppressors” – bad leaders who drive the people like animals.

[Immoral] “Women” – a prophetic application to adulterous religious systems and their beliefs.

“The Ancients” [elders] (religious leaders) and “princes” (those having status or importance).

Isa. 9:15 – the ancient and honorable are the head and the lying prophets are the tail. [EBC]

Accepting earthly/religious leaders rather than God.

Ezek. 8:12 “the ancients of the house of Israel” (same Hebrew word) – religious leaders.

Isa. 5:1-7 – especially verse 7 regarding the vineyard. [R5112]

John 15:1-7 parallel – the vineyard “eaten up” by the leaders of Christendom.

Dan. 12:1 – has the same word “standeth up” where Michael is the LORD’s representative.

Crushing the poor and “grinding the faces” (shaming them). See: Jer. 8:21-22.

God will lift up the poor and the oppressed (the faithful ones).

The unrighteous will be judged and punished.

Amos 4:1; Ezek. 21:26; James 5:1-4 and context

Rev. 19:2 – Judgment against Babylon

God is a very fair God. In this book he identifies the issues, sins and shortcomings and then explains his actions. His judgments are for a reason. They are just, yet loving, and always fair.

The symbolic nature of the expressions Zion and daughters of Zion, when used in a negative sense in the opening chapters, represent symbolic Babylon. On the surface this might seem contradictory, but the parallel is to a corrupt nominal system in both cases. Natural Israel was exclusively God's people until they lost that exclusive position. What became Babylon the Great had its origins in the early Church, which transition is detailed in Revelation chapter 12 and other places.

### **Judgment against the daughters of Zion**

“Daughter(s) of Zion” (children of Jerusalem)

Used in a negative sense in this context. (Isa. 3:16; 3:17, 4:4)

Offspring of vial and self-serving women, not virgins.

Corresponding to the “man-child” of Rev. 12 which started in “Zion” but was corrupted.

Used in a positive sense in other places (virgins: Isa. 37:22 ; 52:2; 62:11; S.O.S. 3:11)

The context and characteristics determine the meaning.

Natural and Spiritual Israel: Isa. 10:42; 52:2; 62:11; Ps. 9:14; 2 Kings 19:21; etc.

Babylon, the Nominal Church: Jer. 6:2; 6:23; 4:41; Lam 1:6; 2:1; 4:10,22; etc.

Nominal Israel: Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 2:10; 9:9; Matt. 21:5; etc.

Ezek. 8:1-18

Items listed are wealth, power, earthly attractions, etc. (See: Rev. 18)

Notice how each item in the following verses is different, and often has to do with a different part of the body.

3:16 *Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:*

Because = “Pay attention!” This is what has brought judgment against yourself.

Haughty = proud, self-exaltation (like Lucifer). [Isa. 14:14; Jer. 13:15; 50:29]

Stretched necks = heads held high.

Can also mean bending away in a moral deflection.

Psa. 5:9 = “*their throat is an open sepulchre*”

Wanton eyes = flirtatious, seductive and deceiving eyes.

Ecclesiasticism always tried to seduce the Civil Powers (male)

Mincing, tinkling = prancing with swaying hips and jingling ankle-bracelets that call attention to the way they walk.

The objects here in succeeding verses emphasize outward appearance rather than inward beauty. (1 Pet. 3:3,4; 1 Tim. 2:9,10)

Pretending to be something she is not.

Just as Eliezer gave similar objects, as gifts, to Rebecca, so Israel received many beautiful love gifts from God, but they used these improperly.

They played the harlot instead of remaining faithful virgins. [Rev. 17:1,4,5,16 and context]

They took those love gifts and turned them into idols, etc. (Ezek. 16:17)

This applies to nominal natural Israel as well as nominal spiritual Israel.

*3:17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts.*

Therefore – the consequences follow in the next verses.

The punishments mentioned are retributive in nature: “The punishment fits the crime.”

A women’s hair is her glory, which here is cursed and turned into shame.

The top of the head representing the religious leaders who will lose their power.

The leaders will be shamed and the entire system likewise.

Discover their secret parts = show their symbolic nakedness.

God will reveal everything they were trying to hide. We see this happening in our day.

Giving garments shows favor and covering of sins.

Taking away the garments is a removal of favor and shows the wrong condition of the heart and no longer covering those sins.

False doctrine and untruth is also uncovered.

Because of pride, arrogance, etc., God exposes the false nature of their pretensions and brings shame upon them. (Rev. 3:17,18)

The false system is exposed and revealed during the *parousia*, corresponding to the thoughts in this verse. (2 Thess. 2:8)

The hidden things of darkness are being brought to light.

*3:18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,*

Take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments – remove their beauty.

Cauls = hair ornaments

Round tires = round pendants for the neck (Judges 8:21)

As a principle, the removing of these things because of self-exaltation and pride. (Zeph. 3:11 shows similar dealings with the nations in the Kingdom.)

Three categories of things removed: tinkling ornaments – attracting people to Babylon, hair ornaments showing glory, and the round pendants are false claims of spiritual power.

The Romanian and Russian includes the thought of stars instead of pendants.

All the items mentioned in these verses are a false front, and all these things are to be exposed for their true nature. [See Vol. 4 chapters on the judgment of Babylon] These adornments are intended to attract males. (2 Kings 9:30) [Symbolically the civil power.]

The false system is not shown with “fine linen” whereas the true Church is. Compare Isaiah 61:10; Hos. 2:13; Ezek. 16; Ps. 45:10,13,14; and Rev. 19:8, also the glorious garments of the High Priest.

Other contrasts regard the purpose of these adornments and the robe in particular, which is related to the Church’s covenant by sacrifice to the Lord. The Nominal system described here does not sacrifice to the Lord, but uses these things selfishly, to glorify self, whereas the true Church uses these things to serve and glorify the Lord.

3:19 *The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers.*

Num. 31:50 – a true usage of all these things.

Chains = a decorative necklace or pearl earrings.

Prov. 3:3 in a positive sense.

If these were earrings they show ownership – used here in a false sense, claiming to be owned of the Lord, but they are not..

Bracelets for the wrists

Showing servitude – true and false.

Eliezer gave bracelets to Rebecca – asking her to agree to be the Bride of Isaac, contrast between the true and false Bride of Christ.

Mufflers = veils (covering the face except the eyes)

To hide themselves and what they really are.

At the same time giving the impression that there is something worthwhile to discover, in a tempting way.

In the case of Moses his face was covered, but in a different and positive sense.

3:20 *The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,*

Bonnet = fancy head-dress – diadem – true and false “royal” authority

Ornaments of the legs = ankle chains [See verse 16]

Headband = better translated girdle, as in a belt – showing servitude.

The servitude of the false system is selfish, and of the true Church is to the Lord.

Like the girdle of the whole armor, but used here in a false sense.

Tablets = perfume boxes, attractive fragrances – another example of “pomp and circumstance.”

Earrings = amulets or charms – Hebrew includes the thought of “whisper”

Related to prayer and spiritual power, calling on the Catholic “saints” to do miracles, etc.

Romanian and Russian is related to magic or healing – divination.

3:21 *The rings, and nose jewels,*

Rings = signet rings of authority

The nominal systems falsely claim authority from God for their doctrines, and civil power.

Joseph pictures Jesus in Gen. 41:42.

Esther chapter 8 is another example.

Also the prodigal son picture in Luke 15.

Nose jewels = nose rings showing servitude to God, real and claimed.

Modern society also uses these things in a literal sense without any understanding of the true meaning.

3:22 *The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,*

Previous items were adornments for beauty, whereas these are public displays of what the wearer claims (the nominal Church).

2 Kings 5:22,23 and context uses the same words for “changes of garments” and “bags” being the same as “crisping pins” in Hebrew.

Changeable suits of apparel – public display of role and authority, more than for beauty.

Robes of state (only Kings and the very rich could afford these) – false claims of Papacy.

Same word as for the glorious garments of the High Priest – only for special occasions.

Signs of wealth and power, both which will be removed.

Mantles = tunics or capes

Hebrew 4595: to cover or enshroud (in darkness)

Psa. 109:29 “...*clothed with shame...cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.*” [same word in Hebrew]

“To cover” or “to clothe” – a forward tunic with sleeves

Elijah’s mantle is a different word (2 Kings 2:13) [H155 vs. H4595 in this verse]

Removal of spiritual authority

Wimples = cloaks or shawls

By removing these, the consequence is bringing to light that which was hidden.

Crisping pins = money purses

Removal of wealth and money.

See: Rev. 16:12 (drying up the river Euphrates)

3:23 *The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.*

Glasses

Writing tablets (see Isa. 8:1 – “roll” is the same word.) [NAS “papyrus”]

Claimed doctrinal authority will be taken away.

False claims of inspiration will be exposed.

Looking glasses, hand mirrors (obsession with appearance)

Fine linen (specifically a night gown)

Religious and spiritual pretense for the sake of show.

Signs of refinement and wealth.

Claims of holiness.

Hoods

Head-dress – mitre, diadem, tiara

Claim to having the right to reign.

Veils = a wrap-around veil or robe

Unveiled – shown for what she really is.

All the things mentioned are taken away by showing them to be false, especially the pretenses associated with them.

### **Consequences:**

3:24 *And it shall come to pass, that instead of a sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.*

Personal humiliation and shame

The consequences of what is removed from Babylon are the exact opposite of their pretensions (Rev. 3:17,18) that are removed in Armageddon.

A time of arraignment and exposure for false claims.

They are humbled against their will.

In contrast with genuine humility manifested by others.

Sweet smell becomes a stink.

Sweet smell like the holy anointing oil or incense, forbidden to be used for other purposes.

Stink – becomes repulsive to the people. A consequence of the removal of false claims of having the Lord’s anointing (spirit).

Instead of an embroidered girdle (belt) a rope: as a captive.

Symbol of faithful servitude: Exod. 28:4; Isa. 11:5; Eph. 6:4

Loss of power.

Like the strong man being bound.

Baldness

Instead of a nice hair-do (glory of the woman – 1 Cor. 11:15), loss of glory.

Baldness – shame.

Like a slave

Job shaved his head. (Job 1:20)

Burning: some suggest this was a “brand” which would fit with a slave or cattle.

An everlasting *mark* of shame for all her crimes.

Rev. 17:16; 18:8,9,18; 14:11

Sackcloth – a sign of mourning – Jonah 3:5; Esther 4:1-4; many other places

Three prophecies combining baldness and sackcloth with the day of the Lord:

Isa. 22:5,12-13

Ezek. 7:2,3,7,18,19

Judgment, wrath, recompense, trouble

Verse 19 is parallel with Isa. 2:20 regarding silver and gold cast into the streets.

Amos 8:10 (contemporary with Isaiah)

3:25 *Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.*

“Thy” is feminine (the “daughters of Zion” in verse 16).

The “men” of Babylon – supporters.

These “women” (churches) are deprived of their “husbands” (civil aspect)

Fall by the sword:

Sword can be translated “drought” – lack of Truth.

Ezek. 7:15 and context – those in the field die with the sword, those inside die of famine and pestilence.

Parallels to the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem.

Men = inside the city – those guarding the city and its inhabitants.

Mighty = literally warriors in battle

Symbolically the leaders in Babylon – the Pope, Cardinals, etc. (Jer. 50:22-32; R1137)

In the Battle of Armageddon the leaders will fall.

3:26 *And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.*

Gates = of Zion (nominal)

Babylon laments and mourns because no one enters through her gates.

Another possible tie in with the drying up of the river Euphrates. (Rev. 16:12)

Left deserted, desolate and alone (losing adherents).

Sit on the ground (in the dust).

No longer in an elevated position.

Humiliated to a lower place (like regular people).

Applies also to Natural Israel and to the religious system in particular. (Isa. 52:2; Ezek. 8)

Lam. 1:1-6; 2:8-10

Similar language to Isa. 3:26

1:1-6 has many parallel symbolisms.

2:8 – Daughter of Zion

2:9 – Gates destroyed, leaders brought down

2:10 – Elders sit upon the ground, sackcloth, etc.

Loss of support and power is indicated in verses 25 and 26. (John Gill commentary suggests the loss of support by civil power.)

Jer. 14 also relates to verses 25 and 26

Verse 1 talks about drought (“sword” in verse 25).

Verse 10 shows the judgment aspect against Judah and Jerusalem.

Verse 18 parallels to Ezek. 7:15.

## Chapter 4

4:1 *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.*

[Q851:2]

In that day: the Time of Trouble – Armageddon

Seven women: the complete nominal church – Babylon mother and daughters

Take hold [in order to be] called by thy name [Christians], [and] to take away our reproach.

Eat our own bread:

Their own doctrines.

Could show humbling in no longer eating the bread of others.

Could also show humbling in a possible parallel to Rev. 16:10.

The humility could also be merely an outward pretension.

Wear our own apparel:

Their own righteousness.

Before, they wore the apparel of kings. This fits with the humbled condition.

By “thy name” – the “one man” Jesus – to be called Christians

Take away the reproach:

Shame for all they have done, the darkness being brought to the light.

A continuation of 3:26, the humiliated condition (sitting on the ground) with desperate hopes of regaining her former glory, and the support of increasing members.

Reproach = criticisms that they are not the true Church.

“Take away” can mean “to gather”

On the one hand: the seven women gather together, seeking a confederacy.

On the other hand: Zech. 14:2,4 – the nations are gathered together against Jerusalem.

4:2 *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.*

In that day – Armageddon, as in verse 1.

This fits with the characteristics of Jesus “in that day” as shown in this verse.

Jesus (and the Church) are in the glorified condition at the climax of Armageddon.

Branch: [H6780] Same as in Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Jer. 33:15; Zech. 6:12, referring to our Lord.

In the New Testament: Rev. 22:16

In what way is the branch “beautiful and glorious?”

Beautiful in the sense of splendor.

Glorious in the sense of the condition of the Divine Nature [Isa. 28:5]

“The fruit of the earth”

Deut. 26:1-4

The faithful remnant of Israel.

The completion of the Church. (Jas. 5:7)

Israel will be fruitful at that time – Hos. 10:1; Isa. 37:31; Ezek. 36:8

Excellent and comely – as an ornament, beauty, honor, majesty.

The “escaped from Israel” [H6413] (Same word as “deliverance” in Joel 2:32.)

Spiritual Israel (Isa. 37:32)

Those who have left Babylon, and are gathered to the “carcase” – (Matt. 24:16,28)

Three categories in this verse:

Branch – Jesus in his glorious condition.

Fruit – the Vine of God’s planting. (Natural Israel: Isa. 5:7; Psa. 80:15) – at peace.

Escaped from Israel – the Church – these are the ones that are “comely” or beautiful.

*4:3,4 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: (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.*

What is the time-setting?

“In that day . . . it shall come to pass.” (Later in “that day” than in verse 1.)

The Church is gone.

Those remaining in Jerusalem are Natural Israel who have come back to God.

Jesus has already fought for Israel and those who remain have accepted him as Messiah.

The New Covenant is in operation. (See Isa. 2:3)

The Ancient Worthies are on the scene (those “written among the living” [in the book of life] who were recorded in Hebrews 11 and have received a better resurrection.)

Zech. 14:17-19; Joel 2:28,32 are pertinent to the time-setting and circumstances.

Who are those that are left in Zion?

Left [H7604] = delivered survivors (passed through the Time of Trouble) [Isa. 37:30-32]

Zion = spiritual phase

The last members of the Church now glorified. [1 Thess. 4:17 “with the Lord”]

Who are those that remain in Jerusalem?

Remain [H3498] = remnant

Jerusalem = earthly phase

Those of Natural Israel who came back to God and survived Jacob’s Trouble.

Why are they called holy?

Both classes have passed their test.

Jerusalem (Natural Israel) has been “purged” or cleansed and have come back to God.

Who are those *living* in Jerusalem?

Literally: recorded among the living

Is this a separate class from those that *remain* there?

How does this compare with them that are *escaped* of Israel? (verse 2)

The *escaped* were previously identified as the Glorified Church.

The escaped are gone while those that are living in Jerusalem remain.

Not the same class.

In what way is the filth of the daughters of Zion washed away?

Daughters of Zion = the Nominal Church

All the plagues have been poured out.

See: Isa. 28:7,8 – showing the filth of the daughters of Zion, the Nominal Church. This can also apply in principle to the “Nominal” Jews (blood purged).

The systems are destroyed at this point, but the people remain.

The tares are all burned and have returned to the “earth” where they belong.

See: Isa. 22:14 – their iniquity will not be washed away until the systems are “dead.”

How is the blood of Jerusalem purged from the midst of her?

All the blood shed, both of the Prophets and of Jesus. (Lam. 4:11-13; Matt. 23:30; 27:25)

The Jews have recognized and accepted Jesus as Messiah.

Ezek. 20:38 [H1305] regarding purging out the rebels.

What is the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning?

Justice meted out in destruction.

*4:5,6 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. (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.*

Signs of the Lord’s care for them day and night under the organization of the New Jerusalem.

Dwelling place = central ruling place or government

Assemblies = the people

Cloud, smoke and fire – not natural, since they cannot physically see the Church.

Shadow from heat, place of refuge, covert from storm and rain, protection from trouble and tyrants (like the walls of the New Jerusalem) [Isa. 11:9, 25:4,5; 65:25]

Showing a condition of safety and refuge. [Under the New Covenant – Heb. 12:18-24.]

Reminiscent of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, however “Tabernacle” [H5521] is the same word as in the *feast of booths*. (Lev. 23:34) It is *not* the same word as used for the Tabernacle proper. [H4908]

## Chapter 5

### OVERVIEW:

Helpful references:

- R1896 The woes of intemperance
- R2904 The parabolic vineyard wasted
- R3892 Do all as unto the Lord
- R4256 Hell hath enlarged herself
- R4794 The song of the vineyard
- R5112 Come and let us return

This chapter contains a parable, as indicated by the great similarity to our Lord Jesus' parable recorded in Matthew 21:33-46 and Mark 12:1-12. See also Luke 13:6-9.

There seems to be a four-fold application of this chapter:

- 1) To Isaiah's generation of Jews and the Babylonian captivity which followed.
- 2) To the Jewish religious system at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent
- 3) To the Nominal Christian system at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent
- 4) Moral lessons regarding intoxication and misuse of wealth.

### The parable – verses 1-7:

*5:1,2 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: (2) And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.*

“Beloved” and “wellbeloved” refer to God as the husbandman.

First of all, Isaiah is the one who is “singing” and shows the close relationship of Isaiah, the other Prophets and Ancient Worthies to God.

Relates to John 15:1-8.

God says he was a “husband” to the Jewish nation. (Isa. 54:5-8; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16:32; Hos. 2:2-7,14-20)

The Nominal Church had a special position of favor.

Both Nominal systems were punished in the same way.

Jer. 2 – also focuses on the sins of the priesthood.

Rev. 14:18-20 – the vine of the earth and the great winepress

The symbol of a vineyard is very appropriate when applied to natural and spiritual Israel.

The vine is not big like other trees, or outwardly attractive, but the value is in the fruitage.

A grapevine requires a lot of special care and attention.

The vineyard in this context represents a favored condition:

The “roots” of this arrangement had their beginnings with Abraham.

See: R4794 – “The Song of the Vineyard”

A “fruitful hill” – the Prophets, the Word of God, (eventually Jesus)

Fenced (protected by the Law, the Prophets and special arrangements)

Stones gathered out (removed the difficulties which weigh down or stumble) [Isa. 62:10]

The vine was specially chosen. (The richest promises of the Kingdom and its blessings)

A tower in the midst (watchtower)

The Prophets and prophecies, esp. those which warned them of danger.

The Church (Micah 4:8)

A winepress or more appropriately a winevat (to collect the juice)

Expectation of good fruitage.

Instead, the fruitage was actually poisonous. [H891]

This favored condition was for:

Isaiah’s generation of Jews,

The Jewish religious system at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent,

The Nominal Christian system at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent,

The True Church.

Both “houses” of Israel: Isa. 8:14; Heb. 3:1-6.

Possibly also the World of Mankind. (Joel 2:22)

The very fruitful hill:

The Lord provided very blessed circumstances for the development of the favored ones.

The problem was not with the “fruitful hill” or the vinedresser, or the vine, but with the fruitage.

*5:3,4 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. (4) What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?*

Jer. 2:21 – Paraphrase: “What did I do wrong to you?”

The “wild grapes” (Hebrew: stinkberries) in verses 2 and 4

Deut. 8:13,14 (pride); Hos. 10:1 (selfishness); Deut. 32:15-18 and 2 Kings 17:10-16 (idolatry); Ezek. 23:17,30,37,39 (symbolic adultery).

Babylon, the Nominal Church, was guilty of the same sins. (Jer. 1:16; 50:2; 51:47,52; Ezek. 16:46-49)

5:5,6 *And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: (6) And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.*

No hedge – a barrier of thorny plants that kept out grazing animals and wild beasts.

The prophets will be taken away.

Eaten up: burned, made of no effect, loss of protection.

No wall – an additional barrier, showing a double protection that would now be removed.

God removes His special protection, allowing Israel to be besieged and taken.

The special protection was for the sake of the good fruits, until the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent rejection. (70 weeks prophecy) [See also: Matt. 23:37]

The same is true of the Nominal Church which was protected until the call: “Come out of her my people.” (Rev. 18:4)

Trodden down: Especially during the Times of the Gentiles. (Luke 21:24) But only temporarily. (Rom. 11)

Goes to waste: rejected and becomes desolate, ruined. Abandoned as further efforts are futile.

Regarding Israel:

During the 70 years of desolation

With the destruction of Jerusalem in 69-73 a.d. (Matt. 23:38)

Also regarding Babylon: Isa. 47:8-11

And those who came against Israel: Isa. 51:22,23

To several classes, because they failed to help the poor: Isa. 10:2,3; 17:8-10

The burden of Damascus: Isa. 17, esp. verses 12-14.

Neither pruned nor digged:

Pruning = striking strings of musical instruments (no joyful celebrations, etc.)

[H2167 – identical with H2168 through the idea of striking with the fingers...]

Ezek. 26:12-14; Rev. 18:21-24

Three groups – Natural Israel, Babylon [Tyre], all the nations (Isa. chapter 24 and chapter 8 – esp. verses 19 and 21)

Digged: Instead of a gathering out of stones there is a scattering.

Briars = hard stone – “adamant stone” (Zech. 7:12-14 uses the same word.)

Thorns = meanness bringing upon them desolation (Isa. 7:23-25; 42:13 and context)

Clouds shall give no rain – loss of Truth and Blessings (Deut. 11:14,17; 32:2; Ezek. 22:24, 34:26; Hos. 6:3; Joel 2:23; Zech. 14:17)

*5:7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

Vineyard of the LORD = Jehovah.

See: Hab. 3:17; Matt. 20:1-16; Matt. 21:33-41; John 15:5.

Vineyard and pleasant plant – religious systems. Natural Israel and also Christendom. [R5112]

Instead of Judgment and Righteousness there was oppression and a cry (a shout of injustice).

Shed blood: Ezek. 22; Ezek. 33:25; Joel 3:19; Hab. 2:8; Rev. 17:6; 18:24; 19:2.

Unjust: Mic. 3:9,10.

Related to the 1<sup>st</sup> woe against the rich and powerful. (Jas. 5:4 and context)

General lessons of blessings and curses under the Law, unthankful, proud, etc.

Deut. 4:9 – Forgetfulness as a danger.

Deut. 9:4,5 – Israel was not blessed because they were better than others.

Deut. 15:7 – Hardness of heart and lack of love for those less fortunate.

Deut. 28 – Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

Deut. 30 – especially verses 6 and 9

Pride was a big problem for many:

King Saul

The Scribes and Pharisees

The Jewish nation in general

The Nominal Church

There are important lessons for us in all this.

We must properly appreciate all that the Lord has given us. We must have a proper character in order to be able to “bear” all these blessings from the Lord without them being a cause for pride, etc.

Luke 12:48 – *“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.”*

## **The six woes – verses 8-23:**

Woe: expressing grief, sorrow or mourning. (Actually shows God's love. Chastisement is for their good, but God is grieved at the need for this.)

Verses 8 to 23 give the reasons why God was displeased with Israel and rejected them. The same principle applies to Christendom.

*5:8-10 Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! (9) In mine ears said the LORD of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant. (10) Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.*

Russian verse 8: "...so that there is no room left for others..."

Join house to house:

Greedily buying up houses (large landholders) in violation of the Jubilee arrangement, charging exorbitant rents, forcing tenants to practically become slaves.

Join: [H5060] to take by violence, including taking another's wife.

Oppress or defraud, including by false or unscriptural teachings.

Applies to Israel, Babylon and Christendom.

Micah 2:1,2 contains parallel expressions.

Lay field to field:

Amass wealth and control the sources of wealth and power.

Zech 9:3; Mic. 3:11

Adding to their riches, power, control (trusting in alliances, etc.) [Isa. 8:9,10]

Many houses shall be desolate: [H8047] ruin, consternation, dismay

Houses referring to powerful people.

Houses can also apply to the rich or to the systems and institutions.

This condition will become desolate, ruined, etc.

May be placed alone – from pride and glory

Represents a standing, or condition.

Selfishness and greed wants to take everything, to dominate all.

The false teachings take the people away from being one with God and the spirit of the world enters in.

Their accumulated wealth and power shall become desolate = ruin to all three time groupings.

Isaiah's day: Isa. 13:9; Zech. 7:14 (70 years desolation)

1<sup>st</sup> Advent "your house": Matt. 23:38 (69 a.d.)

Christendom: Rev. 17:16; 18:19 (climax of the Time of Trouble)

Birth pangs, wars – Matt. 24:6; Hag. 2:22,23; Joel 3:9-12

The penalty given is an act of retributive justice.

One acre = one day's plowing – but even 10 together bring only one tenth normal. And one Homer = 10 ephah, so again only one tenth normal

The yields here mentioned are practically a total failure, representing a total loss of revenues bringing about financial ruin.

Zech. 8:10

The 10 acres of Vineyard yields one bath: Wine = doctrine (men will depart from the religious systems and their doctrines).

Sowing of a homer yields an ephah = preaching will not be listened to because men will not want to listen.

There are many parallels to the Time of Trouble upon Christendom.

*5:11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!*

Applications for both Natural Israel and Christendom.

Rise up: load up on the back of man or beast. (Luke 11:46) [ISV]

Early in the morning: corruption of the Truth at the beginning of Gospel Age. (2 Cor. 11:13; Phil. 3:2; 2 Thess 2:7-12; 1 John 2:18; Jude 1:4)

Strong drink:

Partaking of false doctrine, the spirit of the world, etc. (Isa 1:11, Jer. 51:7; Rev. 17:1-4; 14:8)

Israel: Mic. 2:11

Christendom: Isa. 29:9; Joel 1:5

Causes bad vision and poor judgment – Lev. 10:9; Isa. 28:7

Can cause a false sense of well-being, euphoria, exempt from the sufferings of others, inflamed with cruelty, self-exaltation.

Priests, scribes, pharisees, priests of Christendom, etc.

Such excesses sparked the Reformation

Ironically, God will make them drink of the cup of wrath. (Obad. 1:15,16)

“Well into the night” – the night of sin, including throughout the entire period of the Gospel Age. (Psa. 30:5; Matt. 24:43; 25:6; Rom. 13:12)

5:12 *And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.*

Instruments:

1 Sam. 10:5 (anointing of King Saul) contains all four instruments. Could refer to the Word of God being in their feasts (prophesying), but regarding not the work as being the Lord's work, but rather of their own hands (mingled with pride, traditions, etc.).

Of joy and praise, but in the delirium of their false conceptions of God's character and plan.

Their feasts – selfish indulgence.

Regard not – do not consider, look to attentively, study, etc., and have no respect for the Word or work of the Lord.

This is the effect of the accumulation of wealth.

They do not see the mighty work of God in the setting up of His Kingdom, hence they see it as a *strange* work. (Isa. 28:21)

(Psa. 19:1-4; 44:1; 143:5)

### **Consequences follow these “woes”**

5:13 *Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.*

My people *are gone* [*go into* or *will go*] into captivity:

In Israel and Christendom

Literally with the Jews in the 70 years of desolation and at the First Advent.

Symbolically with Nominal Christians (professed people) who became captive to their ambitious leaders, clergy, the popes, etc.

They have no knowledge:

Lack of genuine truth

See Rotherham (taken away captive before they know it)

Honorable men are famished:

Religious leaders such as the pharisees, teachers, popes, clergy, etc.

From lack of genuine spiritual food based on the Word of God.

The multitude are dried up with thirst:

The followers of these religious systems

From lack of truth and satisfying explanations. (Amos 8:11; Jer. 14:3)

Spiritual drought during the 1260 years, but also afterwards until the end.

R2904 – regarding both hunger and thirst due to evolution, higher criticism and false doctrine.

5:14 *Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.*

“Therefore” – as a consequence of lack of Truth and interest in the Truth, etc. (verse 13)

Hell – (sheol) destruction, oblivion:

For Natural Israel – in Isaiah’s time and at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent.

For Christendom – at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent

Enlarged (open mouth), without measure:

An appointment with destruction without measure.

A time of trouble such as never was.

Destruction of the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple and the 70 years of desolation which followed.

Destruction of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple and Jerusalem and the Diaspora which followed.

Time of Trouble since 1914

If the trouble were not cut short, no flesh would be saved. (Matt. 24:22)

Glory, multitude, pomp, those that rejoice, all descend into oblivion:

Ezek. 27:27 provides interesting details. (“Company” is the same Hebrew word as “multitude”.)

Complete destruction

Glory – pride, honor and majesty

Multitude – of adherents, power and wealth

Their pomp – arrogance, celebrations, ceremonies, etc.

Those that rejoice – those who were linked by personal interest to Babylon, and “rejoiced” in her, then see that their advantages are destroyed and that their beliefs were based in falsehoods.

Descend into it:

Total destruction of those systems and everything associated with them.

Including the destruction of their false beliefs and the hopes built thereon.

5:15-16 *And the mean man [mankind] shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled: (16) But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.*

Some translations add the word *Zion’s* before *the mighty man*.

Mankind in general “the little ones” will be brought down “in that day”. (Isa. 2:9,11,17)

Laid prostrate in the dust

Like cutting down a tree

Thoroughly humbled and in despair

The [mighty] men will be humbled [humiliated].

Men in general based on the Hebrew (they didn't get what they wanted, but still have this wrong attitude – jealousy).

Humbled – literally: brought down to a lower position [H8213] diminished or “sunk”

The eyes of the lofty will be humbled. (Ps. 2; Isa. 40:4; Ezek. 21:26; Luke 18:14)

Lofty: proud, haughty, arrogant leaders who selfishly exalted themselves.

The systems themselves. (Isa. 26:5, 29:4)

Humbled – [H8213 again]

The LORD will be exalted and sanctified.

In contrast to the self-exaltation and un-holiness of the ones punished.

Judgment – in the Great Time of Trouble (Isa. 26:9; 29:18-21; Ezek. 38:20-23; John 5:29)

In righteousness – under the New Covenant

Sanctified – appreciating his holiness, complete control, engendering trust. (Ezek. 39:27)

*5:17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.*

In Isaiah's time:

After the fall of the 10-tribe Kingdom foreigners occupied their northern lands.

The 2-tribe Kingdom was also warned not to fall into the same dangers.

In the future Kingdom arrangement:

Lambs shall feed [in their own pasture].

Those places greedily and wrongly possessed by the rich.

Rightfully belonging to the sheep class who follow Jesus and feed on the Word.

Strangers [new inhabitants] will partake of the waste places of the fat ones.

The poor people who had nothing because of the oppression of the rich.

These new inhabitants will “eat” (occupy) the ruined places of the wealthy.

Micah 4:4

### **More woes**

*5:18-19 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: (19) That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!*

The unjust, immoral, etc., class – especially the religious leaders. (verse 19)

During the Great Time of Trouble when all injustice is being punished.

You draw [sow] iniquity [or pride, evil ambitions, perversity] with cords [measuring line] of [sin and falsehood] vanity [evil, including immorality, idolatry].

Contrast with Hos. 11:4

R3892 – the poor groaning creation, like a slave bound to sin like a cart rope, and are consequently inclined to doubt “the Holy One of Israel” and the Bible. [2 Pet. 3:4]

By “sowing” iniquity it has an advancing and accumulating effect. This adds to the burden they are pulling.

“Your lies [iniquities] are like ropes by which you drag along sin and evil.” CEV

You [leaders and false prophets] say concerning the Holy One of Israel:

Let him make speed.

Let him hasten his work, that we may *see* it. Let his counsel draw nigh and come, that we may *know* it.

Human reasoning, relying on the senses.

Lacking faith.

Mark 15:31,32 – 1<sup>st</sup> Advent mocking.

All this seems like the scoffing of 2 Pet. 3:3,4 and defying God.

Ironically, this will bring punishment upon them even more quickly (make speed).

Barnes notes: They add one sin to another in defying God, pretending He does not punish sin, and consequently plunge more deeply into iniquity, and so the judgments and woes must come upon them – Characteristic of the end of the age and why the woes come.

Apostle Thomas wanted a visible sign: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed.”

*5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

Against which class is this woe?

Primarily the spiritual leaders and teachers in Israel and in the Nominal Church.

Wicked kings, rulers, and anyone who thinks they are intelligent in their own right.

The Pharisees. (Mark 3:1-6)

The Chief Priests and Pharisees. (John 11:50) “The ends justify the means.”

Eventually there will be a judgment (woe) against the religious systems, teachers, rulers, the rich, etc., and a righting of the wrongs. (1 Cor. 3:18-20).

(1) Them that call evil good, and good evil

Opposition to moral principles.

Embracing relativistic morality.

LGBTQ [love accepts anything]

A description of this class: Rom. 3:13,14

“Modern lingo” makes bad to be good and good to be bad.

(2) Them that put darkness for light, and light for darkness

Reversing truth and error, changing the light to darkness (and vice-versa).

Light is Truth, Darkness is Error: Isa. 2:5; Prov. 6:23; Isa. 51:4; Acts 26:18

Wrong theories and ideas

Satan’s tactic: 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14,15

Another Gospel: Gal. 1:6,7

“Give out darkness for light.”

(3) Them that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter

Consequences of the false doctrines

Satan uses various methods to lead God’s people astray from sacrifice.

R5183 – “The Arch-Enemy of the People of God”

The Prosperity Gospel vs. the Covenant by Sacrifice

Doctrine of the Mass vs. the Ransom

The resurrection is something sweet, but is made bitter by the immortal soul doctrine.

Eternal torment prized as a “sweet morsel” – (A159)

Ecc. 11:7 has the same three elements in a positive way.

This verse relates to the next verse (woe) by showing what is behind these wrong practices.

5:21 *Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!*

Isa. 29:13,14; Prov. 3:7; Matt. 11:25; Luke 10:21

A temporary condition: Mal. 3:15

This worldly wisdom is foolishness in God’s sight. (1 Cor. 1:19,25-31; 1 Cor. 3:19)

The proper perspective: Job 28:20,21; Prov. 9:10

This is an evil intelligence. They say that God’s people are stupid, but such are really “simple-minded” (“babes” in Luke 10:21) in the sense of being humble. ( 1 Cor. 4:13)

Scientists realize that the Earth is very special, but they insist on evolution as the explanation at the level of the Universe and are looking for other planets that “evolved” like Earth.

5:22-23 *Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:  
(23) Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!*

The International Sunday School lessons focused on this woe as a temperance lesson, but Brother Russell took advantage of the opportunity to give a prophetic lesson.

Wine = false doctrines in this context. The spirit of the world. (Eph. 5:18)

Making strong drink = mixing religious doctrines with non-religious philosophies, etc.

With the Jewish system the Bible was mixed with the Talmud, etc.

With the Papacy the Bible was mixed with heathen philosophies, etc.

Isa. 28:7 (parallel passage)

R4288 – “Intoxicating errors pervert the judgment and hinder a proper view of the divine word and the simplicity of the Gospel.”

Reward = bribe or gift (Exod. 23:8; Deut. 16:19)

Chief priests: Matt. 28:12

Indulgences of Papacy “justify” the guilty for money.

Taking away the righteousness of the righteous:

The Jews killed the prophets. (Matt. 23:37)

Jesus the “Just One” was murdered. (Acts 7:51-53)

Many were martyred under Papacy for telling the Truth.

### **More consequences**

*5:24 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.*

*5:25 Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*

*5:26 And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:*

*5:27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:*

*5:28 Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind:*

*5:29 Their roaring shall be like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it.*

*5:30 And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.*