

ISAIAH 2¹

Man's Pride Humbled

The Nations Stream to Zion

1 The word (דָּבָר) that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 It shall come to pass in the latter days (בְּאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים)² that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be lifted up above the hills.³ And all the nations (גּוֹיִם)⁴ shall pour out in a river (נָחַל) to it, and many peoples (עַמְּמִים) shall come and say:

Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach (יְרִי) us his ways and that we may walk (הֵלֵךְ) in his paths.

For out of Zion shall go forth the law (תּוֹרָה), and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations and shall decide disputes for many peoples. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.⁶ Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.⁷

5 O house of Jacob, come, let us walk (הֵלֵךְ) in the light of Yahweh.⁸

¹ Is 2-4 are a literary unit within the introduction (Is 1-5). Is 2:2-4 is the ideal Jerusalem, Is 2:5-4:1 is the actual Jerusalem, and Is 4:2-6 is the new Jerusalem (Is 4:2-6).

² Most translations understand this phrase to refer to the eschatological era (cf. “in the latter days” in ESV, and “in the last days” in KJV, NIV, HCSB, and NLT). The phrase “end of days” occurs thirteen times in the OT. It often refers to the future in a general way (see Gen. 49:1; Num. 24:14; Deut. 31:29; Jer. 23:20; 30:24; 48:47; 49:39). On other occasions it appears to refer more specifically to the culminating period in Israel’s history when God destroys his enemies and vindicates his people (see Deut. 4:30; Ezek. 38:16; Dan. 10:14; Hos. 3:5; Mic. 4:1). The situation described in vv. 2-4 is the result of the purifying judgment and restoration of Is 1:26-27. See *The Messianic Kingdom*.

³ **Ezekiel 40:2** 2 In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south.

⁴ All nations will one day worship Yahweh. So why not get started worshipping Yahweh now?

⁵ See *God as Teacher*.

⁶ This is reversal of Joel 3:10. **Joel 3:10** 10 Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears.

⁷ Peace on earth will happen only when Messiah Jesus rules. Today’s wars prove Jesus is not ruling yet. “For Isaiah, living in the 8th century B.C., facing the Assyrian menace, war meant (a) bloody slaughter on the battlefield in hand-to-hand combat, (b) siege warfare, resulting in starvation and atrocities, such as eating one’s own children, (c) destruction of crops, (d) the raping of helpless women and the slaughter of innocent children, (e) the slave trade, and (f) the deportation of entire population groups to foreign lands. But all this will change in the day of Jerusalem’s glorification. Nations will plant crops instead of going to war; they will listen to God’s teachings and allow him to mediate their differences.”

⁸ Israel must walk in the light of Yahweh before the nations may go up to Zion and learn. The believer’s job is to practice today what all believers will practice in the future. We do this by obeying God’s commands in grace and modeling true peace (see Ro 14:19; 2 Co 13:11; Col 3:15; 1 Th 5:13; Heb 12:14). Vv. 5 and 22 are an inclusio.

Israel's Compromise with the Pagan Nations

6 For you have rejected your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of things from the east and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines,⁹ and they strike hands with the children of foreigners. 7 Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures. Their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots.¹⁰ 8 Their land is filled with idols. They bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.¹¹

Man's Pride Will Be Humbled

9 So man (אָדָם) is humbled, and each one is brought low—do not forgive them! 10 Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of Yahweh and from the splendor of his majesty.¹² 11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, the lofty pride¹³ of men shall be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. 12 For Yahweh of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low:

13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up, and against all the oaks of Bashan;

14 against all the lofty mountains and against all the uplifted hills;

15 against every high tower and against every fortified wall;

16 against all the ships of Tarshish and against all the beautiful craft.

17 And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. 18 And the idols¹⁴ shall utterly pass away. 19 And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of Yahweh and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. 20 In that day man (אָדָם) will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats, 21 to enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from before the terror of Yahweh and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify (עָרַץ) the earth. 22 Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?¹⁵

⁹ Divination was prohibited in Israel (Dt 18:10), but in the ancient Near East it was a popular form of discerning the divine will and receiving guidance for life (Dt 18:14). Active omens included examining the internal organs of animals and casting lots. Passive omens came in celestial, terrestrial, and physiognomic forms. Omen reading was essentially an attempt to manipulate one's destiny. Once the (hypothetical) future was known, one could then seek to avoid disaster by using magic.

¹⁰ It's okay for a nation to have horses and chariots (aircraft carriers and F-22s) for national defense. But ultimate trust must not be placed in them.

¹¹ Yahweh has rejected Israel because she has compromised with the nations. She was to be a nation set apart.

¹² See *The Glory of God*.

¹³ See *Pride*.

¹⁴ See *Idolatry*.

¹⁵ See *The Fear of Man*.

Biblical Worldview

1. In the future, Jerusalem will be the capital of Jesus' worldwide kingdom.

- a. **Is 2:1-3** 1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
2 It shall come to pass in the latter days (בְּאַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים) that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be lifted up above the hills. And all the nations (גוֹיִם) shall flow [as a river] to it, 3 and many peoples (עַמִּים) shall come and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.
- b. Here, “the latter days” refers to the 1000-year Messianic kingdom and/or the period of the new universe, both of which are still future to us.
 - (1) The phrase “latter days” occurs thirteen times in the OT. It often refers to the future in a general way (see Gen. 49:1; Num. 24:14; Deut. 31:29; Jer. 23:20; 30:24; 48:47; 49:39). On other occasions it appears to refer more specifically to the culminating period in Israel’s history when God destroys his enemies and vindicates his people (see Deut. 4:30; Ezek. 38:16; Dan. 10:14; Hos. 3:5; Mic. 4:1).
 - (a) **Dt 4:30** 30 When you [Israel] are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to Yahweh your God and obey his voice.
 - (b) **Da 10:14** 14 ...Came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.
 - (c) **Hos 3:5** 5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek Yahweh their God and David their king, and they shall come in fear to Yahweh and to his goodness in the latter days.
 - (2) The situation described in vv. 2-4 is the result of the purifying judgment and restoration of Is 1:26-27.
 - (a) **Is 1:26-27** 26 I [Yahweh] will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you [Jerusalem] shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. 27 Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who change their mindsets, by righteousness.
 - (3) Many theologians do everything they can to explain away the earthly, literal, physical Messianic kingdom on earth, centered at Jerusalem. They are wrong.
 - (a) The phrase “in the last days” (בְּאַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים) cannot be associated with the millennium or with the church age in Isaiah’s thinking, because such concepts were not known to the prophet. He is simply talking about the last events in human history, when the kingdom of God would begin. New Testament readers must be careful not to read later NT information back into earlier texts and make them say things that God did not reveal to the prophets (G. V. Smith, [Isaiah 1–39](#), NAC).
- c. Jesus himself will rule as king over Israel and the nations from Jerusalem.
 - (1) “Lanier and I are in Israel on a DTS tour. It has been a wonderful experience. Jesus will one day rule this earth from where we are tonight! Sending much love. Kathy Burns.”

- (2) Zion will be the joy of all the earth. That's where Yahweh will be praised by nations forever.
 - (a) **Ps 48:1-2** 1 Great is Yahweh and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, 2 beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King.
- (3) Ultimately, Yahweh's name will be great among the nations.
 - (a) **Mal 1:11** 11 For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts.
- (4) The nations will come voluntarily, transcending nationalism and acknowledging that the God of a single nation, Israel, is the God of all nations (Motyer, 54).
- d. Jesus' kingdom will be greater than all kingdoms that have gone before, including Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Great Britain, the United States, Russia, and China.
 - (1) **Da 2:44-45** 44 In the days of those kings [symbolized by the clay and iron toes] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, 45 just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.
 - (2) The emphatic position of *Zion* here stresses the fact that there are not many ways to heaven (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:117).
- e. Believers from every nation will go to Jerusalem to be taught directly by King Jesus.
 - (1) Notice the river of the peoples goes uphill.
 - (a) "The incongruity of a stream flowing upwards to earth's highest point is intentional; a supernatural magnetism is at work."¹⁶
 - (2) The nations need the teaching of Jesus.
 - (a) "Unless God teaches we cannot walk, but unless we come he cannot teach" (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:117).
 - (3) While Jesus' teaching is available in some sense now in the Church age, it will be available more directly and to a much greater degree in the future.
 - (a) "[W]e await Christ's second coming for the complete fulfillment of this promise, but the partial fulfillment began at Pentecost" (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:116-17).
- f. The contemporary prophet Micah echoed Isaiah along these lines in Mic 4:1-5.
 - (1) **Mic 4:1-5** 1 It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills, and peoples shall flow to it. 2 And many nations shall come and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into

¹⁶ Motyer, 54.

pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. 4 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of Yahweh of hosts has spoken. 5 For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of Yahweh our God forever and ever.

(2) Micah's use of Isaiah's prophecy shows inspiration can involve guidance in the utilization of already-existing materials (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:115).

g. Concrete application.

(1) As Christians, we must have a Zion-centered vision.

(2) We should love, pray for, and support our nation and its government officials. It's good and worthwhile to pursue national blessing through righteous laws and high moral conduct. However, our ultimate allegiance lies with King Jesus.

(3) Our end goal is not to "Make America Great Again" or to "Make New Zealand Great Again."

(4) Our eyes must be fixed on the coming of Jesus and the establishment of his worldwide kingdom.

2. Only when Jesus personally rules from Jerusalem will there be peace on earth.

a. **Is 2:4** 4 He [Yahweh] shall judge between the nations and shall decide disputes for many peoples. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

b. The presence and truth of Yahweh will exercise a supernatural magnetism, producing a reordered world and a new humanity. Zion will be the centre of world-wide attraction, revelation, and peace.¹⁷

(1) People will be right with God, the curse will be removed, Satan's dominion will end, and an ideal environment will proceed forever.

(2) The change of war implements to agricultural implements implies a return to Eden.

(a) **Is 11:9** 9 They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea.

c. Assuming Is 2:1-4 describes the 1000-year Messianic kingdom, the means, practice, and mentality of war will disappear until the Gog-Magog revolt.

(1) **Re 20:7-10** 7 When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them. 10 And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

d. We need a king with infinite power and perfect character to rule over us.

(1) The globalist dream of an earth without war is not possible without the personal presence of Jesus.

¹⁷ Motyer, 53.

- e. Application.
 - (1) Don't join "peace on earth" or "unity" initiatives that aren't centered on the literal second coming of Jesus.
 - (a) **Ge 11:4** 4 Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.
 - (2) New Zealand's war readiness is in a pitiful state. It needs to reverse course.

3. Israel must walk in the light of Yahweh to fulfill her destiny, and one day she will.

- a. **Is 2:5** 5 O house of Jacob, come, let us walk (הלך) in the light of Yahweh.
- b. The question is: Given Yahweh's indictment of Israel in Is 1, how will Israel ever be able to walk in the light of Yahweh?
- c. Under the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, Israel has a special privilege and responsibility in God's plan. She must walk rightly, so that the nations may walk rightly.
 - (1) **Dt 4:5-8** 5 See, I [Moses] have taught you [Israel] statutes and rules, as Yahweh my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 6 Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. 7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as Yahweh our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? 8 And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?
 - (2) "If others are ever to say Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord (3), Judah must heed the call Come...let us walk in the light of the Lord (5)" (Motyer, 53).
- d. The call by John the Baptist, Jesus, Peter, and others for Israel to change her mindset was a call for Israel to walk in the light of Yahweh so that Yahweh could bless the nations through her.
 - (1) **Ge 12:3** 3 In you [Abram] all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
 - (2) **Ge 22:18** 18 In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you [Abraham] have obeyed my voice.
 - (3) John the Baptist:
 - (a) **Mt 3:1-3** 1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight.
 - (4) Jesus:
 - (a) **Mt 23:37** 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!
 - (5) Peter:
 - (a) **Ac 3:25-26** 25 You are the sons of the prophets and of the [Abrahamic] covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 26 God, having raised up his

servant [Jesus], sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.

- e. In the future, Israel will become the vehicle through which God will bless the nations.

4. Israel was called to be different from the nations, but she became just like them.

- a. **Is 2:6-8** 6 For you [Yahweh] have rejected your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of things from the east [Assyria and Babylonia] and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines [the west], and they strike hands with the children of foreigners. 7 Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures. Their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots. 8 Their land is filled with idols. They bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.
- b. Israel borrows the pagan ways from east and west. She is looking in every direction but up.
 - (1) The contrast between v. 3 and v. 6 is noteworthy. There the nations have come to Jerusalem to learn God’s ways. Here Jacob is full of the nations’ pagan ways (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:122).
 - (2) Israel has compromised with the pagan nations by doing what they do:
 - (a) Filling their homes with pagan merchandise.
 - (b) Engaging in fortune-telling (see Dt 18:10-14).
 - (c) Entering agreements with pagans.
 - (d) Pursuing wealth.
 - (e) Trusting in military power (see Dt 17:16-17), and
 - (f) Engaging in idolatry.
 - (g) Solomon’s career mirrors this compromise (1 Ki 10:26-11:8).
 - (h) Uzziah’s long reign during the Assyrian lull prior to Tiglath-pileser III’s accession (745 bc) had given an opportunity unlike any since Solomon’s time to amass wealth and power (2 Ch 26:6-15).
- c. Israel cannot fulfill her purpose because she has lost her distinctiveness.

Ideal Situation (Is 2:2-5)	Actual Situation (Is 2:6-8)
The world is drawn to Zion	Israel chooses to conform to the world
The world seeks spiritual benefit	Israel heaps up material wealth
The consequence of coming to Zion is peace	Zion is full of armaments
The world seeks to know the true God	Israel busily invents her own gods

- d. The church, too, loses her distinctiveness and cannot fulfill her purpose when she compromises with the world system.
 - (1) In what areas are we, the New Zealand church, compromising with Satan’s world system?
 - (a) The biggest area of compromise for the New Zealand church is in how we think about the world—our worldview.
 - (2) God will not use believers and churches who lose their distinctiveness by compromising with the world system.

- (3) **Jas 4:4-5** 4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
- e. To fulfill its purpose, the New Zealand church must regain its distinctiveness through the understanding and application of God's word.
- 5. By compromising with the nations, Israel has joined in their pride against God.**
- a. **Is 2:8-9** 8 Their land [Israel] is filled with idols. They [Israel] bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made. 9 So man [including the nations and Israel] is humbled, and each one is brought low—do not forgive them!
- b. Vv. 8-9 are a transition between the compromise of Israel and the pride of man. The two concepts are linked together.
- c. As Israel is to the nations, so the Church is to the world.
- (1) The Church is not Israel, nor has the Church replaced Israel. But in the dispensation of the Church age, it is the Church, not Israel, charged with representing God and proclaiming the gospel. So the history of Israel during the age of Israel is instructive for the church during the age of the Church.
- d. When we compromise with the world, we join in the world's pride against God.
- e. When we join in the world's pride against God, we are asking for divine discipline.
- 6. Objects that are tall, strong, and beautiful often signify the pride of man.**
- a. **Is 2:11-16** 11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. 12 For Yahweh of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low: 13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up, and against all the oaks of Bashan; 14 against all the lofty mountains and against all the uplifted hills; 15 against every high tower and against every fortified wall; 16 against all the ships of Tarshish and against all the beautiful craft.
- b. Isaiah lists eight tall things to symbolize the pride of man in his day.
- (1) Cedars of Lebanon and Oaks of Bashan.
- (2) Lofty mountains and uplifted hills.
- (3) High towers and fortified walls.
- (4) Ships of Tarshish and all beautiful craft.
- (a) These were the largest ships of their day, capable of the greatest voyages and cargoes.¹⁸
- c. The tower of Babel is the prototypical tall object signifying man's pride.
- (1) **Ge 11:4** 4 Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves....
- d. Many ancient religions saw their gods as dwelling on a high mountain (Olympus for the Greeks or Cassius for the Phoenicians)(Oswalt, *NICOT*, 2:117).
- (1) Temples were usually built on the highest place available so they would be closer to heaven (Smith, *NAC*, 1:129).

¹⁸ Motyer, 57.

- e. In *The Lord of the Rings*, evil is symbolized by tall, strong towers.
- f. The Empire State Building in New York, and various skyscrapers in Asia and other places symbolize the strength and independence of man.
- g. New Zealanders are quite good at knocking down tall things, like poppies.
- h. These are just symbols. What God really opposes is man's arrogance, independence, pride, and self-sufficiency. It is these the prophet is attacking.

7. There is a future day when Yahweh will exalt himself and humiliate man's pride.

- a. **Is 2:11-12** 11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. 12 For Yahweh of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low.
- b. **Is 2:17** 17 The haughtiness of man shall be humbled, the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day.
- c. **Is 2:20** 20 In that day man will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold....
- d. The day of Yahweh is that future period when he will make his power and character absolutely clear to every human being. It includes the seven-year tribulation, the second coming of Jesus, and the 1000-year Messianic kingdom. The events of those periods (all future to us), will:
 - (1) Bring low man's arrogant demeanor (v. 11, 17).
 - (2) Humble man's lofty pride (v. 11, 17).
 - (3) Exalt Yahweh alone (v. 11, 17).
 - (4) Cause idolatry to cease (v. 20).
- e. Today, man's level of pride against God is greatly increasing. We're in for trouble.
 - (1) "People's proudest achievement is to dispense with the living God and to become god-makers."¹⁹
- f. Here we see the biblical view of history. It is fundamentally linear, not cyclical.
 - (1) To say there is a day in store for humanity means time is linear, not circular. Days do not simply come around. Within the series of divinely planned and sent days there is in reserve a day that is specially Yahweh's, to be inserted into the time-line at a point he alone determines (Motyer, 57).

8. For unbelievers, the future day of Yahweh will be a time of incredible terror.

- a. **Is 2:10** 10 Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of Yahweh and from the splendor of his majesty.
- b. **Is 2:19-21** 19 People shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of Yahweh and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. 20 In that day man will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats, 21 to enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from before the terror of Yahweh and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify (עֲרִיץ) the earth.

¹⁹ Motyer, 58.

- c. The opening of the sixth seal in Re 6 describes this same type of event.
 - (1) **Re 6:12-17** 12 When [Jesus] opened the sixth seal, I [John] looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. 14 The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth, the great ones, the generals, the rich, the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?
- d. Unbelievers will try to hide from God's wrath, but they will not be able to.
 - (1) **Am 9:2-4** 2 If they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them. If they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down. 3 If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search them out and take them. And if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. 4 And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them. And I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good.
 - (2) "Since there is no possible way for people to actually hide from God, this must be an ironic picture of people foolishly running into graves cut from the rocks or holes dug in the ground—hardly safe places to hide if one is fearful of death" (Smith, *NAC*, 1:139-40).
- e. The day of God's wrath is not something Christians need to apologize for.
 - (1) "God makes no apology for that day, nor is there any attempt by the prophet to make God's actions more humane or 'politically correct.' God will totally devastate the proud. They will finally meet the real holy God that they attempted to define out of existence by reconstructing his ways after the desires of their own imagination" (Smith, *NAC*, 1:140).
- f. Application.
 - (1) We need to communicate clearly and effectively in New Zealand today about the consequences of not obeying the gospel through faith.

9. When Yahweh finally reveals his majesty, people will rush to get rid of their idols.

- a. **Is 2:18-20** 18 And the idols shall utterly pass away. ...20 In that day man will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats.
- b. God will make it so clear he is the one, true, living God that all men will finally throw away their idols.
 - (1) "The God from whom their self-worship has alienated them will appear, and there will be no more cause to glory in human greatness than there would be to praise a flashlight in broad daylight. ...[I]t will be true terror to meet the Holy God having lived our lives for ourselves.... When God appears all the attempts to deify parts of creation are seen for what they are—foolishness (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:128).

- (2) The idols “will disappear and be abandoned (2:18, 20) because people will finally understand that they are nothing when they experience firsthand the majestic power of God’s glory” (Smith, *NAC*, 1:141).

10. Given the day of Yahweh is coming, our fear of man must cease.

- a. **Is 2:22** 22 Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?
 - (1) **Ac 4:19-20** 19 Peter and John answered [the Jewish leaders], Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, 20 for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.
 - (2) **Ga 1:10** 10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Messiah.
 - (3) **Ro 1:16** 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- b. If we fear man and not God, we cannot fulfill the purpose for which we were created.
 - (1) “[T]o attempt to exalt myself is to become nothing, adrift in a meaningless universe, in dread over nameless horrors which threaten me; to submit to the exalted Lord is to know myself picked up, declared his child, and made vice-regent of the universe, my Father’s home” (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:128).
- c. Fear of man is ruining the people’s lives, including the lives of believers.
 - (1) Fear of man is ruining New Zealand youth, who are basing their identity on whether their social media posts are liked.
 - (2) Fear of man is stopping New Zealand Christians from sharing the gospel.
 - (a)
 - (3) Fear of man is preventing New Zealand Christians speaking out boldly on societal issues.

Notes