

THE BIG PICTURE OF SCRIPTURE THROUGH THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS
WEEK 4 – Judgment? Restoration? WHY?
February 13, 2024

Immediately following the stinging indictment from God in Isaiah 1:1-4, where we viewed a courtroom setting with God bringing a charge against Israel re: their sinful practices, in Isaiah chapter 2, Isaiah prophesies the restoration of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom/the Kingdom of God! This powerfully dramatic true message from God is a continued theme in Isaiah! Judgment/discipline/chastisement on Israel will be followed by the fulfillment of the promises (land, THE Seed, blessings) in the Millennial Kingdom.

Isa. 2:1- The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

Isaiah prophesied from 739 BC to 686 BC. This prophecy is directed towards the southern Kingdom of Judah and its capital, Jerusalem, in the land of Israel.

Isa. 2:2- Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.

...in the latter days – (Hosea 3:4-5 [prophesied from 755 BC to 710 BC – a contemporary of Isaiah's; there was a king on his throne in Hosea's day and in Isaiah's day) - For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. ⁵Afterward the children of Israel shall return (following the exile in Babylon) and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days. In the context, the latter days refer to the "time of the Messiah," the Millennial Kingdom when the Messiah will reign on this earth for 1,000 years (Psa. 72; Isa. 11:4-9; Jer. 23:5-6; Eze. 43:1-12; Lk. 1:32-33). Deut. 4:30 - When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice.

...the mountain of the LORD's house – referring to Mt. Zion the location of the temple in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3). Mountain can refer to a Kingdom in Scripture. This is the location of the center of the Kingdom of God on earth.

*Zech. 14:10-11, 16 - All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place... **11** The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.... And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles celebrates God dwelling with the children of Israel. The Feast of Tabernacles finds its fulfillment in the Millennial Kingdom – God dwelling with us!!*

...shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills – geographical changes (Zech. 12:4).

...and all nations shall flow to it – at the outset of the Millennial Kingdom those who are born again Gentiles within the nations will enter the Millennial Kingdom/the Kingdom of God along with the born again Jewish people.

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Isa. 2:3-4 - *Many people* (representing the nations/the Gentiles) shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hook; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. During the reign of Jesus, there will be no more war. The weapons of war will be crafted into agricultural implements. Conflicts will be resolved by Jesus. Why am I making that statement?

Psa. 2:6-9 – God tells us, 'Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion' (on earth). The Messiah Jesus then makes this declaration ⁷ I will declare the decree: the LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You (I have brought You forth). ⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. ⁹ You shall break (rule over) them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel (there will be non-believers in the Millennial Kingdom, the breaking and dashing is in response to sinfulness).

What is the purpose of the Millennial Kingdom?

To glorify God – Hab. 2:14 - *For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD....*

To vindicate God – His plan will be fulfilled! His will be exalted!

To set My King on My holy hill of Zion (Psa. 2:6) – to rule and reign over the earth.

To give Jesus His inheritance (Psa. 2:8) – the nations.

To redeem the creation (Rom. 8:21-22 - *...the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God... ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs....* The curse will be reversed. God will restore His original creation...His original plan for the world. Restoration – to return to its former condition.

To restore Israel – God will fulfill His unconditional covenant promises (Abrahamic: land, THE Seed, the blessings). And to give the sons of Levi the opportunity to offer to the Lord offerings in righteousness (Mal. 3:3) in the Millennial Temple.

To evangelize – Zech. 8:23 - *Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.'* ²³ 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In

those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'

To crush the last Satanic rebellion (Rev. 20:7-10) – and cast the devil into the lake of fire and brimstone.

To proclaim final VICTORY!

The restoration following judgment is noted in most of the Prophets. God's message to the children of Israel through the Prophets (840 BC through 430 BC), while warning them of the consequences of their veering from Him, God wanted His people to be aware that He would protect His covenant nation. God told them that they would continue to exist even though they would be taken into captivity (Isa. 66:22)!

God exhibited tough love in His covenant relationship with Israel while always protecting them.

Deut. 32:10; Zech. 2:8 – God called Israel the “apple of His eye.” “Apple” – pupil.

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Deut. 32:10 - In the wilderness God *encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye.*

Zech. 2:8 – Jesus said that God the Father sent Him to the nations which plundered Israel - *for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.* Harming God's people is like striking the pupil of God's eye.

Psa. 17:8 – David, in prayer to God said, *Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings...PROTECTION!*

Matt. 23:37 – Jesus wept over Jerusalem and said, *How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!*

Eze. 16:8, 15, 60, 62 - *I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine,” says the Lord GOD. ...¹⁵ But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot...⁶⁰ “Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you...⁶² ...Then you shall know that I am the LORD,*

How should I understand God's judgment? What is your view of God?

Before we ask the question, “Why would God....?” ...we need to ask, “WHO is God?” Our understanding of God's judgment must be grounded in His attributes which define WHO He is!

God is holy, just, eternal, self-existent, three in one, immutable (unchangeable), infinite (w/o origin), self-sufficient, righteous (eternally right), omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, transcendent (above time and space), faithful, good, gracious, merciful, loving, sovereign.

God is ALL of these and more, SIMULTANEOUSLY, ALL the time!

When God is confronted by unholiness on the part of man, our holy God responds. And, in His judgment, God remains fully faithful, merciful, gracious and loving. He is fully God in every

moment! God remains consistent. He is true to His word. God has always carried out what He declared He would carry out and will always carry out what He said He will.

Throughout the Prophets we see that He extends mercy to the guilty. In His grace and compassion, God called the children of Israel back to Himself repeatedly. God's purpose in His judgment/chastisement among the children of Israel was not destruction but reconciliation. Israel is His covenant nation/covenant people. God's motivation was not revenge, but compassion.

- *Return to Me* (Jer. 3:7) - God extends an invitation.
- *Return, backsliding Israel...I am merciful* (Jer. 3:12).
- *'Return, O backsliding children,' says the LORD; 'for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion* (Jer. 3:14). Appears to be individuals from the nation who will return – the remnant.
- *Return, you backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings* (Jer. 3:22).
- *And I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and will rebuild those places as at the first. ⁸I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me. ⁹Then it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations of the earth, who shall hear all the good that I do to them; they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide....* (Jer. 33:7-9).

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CONSIDER: Have you heard people say, "A God without judgment is a God of love." What are they expressing? They MUCH prefer a God of love. How would you answer that statement? God is ALL of His attributes, SIMULTANEOUSLY, ALL the time!

When we think of this world system...do we want God to look the other way and not confront the evils and deception? We desire JUSTICE! We want a God Who is both gracious and just. Isn't it our desire for our God to exercise loving justice and love that is just?

Only God can accomplish that work. And, in His mercy He did so through Jesus' death on the cross. God's ultimate judgment for humanity's evil rained down, not on us, but on HIMSELF in the person of Jesus (I and the Father are one [Jn. 10:30]; if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father [Jn. 14]; Elders were called upon *to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*)

Jesus died the death of a criminal. He took upon Himself the judgment of God to pay the penalty we owed for our sin. Jesus died the death we deserve!

God's perfect love and perfect justice collided which has resulted in eternal grace for those who believe.

When we reflect on His full character and genuinely seek to know Him, we discern that He alone can deliver true justice...and He does so in perfect love!

JESUS, Redeemer, Messiah, Son of God, LORD, have mercy on me a sinner!

QUESTIONS:

As we have been broadly looking at Biblical foundational truths from some of the prophetic books, has your understanding of these books changed? If so, in what way?

What are your questions? Please write them down and give them to Cathy.

Do you have questions re: the "end times," the "latter days"?

Have you been sharing what you're learning with someone? If so, do they have questions?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 4 with the Bible references.

Jot down observations and your questions.

In your journal also record how God is transforming you through the truths in His word.

Begin to answer some of your questions from Scripture.

Pray about with whom you might share what you're learning.

Read Week 5's handout when you receive it.