

Session 1

Forsaking Jacob and the Day of the LORD

Isaiah Oracle by Oracle / Dr. Randy White

Isaiah 2:6-22

Session Purpose

Isaiah 2:6–22 explains why the LORD has forsaken the house of Jacob, shows the humbling force of the Day of the LORD against every form of human pride, and closes by commanding the reader to cease trusting in man.

Forsaking of the House of Jacob for Idolatry and Treasures (vv.6–9)

- Isaiah moves from talking to the house of Jacob to talking directly to God. In vv. 1–5, God is spoken of in the third person; in v. 6, the address shifts to the second person singular.
- Note the pair “therefore” and “because” (v. 6). It is not one redundant phrase.
 - **Therefore** is backward-looking, because of vv. 2–4.
 - **Because** is forward-looking, because of vv. 6–9.
 - One way to understand the flow is this: “In light of what the LORD is going to do in the future (vv. 2–4), the house of Jacob should therefore walk in the light of the LORD.”
 - Then a new sentence begins: “thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because ...” Thus vv. 6–9 answer why God has forsaken Israel.
- Note that the **house of Jacob** is called **thy people**.
 - The term is defined in its first use in Genesis 46:27.
 - Covenant theology has to spiritualize **house of Jacob** to make it fit its broader view of God’s people.
- A litany of reasons for God to forsake His people is then announced.
 - **replenished from the east** (v. 6) — presumably rather than trusting in the Lord
 - **soothsayers like the Philistines** (v. 6) — turning to pagan divination instead of God’s word
 - **please themselves in the children of strangers** (v. 6) — joining themselves to foreign ways and alliances
 - **land is full of silver and gold**

- (v. 7) — material abundance can foster self-sufficiency and pride
- **there is no end of their treasures** (v. 7) — their wealth has become excessive and spiritually dangerous
- **land is full of horses** (v. 7) — trusting in military strength rather than in the Lord
- **there is no end of their chariots** (v. 7) — multiplying instruments of war shows misplaced confidence
- **land is full of idols; they worship the**

- work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made** (v. 8) — they are making idols and then worshipping what they made
- **the mean man boweth down** (v. 9) — idolatry has spread through the common people
- **the great man humbleth himself** (v. 9) — idolatry has also captured the leaders and mighty

The Humbling of the Lofty and Exaltation of the LORD Alone (vv.10–17)

- Now Isaiah switches pronouns again, and the second-person singular is Israel.
- Verse 10 is an encouragement / warning to **Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust** because they are about to encounter the glory and majesty of the LORD.
 - Compare Revelation 6:15–17.
- Verses 11–17 display the “target audience” of **the day of the LORD** (v. 12). These include:
 - The *lofty and haughty* (v. 11) and *proud* (v. 12) **shall be brought low** (v. 12)
 - **the cedars of Lebanon** (v. 13) — the great and majestic
 - **the oaks of Bashan** (v. 13) — the strong and established
 - **all the high mountains** (v. 14) — exalted powers
 - **all the hills that are lifted up** (v. 14) — lesser but still proud powers
 - **every high tower** (v. 15) — human defenses
 - **every fenced wall** (v. 15) — trusted fortifications
 - **all the ships of Tarshish** (v. 16) — commerce and wealth
 - **all pleasant pictures** (v. 16) — objects of human delight and glory
- The result is that **the loftiness of man shall be bowed down and the haughtiness of men shall be made low** (v. 17), and **the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day** (v. 17).

Abolishing Idols and Fear of the LORD Causing Hiding (vv.18–21)

- The idol worshipers (v. 8) ultimately lose when the Day of the LORD arrives.
- The idols: **he shall utterly abolish** (v. 18).
- Verses 19–21 describe the activity of the idol worshipers on that day:
 - **they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth** (v. 19)
 - They do this for **fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty** (v. 19)
 - They respond when **he ariseth to shake terribly the earth** (v. 19)
 - **a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold ... to the moles and to the bats** (v. 20)
 - **they shall go into the clefts of the**

rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks (v. 21)

- They do this **for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty** (v. 21)
- They respond when **he ariseth to shake**

terribly the earth (v. 21)

- The statement **when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth** (v. 21) is a frightening description of the coming Day of the LORD.

Ceasing From Man Whose Breath Is in His Nostrils (v.22)

- The instruction is to the **house of Jacob** (v. 5), and it instructs them to **cease ye from man**.
- That is:
 - stop trusting man
 - stop esteeming man
 - stop structuring life around human strength, wealth, idols, and systems
- Man's **breath is in his nostrils** — that is, he is a created being, and thus owes allegiance to his Creator.
 - Genesis 2:7 — God **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**
 - Job 27:3 — implication of the frailty and weakness of man
- The question **wherein is he to be accounted of?** means, by what means would he be considered of value?