

The Church in Prophecy

The Heavenly Jerusalem

SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 2:1-4

INTRODUCTION.

- A. The prophets of the Old Testament *“spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”*
(2 Peter 1:16-21)
 - 1. The prophets foretold:
 - a. The rise and fall of Israel.
 - b. The rise and fall of other nations.
 - c. The coming of the Christ as well as His death, burial, and resurrection.
 - d. The coming of the church, the body of Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem.
- B. In this lesson, we will consider a brief history of Jerusalem and the temple and then focus on the fulfillment of Isaiah 2:2-4.
- C. Let’s begin with Jerusalem and the temple.

I. JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE.

- A. Around 1003 B.C., King David took the city of Jebus from the Jebusites and called it Jerusalem. David made it the capital of the nation of Israel.
- B. God gave King Solomon the privilege of building the temple.
 - 1. The temple would take over the role of the tabernacle.
 - a. The tabernacle was currently in Gibeon.
 - b. The ark of the covenant was currently in Jerusalem in David’s tent.
 - 2. Solomon built the temple of the Lord *“at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.”* (2 Chronicles 3:1)
 - 3. The furnishings from the tabernacle were moved into the temple, including tabernacle itself. (1 Kings 8:1-9)
 - a. The altar of burnt offering

- b. The bronze laver
 - c. The table of showbread
 - d. The altar of incense
 - e. The golden lampstand
 - f. The ark of the covenant – This item had been in a temporary tent made for the ark of the covenant in Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 6:17) When David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, the tabernacle built by Moses was still at Gibeon. (1 Chronicles 21:29-30)
- 4. When the priests came out of the holy place, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. (1 Kings 8:10-13)
- 5. The Lord told Solomon, *“For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.”* (2 Chronicles 7:12-16)
- C. Once the temple was built, the city of Jerusalem became the center point of religious service to God for the nation of Israel.
 - 1. David wrote, *“Jerusalem is built a city that is compact together, Where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, to the Testimony of Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD.”* (Psalms 122:3-4)
 - 2. The temple was considered the house of the Lord. He would put His name on the temple. (1 Kings 8:29; 9:3)
 - a. *“that Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, My name shall be there,’ that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place.”* **1 Kings 8:29**
 - b. *“And the LORD said to him: ‘I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.’”* **1 Kings 9:3**
 - 3. Within the temple, the priests would offer up offerings and sacrifices to the Lord.

4. Within the temple, the priest would make atonement for the people.
(Leviticus 16)
5. The Lord would hear prayers and respond to His people. (cf. 1 Kings 8:30-53)
6. Three times a year the men of Israel were to travel to Jerusalem and the temple of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 16:16-17)
 - a. *“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. 17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.”*

II. ISRAEL BROKE GOD’S COVENANT.

- A. The Lord’s presence was conditional.
 1. The Lord would continue His presence in the temple and with the Israelites if they kept the covenant He had made with their fathers. (2 Chronicles 7:17-22)
 2. Take note of verse 19-20, *“But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, then I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.”* (2 Chronicles 7:19-20)
- B. The people broke their covenant with the Lord.
 1. Jeremiah said Israel had broken God’s covenant with them.
 - a. *“They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.”* (Jeremiah 11:10)

- b. *“not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.”* (Jeremiah 31:32)
- C. By turning away from their covenant with God, Israel rejected everything associated with the covenant.
 - 1. Israel rejected the holy temple and the presence of the Lord.
 - 2. Israel rejected the law and the priesthood.
 - 3. Israel rejected the sacrificial system set up to forgive them of their trespasses.
 - 4. Israel rejected Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the mountain of the Lord.
- D. The Lord would save for Himself a remnant of the Jewish people. (Isaiah 10:22,23; 1:9; cf. Romans 9:27-29)

III. THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

- A. The prophet Isaiah prophesied the coming of heavenly Jerusalem.
 - 1. Isaiah highlighted Israel's sinful state in chapters 1-3.
 - a. A state of desolation. (Isaiah 1:7-8)
 - 1) “Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; strangers devour your land in your presence; and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a hut in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.”
 - b. A state of harlotry. (Isaiah 1:21)
 - 1) “How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.”
 - c. Greatly influenced toward disobedience. (Isaiah 2:6-8)
 - 1) “filled with eastern ways”
 - 2) “They are soothsayers like the Philistines”
 - 3) “They are pleased with the children of foreigners”

- 4) The sought the accumulation of wealth and power, no longer relying upon God.
 - a) The sin regarding horses may refer to Deuteronomy 17:16.
- 5) They turned to idolatry, worshiping things created by their own hands. Isaiah lays out the folly of this sin in Isaiah 44:9-20.
- d. Their day of reckon was coming. (Isaiah 2:12-22)
- e. God would take away and judge their leaders. (Isaiah 3:1-15)
- f. God rebuked the vain and worldly women of Judah. (Isaiah 3:16 – 4:1)
2. In the latter days, Zion would be glorified. (Isaiah 2:2-4)
 - a. “In the latter days...” At some point in the future, as determined by the Lord, these events would be fulfilled.
 - b. The mountain of the Lord’s house would be exalted above all the hills and mountains of the world. (Isaiah 2:2)
 - c. All nations would flow to the mountain of the house of the Lord. Many people will say, “Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord.” (Isaiah 2:3)
 - 1) To the house of the God of Jacob.
 - 2) God will teach them His ways and they would walk in His paths.
 - 3) Out of Zion would go forth the Law.
 - 4) Out of Jerusalem would go the word of the Lord.
 - d. God would judge the nations and rebuke many people. (Isaiah 2:4)
 - 1) This portion of the prophecy looks forward to a time when anyone can learn about the Lord and call upon the Lord for salvation.
 - 2) Heavenly Jerusalem would unite all who “come to the mountain of the Lord.”
 - 3) All of mankind would be rebuked and judged by God.
3. The Branch of the Lord. (Isaiah 4:2-6)

- a. *"In that day the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious;..."*
(Isaiah 4:2) Several Old Testament prophecies carry the idea of the Branch of the Lord.
 - 1) Isaiah prophesied, *"There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD."* (Isaiah 11:1-2)
 - a) The Spirit of the Lord rested on Jesus at Jesus' baptism.
(Matthew 3:16-17)
 - 2) Isaiah prophesied, *"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious."* (Isaiah 11:10)
 - a) Paul quotes this verse regarding the salvation of the Gentiles. (Romans 15:12)
 - b) Jesus referred to Himself as the *"Root and the Offspring of David."* (Revelation 22:16)
 - 3) Jeremiah prophesied, *"Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* (Jeremiah 23:5-6)
- b. At this time the Lord would wash away the *"filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst."* (Isaiah 4:3-4)
- c. The Lord would *"create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering."* (Isaiah 4:5)

- 1) We see an illusion to the children of Israel being led out of Egypt.
They protected His children and cared for them.
 - d. The Lord would provide a shelter, comfort, and protection for those who remain in Jerusalem and are holy. (Isaiah 4:6)
- B. Zechariah gives a similar prophecy. (Zechariah 8:1-3)
1. The Lord would return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.
 2. Jerusalem would be called...
 - a. The city of Truth,
 - b. The Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, and
 - c. The Holy Mountain.
- C. When were these prophecies fulfilled?
1. Let's go back to Isaiah's statement, "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days..." (Isaiah 2:2)
 - a. When Jesus began His teaching, He said, "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand...*" (Mark 1:15)
 - b. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, in quoting Joel, said, "*And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;..*" (Acts 2:17)
 - c. Paul wrote, "*...that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ.*" (Ephesians 1:10)
 - d. Paul referred to it as "*when the fulness of time had come*" God sent Jesus to "*redeem those who were under the law.*" (Galatians 4:4)
 - e. The writer of Hebrews wrote regarding the teachings of Jesus that God had "*in these last days spoken to us by His Son.*" (Hebrews 1:2)
 2. The "latter days" statement pointed to Jerusalem, after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.
 - a. Just before His ascension, Jesus told His apostles "*that repentance and remissions of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*" (Luke 24:47)

- b. Jesus also said, *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* (Acts 1:8)
 3. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles. (Acts 2:1-4)
 - a. They preached the message of Jesus Christ and salvation. (Acts 2:22-36)
 - b. We also see a reference to the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. (Acts 2:16-21; cf. Joel 2:28-32)
 4. The events of Pentecost fulfilled Isaiah 2:2-4.
 - a. The gospel ("word of the Lord") began going forth from Jerusalem on Pentecost. Isaiah wrote, *"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."* (Isaiah 2:3)
 - b. The church became the exalted *"mountain of the Lord"* where God's ways are taught.
 - 1) The church teaches the *"word of the Lord."*
 - 2) People from every nation come to learn the word of the Lord and how to walk in the paths of the Lord.
 - 3) The *"word of the Lord"* draws people from every nation, including both Jew and Gentile.
 - a) The inclusion of Gentiles is seen in prophecy as well in application throughout the book of Acts. (Romans 9:24-29; cf. Hosea 2:23)
 - b) Paul wrote, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."* (Galatians 3:28-29)

- 4) There would be peace within heavenly Jerusalem. (Ephesians 2:14-18)
 - a) Isaiah wrote, *"...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."* (Isaiah 2:4)
5. The apostle John saw the New Jerusalem.
 - a. The apostle John wrote about the New Jerusalem that is from above. (Revelation 3:12; 21:2-3)
 - b. John saw the wife of the Lamb, the New Jerusalem. (Revelation 21:9-23)
 - 1) In his letter to the church in Ephesus, Paul speaks *"concerning Christ and the church"* as a husband who loves His wife. (Ephesians 5:22-24, 25-33)
6. The writer of Hebrews tells us that we have *"come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,..."* (Hebrews 12:22-24)

CONCLUSION.

- A. I would like to share with you Homer Hailey's concluding thoughts from this commentary on Isaiah, at the end of chapter four:
 1. "The latter days have come; the mountain of Jehovah's house has been established above the hills, and all nations have been flowing unto it for nearly two millennia. God judges as He translates the saved into the kingdom of His Son. Zion's wickedness and the fruits of her idolatry have been judged by Jehovah and purged and cleansed by a fire from His presence, leaving her redeemed and made fit as a dwelling place for Jehovah. And the beautiful Branch has appeared, bringing glory to the city of spiritual Jerusalem. It is the only kingdom on earth sustained and

extended by a spiritual rather than physical sword; it is the only place where true peace can be found.” (A Commentary on Isaiah, Hailey, pg. 62)

- B. You can be a part of the heavenly Jerusalem today.
1. Leave the “valleys of the world” and come to the mountain of the Lord and learn from His word.
 2. Repent of your sins and be buried with Christ through baptism. (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4)
 3. Become a part of the kingdom which cannot be shaken. (cf. Hebrews 12:28)

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by John M. Duvall – March 22 & 29, 2026 – File #: 1443, Church

Preached at the Seminole Pointe church of Christ in Edmond, Oklahoma