

Isaiah 2:1-22.**Human failure, God's faithfulness.**

Overview. Isaiah's analysis of the current situation (2:5-4:1) covers similar ground to that addressed in 1:2-31. However, 2:5-21 focuses on the religious situation and the failure of the false gods; and 3:1-4:1 revisits the collapse of society due to moral failure. (notes especially from Alex Motyer, Isaiah, Comm.).

V. 1 -4. What might have been – the ideal. Isaiah 'saw' = was revealed to Isaiah by God. There is a very similar poem in Micah 4:1-4, probably taken from Isaiah. This poem reflects the universal claims of Gen. 12:2-3; and 22:16-18 (2:2b-3a), the 'whole world will be changed, but it also has a clear challenge in Isaiah to his contemporaries. Before the world is able to say, 'come let us go up' (3) the Lord's people must heed the call, 'come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord' (5). 'In the last days' indicates that these days are always imminent. These days express the certainty of God's plan and the urgency of being ready.

- **Note the connection between coming to God and being taught by Him so that we live for Him.** Jerusalem is symbolic of God's presence – to which the incarnate one came and where he was crucified and rose from the dead.
- **Note the Divine human interplay.** People are drawn by God (2, supernaturally), and they come voluntarily (3). They come to learn (3, He will teach,), to obey (3, we may walk), to receive what cannot be had elsewhere (3, the law will go out from Zion), and this teaching is nothing less than the 'word of the Lord' (3).

Vs. 5-21. The actual Jerusalem in Isaiah's time.

This brutally realistic section begins and ends with an exhortation to walk with, depend on, trust God not man (5 and 22). The exhortation (5) implies that God's people are not walking in His light, which is revealed by the critique from verses 6-21. **This section can be divided into two poems.**

- **The first (6-9) proclaims the impossibility of blessing, because of the unfaithfulness of the people.** 'You have abandoned' (6) and 'do not forgive them' (9), bracket the reasons for God's rejection and His lack of mercy. The people are 'conforming to the world' (6), seeking worldly resources and security (7), and are worshipping man-made idols (8).
- **The second poem (10-21) asserts that judgment is certain.** The themes of human self-sufficiency (11, 17, see 6-7) and idolatry (20, see 8) continue in the second poem. **Added in the second poem is the idea of God revealing His majesty (10) which results in the humbling of human arrogance and pride (11-17), the exposing of human idols as useless (18-19, idols – 'elilim' = non-entities; this is a pun on 'elohim' = God] – idols may seem to be the real thing but they are not.) and the realisation of human defencelessness (20-21) before the Lord Almighty. God simply reveals Himself.**

Reflection/Response. How do we acknowledge the awesome presence of God in the way we live our daily lives? How do our lives express our thanks to God for His grace shown to us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for us?