

ISAIAH

Chapter 4

In that day seven women will take hold of one man and say, “We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes; only let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace!”

4:1–2 *In that day.*† See notes on 2:2 and 2:11, 17, 20. (CSB)

4:1 See note on 3:6. War will decimate the male population (3:25; see 13:12), leaving many women with the double disgrace of being widows and childless. See 54:4. (CSB)

The male population will be so decimated that once-proud women will experience the “reproach” of lacking children and husbands unless they degrade themselves by becoming concubines. (TLSB)

On Roman commemorative medals, struck after the destruction of Jerusalem, Judea is pictured as a sorrowful, remorseful woman, looking down to the ground. Something unnatural occurs then. Women seek men for themselves. Yes, seven women will grab hold of one man. He will not have to feed and clothe them. They simply wish to become his wives and bear his name. He should merely relieve them of their single status and childlessness. Such scenes, as pictured here, were sins the days of Isaiah oft repeated in the history of Judah-Jerusalem. For repeatedly God gave the faithless city into the hands of its enemies. Already this side of Judgment Day, in this present time, the proud, arrogant joy of women is quite often changed into mourning and humiliation. (Stoeckhardt)

Seven, that is, many. There will be such great poverty that without men the women will be left abandoned. There will be widows and many orphans. The only thing they desire is to live with men. It is the duty of the men to support their wives, but it is the duty of the wives to be in charge of the household. Here, however, because of the greatness of the disaster, some give up their duty, which they have from God. They are willing to be servants and to support themselves. Understand, however, that here God is threatening them that He will overthrow the order for them. (Luther)

CALLED BY YOUR NAME – Women will forego normal cultural patterns of marriage in desperate attempts to find a husband to support them. This exemplifies the nation’s fate. (TLSB)

Only permit us to be called your wives and to have refuge with you. Here there was also an end to the law (Deut. 25:5) concerning the brother who was under obligation to raise up seed, etc. Here to call means to name. It is a Hebraism just as in Genesis. I want Ephraim and Manasseh to be called by the name of the fathers, to be called sons of Jacob and of Abraham (cf. Gen. 48:16). "Thus there your name was also given to us, that is, let us be called by your name." (Luther)

TAKE AWAY OUR DISGRACE – Woman is the glory of man," we read in 1 Cor. 11:7. Without him she is without head and without offspring, and in the Old Testament, too, the barrenness to which they are compelled here by the scarcity of men was a disgrace. And this is the end of the third chapter, which deals with the punishment that lasts even to the present day. Some, however, have read this prophecy as pertaining to Christ; but they have been mistaken, for here the prophet is speaking of the scarcity of men. (Luther)

The Branch of the Lord

²In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. ³Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. ⁴The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit ^a of judgment and a spirit ^b of fire. ⁵Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over all the glory will be a canopy. ⁶It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.

4:2–6 An oracle of redemption just before the long message of indictment and judgment in ch. 5. It balances that found in 2:2–5, which immediately follows the long message of indictment and judgment in ch. 1 (see note on 1:1–31). These two oracles of redemption were intended to complement each other. (CSB)

4:2–3 *survivors ... are left.* See note on 1:9. (CSB)

The Hebrew mind often thought in terms of parallelism. (There is a table that attempts to capture the pairs on PBC pp. 66-67) The verse divisions are indicated by the lines. The terms that are parallel are in the same column. For example the "Branch of the Lord" and the "fruit of the land" are equal thoughts and are parallel. "Beautiful" and "glorious" are equal and parallel, but they describe the Branch of the Lord, while "pride" and "glory" are also equal and parallel, but they explain "fruit of the land." In the third verse our attention moves to the remnant, God's faithful people, and what the Lord would do for them through the coming Messiah. (PBC)

4:2 Luther: “Here again he consoles the remnant of the people, as in Jerusalem. Those who are left are only one cluster, yet no matter how much He afflicts them, He preserves and comforts a remnant, because the Lord will be favorably inclined to His servants, and 7,000 do not bend the knee before Baal. Consider the song of Moses (Ex. 15:1 ff.). *In that day*, namely, now, after Jerusalem has been laid waste. The *Branch* is Christ. Yet there is nothing that He seems to do less than grow. The world would rather say that Christ and His Christians are a dried up tree trunk. But they are not regarded as such before God” (AE 16:51). *In that day*. Phrase previously depicted God’s wrath (e.g., 2:12; 3:7; 4:1). Here it describes God’s healing and restoration. *branch of the LORD*. Reference to the Messiah, centering the work not on the people, but on the Redeemer (6:13; 11:1; Jer 23:5–6). (TLSB)

Branch.† A Messianic title related to the “shoot” and “Branch” (11:1; 53:2) descended from David—see Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zec 3:8; 6:12. (CSB)

pride.† A legitimate pride in the fruitfulness of the land, as symbolic of the spiritual blessings that will characterize the Messiah’s reign (see Ps 72:3, 6, 16). Contrast the pride of 2:11, 17. (CSB)

BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS – Splendid, excellent, glorious, something superb. The kingdom of the Jews was glorious in a physical way, but the kingdom of Christ is now glorious in the spirit. He says, however, that Christ should be extolled with great majesty. (Luther)

glory. Here the fruitfulness of the land will be Israel’s glory; in 46:13 God’s salvation will be her glory (“splendor”); in 60:19 God himself will be her glory. (CSB)

That which comes from importance in such a way that where there is glow, there something else is close by. But he calls Christ One who comes from the fruit of the land because He was born great from the earth, and it is His greatness that He can prevail over all His enemies and protect all His own; and this is a description of Christ as He defends us. Such a One, he says, Christ will be, but for those who will be from among those who have been snatched out of Jerusalem, as he also says. And here he sets forth the fruit of their riches which He will distribute, because Christ will be such a One not only for Himself but will distribute His benefits to the rest. Thus because of Him and through Him they will be called saints, that is, people set aside for divine purposes, people in whom God dwells and who belong to the employment and service of God. (Luther)

4:3 WHO ARE LEFT – Those who believe.

holy. Means “set apart” to God. See 1:26; 6:13; see also Zec 14:20. (CSB)

People are not holy of themselves; the Messiah calls or declares them holy. (TLSB)

WHO ARE RECORDED AMONG THE LIVING – God knows His people. He chose us and wrote our names in the Lamb’s Book of Life (cf Mal 3:16–18; Rv 20:11–14). (TLSB)

They are enrolled in the book of life, the book often mentioned in Scripture. Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; 87:6; 139:16; Dan 12:1; Rev 20:12. In other words this means: they are ordained to life, to life in the full sense of the word, to eternal life. Just as Acts 13:48 speaks of those who are ordained to eternal life. (Stoeckhardt)

Notes from Ephesians 1:5 PREDESTINED US

The Doctrine of Predestination

The primary point is that as God’s chosen we can rest assured that our salvation will not be taken away from us. Predestination is whatever God has done, is doing and still will do for us during our life on earth to bring us to faith in Christ and to preserve us in this faith unto eternal salvation. Some things to remember:

- 1) It is not a matter of chance.
- 2) It is not motivated by any personal merit on the part of humans.
- 3) People are not predestined to hell. That would be contrary to God’s will as expressed in 1 Timothy 2:4, “who desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.”
- 4) People can through willful and intentional neglect throw away their faith. There is no such thing as “once saved, always saved” [Cain Gen 4:16 – Pharaoh – Judas/Peter – Jews – Romans 1:24]
- 5) The life of the Christian is not in the hands of “fate.” In this short phrase three things are said:
 - Our destiny is in God’s hands,
 - The spirit in which God handles us is loving, and
 - Christ is the agent through whom our destiny is managed. (A)

In the NT divine predestination is always presented in the context of gratitude for God’s grace, never is the sense of blaming God or questioning God’s choices.(LL)

2 Timothy 1:9 “who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,”

JERUSALEM – In this context Jerusalem is obviously the place of the elect, therefore, the city of God, the kingdom of God. Those whom God has ordained to life have rights of citizenship in the kingdom that is not of this world, in the kingdom that endures into all eternity. The elect from the Gentiles are added to the remnants in Israel. Those who are ordained to life will then, as a result of God’s ordination, be taken out of the time of the world, will be added to God, be converted to God and sanctified. (Stoeckhardt)

4:4 WASH AWAY THE FILTH – Excrement. (TLSB)

The prophet has the remnant in mind, not those which have sinned to the extreme, who are unrepentant and will be smitten by God's anger. The survivors also, the elect, are by nature sinful, corrupt, and are in need of basic cleansing and renewing. Those who are renewed and cleansed by God's Spirit then walk in holiness and righteousness pleasing to God. (Stoeckhardt)

bloodstains. Another type of excrement or evidence of violence. Symbols of sin. (TLSB)

judgment ... fire. Purifying fire is also mentioned in 1:25; 48:10. (CSB)

A SPIRIT OF FIRE – Through the punishment He sent in the form of the Babylonians, God purged His people. He refined them by burning off the waste, that is, some of the wicked men and women who surrounded His believers in Judah. These believers would experience some of the difficulties of the captivity too, but for them it would help them focus more clearly on His promises of the coming Messiah. (Stoeckhardt)

spirit of burning. Hbr *ruach*, "spirit," can also be translated "wind." This spirit of judgment is a cleansing process. Just as soiled cloths would be burned to dispose of them, the Lord would send fiery judgment. (TLSB)

This is the judgment by which the guilty is condemned. Thus the spirit of judgment executes judgment for the purpose of purging, condemning, and cleansing the old man. Behold, it is a spirit of burning, not sluggish but inflexible and harsh. It penetrates and does not tire; it is relentless and does not flatter. It shows the endurance of the work which Christ performs in His own, of which Paul was aware when he said in Rom. 7:24: "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" First he describes the riches of Christ's kingdom, then the mortification resulting from the fruits of Christ's kingdom. Now comfort in the cross follows. (Luther)

4:5–6 cloud ... fire ... shelter. These words recall Israel's desert wanderings, when the pillar of cloud and fire guided and protected the people (Ex 13:21–22; 14:21–22). Isaiah often refers to the time of the exodus (see 11:15–16; 31:5; 51:10). (CSB)

4:5 LORD WILL CREATE – He comforts in the way the Holy Spirit usually does. It is as if He were saying: "You will be sheep for the slaughter." This is what we see today. There are no people so wretched as the Christians. They are deprived of honor, riches, life, etc., and they are afflicted with so many evils that they would all fall away from Christ if they did not receive help from God in Christ. What Christ said (John 13:16) must be fulfilled: "A servant is not greater than his

master.” And Paul says (Rom. 8:17): “Provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.” And this fight is very much against the flesh, because it is weak. The flesh has eyes only for present things; it considers good only what turns out advantageously and concludes that God is favorable only in prosperity. From adversity it concludes that God is hostile. And yet the very opposite is true here, so that it may be strengthened in such experiences. This comfort is here written by the prophet. (Luther)

A CLOUD OF SMOKE – They will have the presence, guidance, and protection God once manifested in a pillar of cloud and fire during the exodus (Ex 40:34–38). (TLSB)

It is well known from where this text was taken. It is as if he were saying: “The old has passed away, behold, the new has come” (2 Cor. 5:17). Now there will be one cloud, when this Branch will have sprung up. And he means nothing else by the pillar, etc., than the reign of faith, that Christ dwells in us through faith. He is our Mediator, Leader, Teacher, Priest; He Himself is the Pillar and the Cloud, that is, the form in which the glow of God appeared, or that in which God became manifest, as He says in John 14:9: “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” He leads us through unknown ways, through torture in the desert, in which He nevertheless protects us *from the storm*. And this is a remarkable way of speaking: That cloud, which is Christ—cling to it, and you will be safe, and yet that cloud will not appear except through the Word which protects and goes before, and we follow. (Luther)

the glory. The manifestation of God’s presence represented by a glow of flaming fire (see Ex 16:10; 24:17; 40:34–35). (CSB)

The church, every single assembly is here called “glory.” It is itself glory since it is illuminated and permeated by Christ’s grace, Spirit and gifts. (Stoeckhardt)

canopy. The cloud of smoke. (CSB)

His glory stands over all Zion and its assemblies. Instead of the terror that His presence creates in 2:10, it now brings shelter and comfort. God has not forgotten His covenant; His living presence will be among His people again, but in a greater way than when He filled the temple (1Ki 8:11; Ezk 43:1–5). (TLSB)

At that time there is a tabernacle, which serves to provide shade over against heat and the burning of the sun, as refuge and shelter from violent storm and rain. Christ, who dwells within His church, protects His church from the many dangers which encompass it. (Stoeckhardt)

4:6 SHELTER AND SHADE – Set up in the fields to provide places of rest and cover for workers. Here God is the protector. Luther: “In all things Christ is our Defense. But all of these attacks are not perceived and not felt without suffering. The sectarians will

someday feel the sun without shade, because they go to meet the naked majesty of God nakedly, casting aside the humanity and flesh of Christ. This is possible only for a time. I have often advised and still advise younger theologians today that they must so study the Holy Scriptures that they refrain from investigating the Divine Majesty and His terrible works. God does not want us to learn to know Him in this way. You cannot nakedly associate with His naked Godhead. But Christ is our way to God. Those who speculate about the majesty are crushed and led to despair by Satan” (AE 16:54–55). (TLSB)

Where the Word of God is preached, there are preaching pavilions. The cloud cools on the right and on the left, let the matter happen as it will, nevertheless that shade covers us. (Luther)

God’s presence in cloud and fire will protect and preserve redeemed Zion (cf. Ps 121:5–6). (CSB)

SHADE FROM THE HEAT OF THE DAY – There is a double attack: from the heat, that is, from fire, and from the rain, that is, from water. Thus Matt. 7:25 speaks concerning the house built on a rock and says that the strength of the Christians depends entirely on this Rock, which is Christ. The Christian has no other cover than Christ; he does not rely on the arm of flesh, for there is no salvation in man, nor on good works, for they are not good in the presence of God. The Christian should teach and act in such a way that he may dare to stand in the presence of God. But the faithful are supported by the Word alone. The heat is an internal attack, when the conscience is smitten by the wrath of God, an attack which it also feels when the wrath of God is experienced. It is called the lash of God, and that because it is a punishment that God thus inflicts in a fatherly spirit. Yet because our nature feels it with extreme anguish, it is called wrath, even though God is not angry but loves whom He chastises. Satan is added to this anguish, and despair is increased. As a result there is distress within and without, which is the heat, and it is called spiritual. God, however, chastises so that the power of the Word may be shown to us and Satan may see that the Word is invincible and so that thus the power of the Holy Spirit may be glorified. He who has regard for the crowd or tries to gain the good will of princes is deceived, because there is no help in man. Such people cause destruction. Thus God said to Ahaz that he should not fear the king of Syria and promised that He would be his protector, but Ahaz did not believe it (cf. Is. 7:3 ff.). Faintheartedness is not made strong with hands but by the Word of God, which alone heartens and causes to stand. If you trust in men, you will have help neither from them nor from God, who forsakes those who forsake Him. For the Word of God is the exceedingly strong tower of Zion and the pavilion of God offering protection in prosperity and adversity. (Luther)

STORM AND RAIN – These are the external pressures. In all things Christ is our Defense. But all of these attacks are not perceived and not felt without suffering. The sectarians will someday feel the sun without shade, because they go to meet the naked majesty of God nakedly, casting aside the

humanity and flesh of Christ. This is possible only for a time. I have often advised and still advise younger theologians today that they must so study the Holy Scriptures that they refrain from investigating the Divine Majesty and His terrible works. God does not want us to learn to know Him in this way. You cannot nakedly associate with His naked Godhead. But Christ is our way to God. Those who speculate about the majesty are crushed and led to despair by Satan. The reason for this is that they are looking for answers of a kind that they cannot know, such as for the question: Why did God condemn Judas but spare Peter?² And such a speculator argues with God as if with some potter. To keep us from striving to observe God in Himself in this matter, He came into the flesh, presenting the flesh to us, in which we might behold God dwelling bodily, as He answered Philip when the latter gazed at Him: “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). From this, then, you see the madness of those³ who say that the flesh avails them nothing (cf. John 6:63), though on the contrary God is of no avail without the flesh. Indeed no God will avail for you except the God of Him who sucked the virgin’s breasts. On Him fix your eyes. For you cannot grasp God in Himself, unless perchance you want a consuming fire. But in Christ you see nothing but all sweetness, humanity, gentleness, clemency—in short, the forgiveness of sins and every mercy, etc. When you have Him, then good for you; you are a tower of defense with God the Father. Cling to Christ, otherwise you will hear the Father Himself speaking against you when He says (Matt. 17:5): “Listen to Him.” The Jews could not listen to Him, etc. And Paul says that the deity dwells bodily in Christ (Col. 2:9). The incarnation of Christ powerfully calls us away from speculating about the divinity. I learned from Staupitz⁴ that I had been carried away to the devil by my speculations, for human weakness could not bear these if it did not gain access to God somewhere. This they know by the mercy of God, etc.: The flesh of Christ, like ours, does not strike him down who beholds it. And the man in temptation either will not know God, who created heaven and earth and did other wonderful works, or his knowledge will not give him hope and deliverance from temptation. But Christ (as this text shows in a marvelous way) is useful to us for all things and in all things, and through this very Man we are to come to God. To Him Paul and other disciples of Christ come down; they do not climb up to an observation of the majesty, or Paul was not learned because he was not a sophist. When man looks at Christ, Satan is put to flight, and the conscience of a man in temptation is made happy and free from care. God clearly demands honest and pure righteousness of us, and since no one produces it, He permits no one to approach Him by his own strength. Christ has fulfilled this for us, therefore through Christ alone we have access to the Father. To be sure, it is true that one who has never felt his sin can contemplate God, or better, weave his phantasies about God; he can for a while reach out for the godhead he has invented for himself. But one who feels his sin and becomes fainthearted from fear of God will soon withdraw his foot from his speculations and turn to Christ, and he will be better off. He will have coolness in the shade, protection in the pavilion, banishment of Satan and of evil thoughts, also strength against all the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18), etc. The names applied to Christ in this

text should, however, be carefully studied, so that we may know what has been given to us in Christ and that in Him there is victory and light, etc. (Luther)

Sometimes the visible church is persecuted, or other troubles overtake it. Believers, while they live in this world, often feel the troubles God inflicts on the ungodly. But the Lord promises to be with His people during those storm. He will guide them day and night and will shelter them. (Stoeckhardt)

4:2–6 After judgment, Israel will receive rest and shelter. Isaiah describes God’s gracious heart in the coming rule of the Messiah. The Lord’s great desire is to cleanse and cover you. • Cover my guilt, O Lord. Shelter my head from the storms of sin’s destruction. Call me holy by the work of Your Holy Spirit through the Word. Amen. (TLSB)