

# The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Many of Isaiah's prophecies pertain to the last days, the second coming, and the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. These prophecies foretell that Jesus the Messiah will smite the earth and slay the wicked at his coming, preparing the way for the glorious millennium, when he will rule with justice and righteousness. Isaiah wrote using images from his time that still carry this powerful message to people today.

## **ISAIAH 2:4**

*They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nations will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

The passage refers to the millennium, when peace will prevail. Instruments of destruction will be transformed into instruments of production. The instruments Isaiah mentions, swords, spears, plowshares, and pruning hooks, all have blades. Swords and spears are instruments that represent war and destruction (2 Nephi 1:18; 3 Nephi 2:19; D&C 45:33). Plowshares and pruning hooks represent peace and prosperity. A plowshare is the cutting blade of a plow. A pruning hook is a tool with a hooked blade that is used for pruning plants.

During the millennium nations will not participate in war, for they will destroy their weapons, making them into useful implements. Isaiah says that the nations will not even “learn war” any more.

## **ISAIAH 2:10**

*Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.*

At the great and dreadful day of the Lord, or the second coming, wicked people will attempt to hide from the Lord and his glory. They may literally hide in rocks or caves or they may try to hide their wrongs from God. Their attempt to hide will be in vain because the Lord's power and great glory illuminate everything.

Revelation 6:15 presents a scenario similar to that found in Isaiah 2:10: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains” because they feared the Lord.

## **ISAIAH 2:12-13**

*For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan.*

The phrase “day of the Lord” usually refers to the events connected with Jesus’ second coming (2 Nephi 12:12–13; 23:6, 9). The day of the Lord is mentioned five times in Isaiah 2 to emphasize the event’s importance. Throughout Isaiah, the phrases “day of the Lord,” “in that day,” “day of visitation,” “day of his fierce anger,” and “day of the Lord’s vengeance” are found more than fifty-five times. This underscores how frequently Isaiah’s writings emphasize the last days and the second coming.

Isaiah speaks of the Lord coming upon the cedars of Lebanon and oaks of Bashan in the last days. Bashan is a region east of the Jordan River and north of ancient Gilead. Lebanon is the nation immediately north of Israel known for its fine cedars. The scriptures consistently use trees to represent people (Psalm 1:3; 3 Nephi 14:17–18; D&C 135:6). In the context of Isaiah 2:11–21, oaks and cedars are like proud people, who, Isaiah informs his readers, are “high and lifted up.” The day of the Lord will come and destroy them.

### **ISAIAH 2:13, 15**

*Yea, and the day of the Lord shall come . . . upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall.*

Towers and fences sometimes represent humanity’s attempts to create protection from enemies and danger (Judges 9:46–52; Hosea 8:14). They are a demonstration of self-reliance. By contrast, the righteous rely on God for protection because for them God is a “wall of fire” (Zechariah 2:5) and a “high tower” that cannot be destroyed (2 Samuel 22:3; Psalm 18:2; 144:2). At the second coming, the Lord will destroy all man-made defenses, including towers and fenced walls. The safety they offer is temporary and unsure, but the protection the Lord offers is eternal and sure.

### **ISAIAH 2:20**

*In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats.*

When Jesus Christ comes in power, glory, and judgment upon the earth, the wicked will cast away their idols to the moles and bats. Seeing the Lord’s glory, the wicked will be ashamed of their slavish dependence on any kind of false deity, including money, lust, or power.

Moles and bats dwell in darkness in holes and caves. According to the law of Moses, bats were not fit for human consumption: “They shall not be eaten, they are an abomination” (Leviticus 11:13, 19). Throwing idols to moles and bats may symbolize destroying idols or hiding them in dark places where they will not be seen.

### **ISAIAH 10:17**

*And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day.*

Isaiah 10:16–18 describes the destruction by fire of the forests and trees when Jesus comes. The trees represent people, specifically the people of ancient Assyria and the wicked of the last days. The Lord will put an end to their evil. The forest-fire imagery parallels the section of Isaiah in which God, as the forester, cuts down the forest of Assyria with his mighty ax (vv. 33–34).

Isaiah uses the parallel terms “thorns” and “briers” frequently (Isaiah 5:6; 7:23–25; 9:18; 27:4). He identifies the wicked as thorns and briers, meaning prickly, often dry plants that torment and afflict both man and beast. The wicked, at the coming of the Lord in power and glory, will be consumed as easily as the quick burning thorns and briers.

### **ISAIAH 24:20**

*The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.*

Isaiah’s expression is poetic. He portrays the earth staggering about like a person whose sense of balance has been affected by strong drink. He also compares the movement of the earth to a man-made cottage.

The Lord says through Joseph Smith that the “earth groans under the weight of its iniquity” (D&C 123:7). Isaiah teaches that “the earth mourneth” (Isaiah 33:9). Moses records that when “Enoch heard the earth mourn, he wept, and cried unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, wilt thou not have compassion upon the earth?” (Moses 7:49).

In Isaiah 24:18–20, the prophet makes seven statements portraying the earth’s reaction to the transgressions of humanity that are “heavy upon it”: “the foundations of the earth do shake,” “the earth is utterly broken down,” “the earth is clean dissolved,” “the earth is moved exceedingly,” “the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard,” the earth “shall be removed like a cottage,” and the earth “shall fall, and not rise again.” These expressions refer to great earthquakes that will occur in the last days when God’s judgments come upon a wicked world (D&C 88:89). They may particularly refer to the last great earthquake that will occur at the time of the coming of the Lord (Revelation 16:18–20).

### **ISAIAH 30:27–28**

*Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity.*

Isaiah 30:27–33 describes the destruction of the wicked that will take place at Jesus Christ’s second coming, when the Lord comes from the distant heavens to cleanse the earth. Isaiah uses a number of descriptive phrases to describe the Lord’s manner of punishing and destroying the wicked—“burning,” “devouring fire,” “flame of a devouring fire,” “scattering,” “tempest,” “hailstones,” and “brimstone.”

In verse 28, Isaiah speaks of the “sieve of vanity,” better translated as “the sieve of destruction.” In the last days the Lord will sift the nations, removing the tares from the wheat with this sieve. In other words, he will separate the

wicked from the righteous. In Amos 9:9, God uses the same “sieve” to “sift the house of Israel . . . , yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.”

Isaiah assures those who dwell in Zion, the pure in heart who become one with their fellows, that they will be protected. He promises that they will sing songs to the Lord, worship at his temple, and experience a gladness of heart.

### **ISAIAH 33:12**

*And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.*

Isaiah presents two images that deal with burning: “burnings of lime” and “burned in the fire.” The first expression may refer to extracting lime from bones, a process requiring intense heat. (See Amos 2:1 for an example of burning bones.) Thus it would symbolize the complete destruction of the wicked at the Lord’s coming. The second image pertains to thorns and weeds that are burned to prevent them from overcoming useful plants. When thorns are cut down and placed in a pile, they fuel a fire that becomes fierce and hot. Such will be the burning of the wicked at Christ’s second coming.

### **ISAIAH 34:6**

*The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.*

The language of Isaiah 34:1–8 uses symbolism from the Mosaic law of sacrifice. These verses suggest that the wicked will have to die for their own sins because they do not partake of the blessings of the sacrifice of Christ. The wicked will be slaughtered like the sacrificial animals in the temple (Jeremiah 46:10; Revelation 19:17–18). Bozrah (perhaps modern Busra) was the capital of Edom, here called Idumea. Idumea represents the wicked world (D&C 1:36) and will be destroyed by the Lord (Ezekiel 25:14).

Lambs, goats, and rams were sacrificial animals used for sin and trespass offerings to symbolically cleanse the repentant offerer from both willful and inadvertent sins. Under the Mosaic law of sacrifice, the blood and fat of a sacrificed animal are reserved for the Lord (Leviticus 3:15–17). By using the three words “blood,” “fatness,” and “kidneys” in the context of the slaughter of the wicked, Isaiah emphasizes the Lord’s right to exact the penalty for iniquity. Blood and kidneys, with other internal organs, regulate the life of humans and beasts. The Lord’s slaughter will be complete, claiming the very life force of the wicked.

### **ISAIAH 60:20**

*Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light.*

Isaiah uses two heavenly spheres—the sun and the moon—to explain an eternal truth, that Jesus Christ is the everlasting light. In the millennial New Jerusalem, the Lord’s light will be so consistent it will be as though both sun and moon are ever present. The Revelator describes a time similar to the one foretold by Isaiah, “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:23). “And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light” (Revelation 22:5).

### ISAIAH 63:1-3

*Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*

The opening verses of Isaiah 63 give two important questions and answers about the second coming of Christ. The first question is, Who comes with dyed garments traveling in the greatness of his strength? The answer: the Righteous One, who is mighty to save. The second question is, Why are your garments red, as one who has been treading in the winefat? The answer: because I have trodden the winepress alone, and I will trample the wicked and stain my garments with their blood.

When Christ returns, his garments will be red, as John saw: “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood” (Revelation 19:13; D&C 133:48). The red clothing symbolizes at least two things: the blood Christ shed in accomplishing the atonement (Luke 22:44; D&C 19:18) and the blood of the unrepentant wicked he has slain in his wrath (Isaiah 63:3; Lamentations 1:15; D&C 133:48, 50–51). The blood symbolism is implied in the phrases “dyed garments,” “garments like him . . . in the winefat,” “winepress,” “blood . . . upon my garments,” and “stain all my raiment.”

When Christ offered the atonement in the Garden of Gethsemane, his agony was so great that “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood” (Luke 22:44). This blood presumably stained his garments. In addition, the blood of the sins of all mankind—the signs of wickedness—will stain his garments. This blood of atonement is symbolized by the image of a man who treads red grapes in a winepress, staining his clothing with the juice. But, with Christ, not only his hem but his whole garment will be stained. His whole being was engaged in the work of atonement. He trod the winepress alone because only he could and did perform the atonement, kneeling in the Garden of Gethsemane and hanging on the cross. “I . . . have trodden the winepress alone, even the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God” (D&C 76:107; 88:106).