

# Isaiah 4:1 Commentary

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Isaiah 4:1 For [seven women](#) will [take hold](#) of [one man](#) in that [day](#), [saying](#), "We will [eat](#) our own [bread](#) and [wear](#) our own [clothes](#), [only](#) let us be [called](#) by your [name](#); [take away](#) our [reproach](#)!" ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**English Translation of the Septuagint:** And seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own raiment: only let thy name be called upon us, and take away our reproach.

**Amplified:** AND IN that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread and provide our own apparel; only let us be called by your name to take away our reproach [of being unmarried]. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**BBE:** And in that day seven women will put their hands on one man, saying, There will be no need for you to give us food or clothing, only let us go under your name, so that our shame may be taken away.

**ESV:** And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach." ([ESV](#))

**KJV:** And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.

**NET:** Seven women will grab hold of one man at that time. They will say, "We will provide our own food, we will provide our own clothes; but let us belong to you— take away our shame!" ([NET Bible](#))

**NLT:** In that day so few men will be left that seven women will fight for each man, saying, "Let us all marry you! We will provide our own food and clothing. Only let us take your name so we won't be mocked as old maids." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Young's Literal:** And taken hold have seven women on one man, In that day, saying, `Our own bread we do eat, And our own raiment we put on, Only, let thy name be called over us, Remove thou our reproach.'

**For seven women will take hold of one man in that day, saying "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach!":**

- Is 2:11,17; 10:20; 17:7; Lk 21:22
- Eat - 2Th 3:12
- Take away reproach - Ge 30:23; 1Sa 1:6; Lk 1:25

**For** (term of explanation) explains Isaiah 3:26.

**Seven women... one man** - A bad ratio for women! Men will be in short supply.

**The KJV Commentary** feels that this verse "serves as a summary of the preceding chapter" and most other commentators also include it in their comments on Isaiah 3 (Remember that the chapter breaks are "man made" and not inspired, so from time to time the chapters are somewhat poorly divided)

**Vine** comments that Isaiah 4...

and the next chapter (Isaiah 5:1-30) are an expansion of... the judgments of the Day of the Lord, and the subsequent Millennial blessedness of Israel and their land. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson or Logos](#))

**Charles Ryrie**...

Wars will slaughter so many men that in that day (ultimately the tribulation days), women will be willing to be self-supporting if only they can be married and escape the reproach of being childless. ([The Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Translation: 1995. Moody Publishers](#))

**Henry Morris**...

The male population would be so devastated in the coming invasions of Assyria and Babylonia that women would be seven times as numerous as the remaining men. ([Morris, Henry: Defenders Study Bible. World Publishing](#))

**John Walvoord** writes that...

The judgment of God killed so many men that Isaiah predicted, "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!' " (Is 4:1; 2Chr 36:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21) This was fulfilled in the Babylonian Captivity. (Walvoord, J. F. The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

**Ironside**...

The fourth chapter, though very brief, depicts conditions which were to prevail, not only in the days following the threatened Babylonian captivity, but also in the dark days of the great tribulation; for Isaiah looked far beyond his own age to days yet to come.

Note that **Morris** and **Walvoord** see a near fulfillment and **Ryrie**, **Vine** and **Ironside** see a far future fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. The context of these passages would support both interpretations of these conservative commentators.

The respected commentator **Warren Wiersbe** resolves these different comments noting first that the Day of the LORD (Isa 2:6-3:26)

...

is that period of time when God will send judgment to the nations and purify Israel in preparation for the coming of His King to reign in Jerusalem. The Day of the Lord... will be a time of terrible suffering; the environment will be devastated, and millions of people will die. (Note the repetition of the phrase "**in that day**": Isa 2:17, 20; 3:7, 18; 4:1, 2) **To the prophets, "the Day of the Lord" was foreshadowed by events in their own day. In the Book of Isaiah, Assyria's conquest of the Northern Kingdom and invasion of Judah, and the Babylonian Captivity of Judah both picture the coming "Day of the Lord."** (Wiersbe, W. W. Be Comforted. An Old Testament Study. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books) (Bolding and color added for emphasis)

**Tom Constable** agrees with **Wiersbe** writing that...

All this will happen on "**that day**" (Isa 3:7, 18; 4:1), namely, when God judges His people for trusting in other human beings and themselves rather than Him. Many of the judgments prophesied in this section took place during the **Babylonian Captivity**, and during the **Assyrian Captivity** of the Northern Kingdom, but "**that day**" also anticipates Tribulation times. ([Isaiah - Expository Notes](#)) (Bolding added)

**In that day** - Time phrase = **What Day?** This day refers to the **Day of the Lord** (See related discussion in 1Thes notes although there is some overlap in these descriptions) a time phrase found in the Old and New Testaments and sometimes is referred to simply as "**the day**" or "**that day**" (e.g., Is 2:17,2:20, 3:18, 4:1, 4:2) . The **Day of the LORD** (Specific phrase occurs 16x in OT - Amos 5:18, 20; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11; 3:14; Obad 1:15; Zeph 1:7, 14; Is 2:12; 13:6, 9; Je 25:33; Ezek 7:10; 13:6; 30:3 ) stands in stark contrast to the "day of man", typified by this present evil age (Gal 1:4) during which God permits (but does not condone) rebellious, sinful mankind from going their own way, planning their own plans, and in short, living as if God did not exist (this is the essence of ungodliness) and independent of His power and rule (their so-called "independence" being a deception of their vain imagination, for they fail to understand that even every rebellious breath they take is a gift of God's grace!)

## **A TIMELINE OF THE DAY OF THE LORD**

**Earth & Heaven**

**fled away**

(Re 20:11-[note](#))

||

v

Pre-Tribulation Rapture	The Tribulation 70th Week of Daniel (Da 9:27-note)	(2) Day of Lord 2Pe 3:10-note >	Great White < Throne
(1a) Day of the Lord begins >	Mid-Tribulation (1b) Day of Lord begins v	1000 Years The Millennial Reign of Christ (Re 20:4,5,6-notes <a href="#">v4</a> ; <a href="#">5</a> ; <a href="#">6</a> )	New Heaven New Earth (Re 21:1- <a href="#">note</a> )
	3.5 Years		

## QUESTIONS ON THE DAY OF THE LORD

**When does the Day of the Lord (DOL) begin?** [Click for discussion](#)

**Why the Day of the Lord is not a single day?** [Click for discussion](#)

**What will the Day of the Lord look like?** [Click for discussion](#)

**What should be Israel's (and the NT believer's) response to the Day of the Lord?** [Click for discussion](#)

**How does the DOL compare with the Day of Christ and the Day of God?** [Click for discussion](#)

**Richard Mayhue** has a nice summary of the teaching on the **Day of the Lord** in Isaiah...

Isa 2:12 is the first mention of DOL in Isaiah's prophecy. This chapter emphasizes the future establishment of God's kingdom (Isa 2:2, 3, 4 ), the present sinful state of Israel (Isa 2:5, 6, 7, 8, 9), and the future day of reckoning (Isa 2:10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 ).

**The prophet appears to look beyond the near to the far future in the judgment** emphasis of Isa 2:10-22 , just as he had looked to the eschatological kingdom in Isa 2:1-4.

There are several indicators of **millennial conditions** in Isa 2:1-4 (cf. Rev 20:1-6). Mt. Zion will be the world capital and all the nations will come to it (Isa 2:1, 2) in order to seek God's word (Isa 2:3). God will judge between the nations and war will be no more (Is 2:4,5). This eschatological emphasis in Isa 2:2, 3, 4 makes it reasonable to conclude that eschatological judgment is in view in Is 2:10-22 , rather than to God's chastisement of Judah by Assyria and Babylon.

**DOL is described by Isaiah as a time of universal humiliation for all who are proud** (Is 2:11, 12, 17). In contrast, the splendor of God's majesty (Is 2:10, 19, 21 ) will be displayed and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day (Is 2:11, 17). Isaiah's portrayals of DOL here should be interpreted as referring to that time immediately preceding the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. It is a day when God's majesty will be outwardly manifested (Is 2:10, 19, 21), and the population will be driven in terror to caves for protection (Is 2:21 , cf. Re 6:16, 17).

The timing and terminology of Is 2:21 are strikingly similar to the description of the sixth seal in Re 6:16, 17. If these passages are correlated, it can be concluded that the sixth seal is a part of DOL and occurs at the end of the Tribulation. The correlation also confirms that Isa 2:12 refers to the far future. As will be noted later, Zec 14:1 and Mal 4:5 also emphasize only the far eschatological implications of DOL.

Isaiah 13 is the next chapter to be considered. It is an oracle concerning Babylon. Is 13:1-8 deals with God's use of Babylon as his instrument of indignation for the destruction of Israel (Is 13:5, 6 ). This reminds one of Habakkuk's dismay that God would do such a thing (Hab 1:2, 3, 4). The DOL was near in the mind of Isaiah (Is 13:6), although it would not come for over one hundred years. It would be a day of destruction, terror, and pain (Is 13:8). There is little doubt that this refers to the near eschatological event fulfilled by Babylon from

605-586 B.C.

However, there is good reason to believe that Isa 13:9-16 speaks of DOL implications for the far future. The near emphasis returns in Isa 13:17-22 where the end of Babylon is described. That the far future is described in Isa 13:9-16 is shown by the cosmic disturbances (Isa 13:10, 13 ; cf. Matt 24:29; Rev 6:12, 13; Joel 2:31) and the universal judgment of mankind (Isa 13:11 ; cf. Isa 2:11, 12 ). Ladd accurately describes the interplay of the near and far views:

These two visitations, the near and the far, or, as we may for convenience call them, the historical and the eschatological, are not differentiated in time. In fact, sometimes the two blend together as though they were one day. Isaiah 13 calls the day of the visitation of Babylon the Day of the Lord. The Lord is mustering a host for battle (Isa 13:4-6), he will stir up the Medes against Babylon (Isa 13:17). Therefore, men are to "wail, for the day of the Lord is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come!" (Isa 13:6). This historical Day of the Lord is painted against the backdrop of the eschatological Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord will bring disaster to the earth and a disruption of the heavenly order (Isa 13:9-13). Judgment will fall both upon the world of nature and upon men (Isa 13:7) when God punishes the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity (Isa 13:11). Here is a picture of universal judgment. The Day of the Lord is the eschatological judgment of mankind; but the two are seen as though they were one day, one visitation of God.<sup>27</sup>

Isa 13:6, 9 is therefore similar to other passages previously noted which portray the DOL in one context as both a near historical and a far eschatological happening. ([The Prophet's Watchword Day of the Lord -- By Richard L. Mayhue Grace Theological Journal 6:2 Fall 1985](#))

**Seven women will take hold of one man** - The male population will be so decimated by the calamity for most have died in God's judgment on the land. (cp Isa 3:25)

**Constable** commenting on the toll war takes on the male population reminds us...

For example, approximately one million French, one million German, and half a million English male soldiers died in World War I... Long gone is the hope to gain a man through seduction of the eyes (cf. 3:16). Now even begging and pleading would be ineffective. Women providing their own food and clothing is the reverse of God's intention in marriage (cf. Exod. 21:10). Likewise women taking men's places and leading them, as Eve led Adam (Gen. 3), illustrates a desperate situation. ([Isaiah - Expository Notes](#))

**John MacArthur** has an interesting comment that God...

He will judge wicked women indirectly by allowing a slaughtering of males, thereby producing a shortage of husbands. ([MacArthur, J.: The MacArthur Study Bible Nashville: Word or Logos](#))

**Ironside...**

As so often happens in times of prolonged warfare, the proportion of women to men would become very great, so much so, that seven women should take hold of one man and seek to claim him as an husband in order to take away their reproach. Such polygamous<sup>28</sup> suggestions followed the recent world wars, as many will remember.

**We will eat our own bread** - The women who want the men won't even require them to support them. They simply want a man for protection and companionship.

**Called by your name** - To be called by another's name is a Hebrew idiom which speaks of indicates ownership (cp 2Sa 12:28) and in context specifically refers to their desire for marriage.

The **NET Bible note** adds that...

The language reflects the cultural reality of ancient Israel, where women were legally the property of their husbands.

In the book of Ruth we see that **marriage** in ancient Israel was a means of **rest** and **security** for women...

May the LORD grant that you may find **rest**, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. (Ru 1:9-note)

**Comment:** The concept of rest referred to here is the security that is found in marriage. The root signifies not only absence of movement but being settled in a particular place with overtones of finality or when speaking fig of victory, salvation (the ark which "rested" on Mount Ararat Ge 8:4).

**Naomi describes marriage as a place of rest.** The term summarizes all the qualities of an ideal marriage in which a godly woman can find strength, security, material well-being and love. **God has intended that your marriage be a place, and source, of rest, peace, and refreshment in your life. Is it?** God can make it so!

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek **security** (Hebrew word is related to the word for "**rest**" in the preceding verse) for you, that it may be well with you? (Ru 3:1-note)

**Comment: Keil and Delitzsch** write that **rest** in Ruth 3:1 "signifies the condition of a peaceful life, a peaceful and well-secured condition, "a secure life under the guardian care of a husband"

**Take away our reproach** - In Isaiah 54:4 "reproach" is associated with widowhood, and in the present context refers to the scorn associated with the unmarried state. In Ge 30:23 and Lk 1:25 the idea is reproach or disgrace associated with barrenness.

**Jamieson** says that reproach speaks of...

of being unwedded and childless; especially felt among the Jews, who were looking for "the seed of the woman," Jesus Christ, described in Isa 4:2 Isa 54:1, 4 Lk 1:25.

The **NET Bible note** adds that...

This refers to the humiliation of being unmarried and childless. The women's words reflect the cultural standards of ancient Israel, where a woman's primary duties were to be a wife and mother.

**Reproach - cherpah** - 72v -

Gen 30:23; 34:14; Josh 5:9; 1 Sam 11:2; 17:26; 25:39; 2 Sam 13:13; Neh 1:3; 2:17; 4:4; 5:9; Job 16:10; 19:5; Ps 15:3; 22:6; 31:11; 39:8; 44:13; 69:7, 9f, 19f; 71:13; 74:22; 78:66; 79:4, 12; 89:41, 50; 109:25; 119:22, 39; Pr 6:33; 18:3; Isa 4:1; 25:8; 30:5; 47:3; 51:7; 54:4; Jer 6:10; 15:15; 20:8; 23:40; 24:9; 29:18; 31:19; 42:18; 44:8, 12; 49:13; 51:51; Lam 3:30, 61; 5:1; Ezek 5:14f; 16:57; 21:28; 22:4; 36:15, 30; Dan 9:16; 11:18; 12:2; Hos 12:14; Joel 2:17, 19; Mic 6:16; Zeph 2:8; 3:18. NAS = contempt(1), disgrace(5), reproach(60), reproaches(2), scorn(3), shame(1), taunting(1).

**Keil and Delitzsch** - When war shall thus unsparingly have swept away the men of Zion, a most unnatural effect will ensue, namely, that women will go in search of husbands, and not men in search of wives. The division of the chapters is a wrong one here, as this verse is the closing verse of the prophecy against the women, and the closing portion of the whole address does not begin till Isa 4:2. The present pride of the daughters of Zion, every one of whom now thought herself the greatest as the wife of such and such a man, and for whom many men were now the suitors, would end in this unnatural self-humiliation, that seven of them would offer themselves to the same man, the first man who presented himself, and even renounce the ordinary legal claim upon their husband for clothing and food (Ex 21:10). It would be quite sufficient for them to be allowed to bear his name ("let thy name be named upon us:" the name is put upon the thing named, as giving it its distinctness and character), if he would only take away their reproach (namely, the reproach of being unmarried, Isa 54:4, as in Gen 30:23, of being childless) by letting them be called his wives. The number seven (seven women to one man) may be explained on the ground that there is a bad seven as well as a holy one (e.g., Matt 12:45).