

Isaiah 1A

- Isaiah was probably most important OT prophet
 - Therefore Isaiah is one of only a few books of the Bible that by itself can teach virtually everything we can know concerning God's plan for the redemption of the world
 - At least from the perspective of Israel
 - His book is a work of superlatives
 - In terms of language, Isaiah was a master of Hebrew
 - He was without peer in the OT,
 - His writing demonstrates a unparalleled command of Hebrew using a wide vocabulary and frequent use of poetic language
 - He makes frequently use of extended doublets, which are a repetition of the same truth in consecutive steps
 - Shakespeare of the Hebrew language
 - In terms of breadth, Isaiah is the third longest work in the Bible after Psalms and Jeremiah
 - Isaiah's describes his writing as a vision God gave him over the course of His lifetime
 - Hebrew name: The Vision of Isaiah
 - Different than some prophets who received the word of the Lord
 - Isaiah saw the future and wrote from that perspective
 - In terms of depth, Isaiah provides more insight on the coming kingdom of the Messiah than any other book of the Bible, including Revelation
 - Addresses both past and future events, revealing events covering a span of human history longer than any book other than Genesis and Revelation

- I hope you're excited about study a prophet, because here is God's revealing to you and I details about our future
- In terms of structure, Isaiah's organization closely mirrors the Bible as a whole
 - This structure is a testimony to God's sovereignty and to the importance God placed upon Isaiah within the canon of scripture
 - There are 39 books in the OT and 27 books in the NT
 - Similarly, Isaiah chapters 1-39 carry one theme matched to the OT
 - While Chapters 40-66 carry a different theme
 - In fact, it was commonly referred to as First and Second Isaiah
 - Not surprisingly, most Christians will recognize many of Isaiah's later chapters corresponding to the NT but are almost completely unfamiliar with many of his earlier chapters
- In terms of theology, the book is simply profound
 - In some respects, Isaiah could be said to be the Romans of the OT
 - He presents a rich tapestry of Biblical concepts
 - Four primary doctrines: Sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of man and the world, the inevitability of judgment and the coming redemption
 - He presented the Messiah with greater insight and detail than any other book save perhaps Psalms
 - The entire book is strongly eschatological
- Isaiah the man is also a fascinating study
 - He lived from about 740 BC to 681 BC, writing the book in the last years of his life

- He lived in Jerusalem, and prophesied during the reign of four Kings of Judah
 - Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, which he identifies in 1:1

[Is. 1:1](#) ¶ The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

- Tradition says his father was brother to King Amaziah, who preceded King Uzziah
 - Which means he was of Royal blood, though not in the line for king
- Isaiah lived at the critical point in Israel's history
 - When Isaiah began his ministry under King Uzziah, Judah and Israel commanded a greater area than even David or Solomon had controlled
 - In human terms, it would seem that Jewish authority and power was unquestionable and only likely to grow greater
 - It enabled Jews to rest in a prideful belief that there were achieving in their earthly success all that could be expect from God's promises
 - This reliance on self and pride destroyed these nations from the inside out
 - Does this sound like other world powers - past or present?
- Looking back, we can see that Isaiah's time was actually the transition from the OT and Law to the NT and the Messiah
 - Politically, the old world order was passing away
 - New Gentile powers were about to rise and swallow up Israel and later Judah
 - Assyria was gaining power in the north and loomed as a threat to both Israel and Judah
 - Edward Young said of Isaiah's time:

Isaiah exercised his prophetic ministry at a time of unique significance, a time in which it was of utmost importance to realize that salvation could not be obtained by reliance upon man but only from God Himself. For Israel it was the central or pivotal point of history between Moses and Christ. The old world was passing and an entirely new order of things was beginning to make its appearance. Where would Israel stand in that new world? Would she be the true theocracy, the light to lighten the Gentiles, or would she fall into the shadow by turning for help to the nations which were about her?

- Isaiah also lived on the brink of the times of the Gentiles
 - A period of judgment for Israel
 - It was later described by Daniel chapters 2 and 7 and 9
 - It's further defined by Jesus in Luke 17
 - It is a time when the Jews find their beloved city trampled under by Gentile oppressors
 - This age began with Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem and continues to today
 - Daniel declared that it won't be finished until Christ's return
- Isaiah speaks of this coming judgment frequently while at the same time giving more detail about that future time of redemption than any other prophet
- Isaiah's ministry brought it's own trials
 - Isaiah had a wife, who was called a prophetess, and two sons whose names had prophetic meaning
 - The sons names meant the prey hastens and remnant
 - In chapter 20, Isaiah is told by God to walk naked and barefoot for three years in Israel, which he does to establish a picture for Egypt and Cush that they would be led naked into captivity by Assyria
 - I wonder what his wife thought of Isaiah's idea to walk about naked
 - He was martyred tradition says fleeing King Manasseh, one of the worst kings in all Judah
 - Isaiah hid in the hollow of a tree

- When soldiers found him, they executed him by sawing in two the tree he was hiding in, causing Isaiah to be sawn in two as well
 - Heb 11 speaks of such an event without naming Isaiah
- The structure of the Book
 - Isaiah's book is carefully structured, and that structure helps us understand it
 - The first five chapters provide something of an overview for the entire book)
 - Isaiah waits until chapter 6 to give his personal testimony to how he was called to be a prophet
 - Chapter one is itself a mini summary of the book and sets up the rest of the first five

[Is. 1:2](#) Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth;
 For the LORD speaks,
 " Sons I have reared and brought up,
 But they have revolted against Me.

[Is. 1:3](#) "An ox knows its owner,
 And a donkey its master's manger,
But Israel does not know,
 My people do not understand."

- Isaiah's book begins with a call to heavens and earth to hear the Lord speaking to Israel
 - Israel here means the Southern Kingdom
 - Isaiah uses the term Israel because Judah is the true remaining remnant of Israel by this point
 - Ruled by the Davidic kings, still living in Jerusalem
 - The scene opens as if in a room in the gate of the city
 - A place where court was held
 - And God calls these two witnesses to put up a seat and hear the case against Israel
- God is the prosecutor

- The witnesses are to judge
 - What is the crime?
 - Israel's violation of the covenant they entered at Mt. Horeb with Moses
 - When that covenant was inaugurated, God gave stipulations for their obedience, including blessings that would come from obedience and consequences for disobedience
 - In Deut, Moses restated the Law to Israel leading to a covenant declaration
 - Listen to how that declaration began in Deut 4

[Deut. 4:10](#) "Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'

[Deut. 4:11](#) "You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the *very* heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom.

[Deut. 4:12](#) "Then the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form — only a voice.

[Deut. 4:13](#) "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, *that is*, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.

[Deut. 4:14](#) "The LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it.

- Then later

[Deut. 4:23](#) "So watch yourselves, that you do not forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything *against* which the LORD your God has commanded you.

[Deut. 4:24](#) "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

[Deut. 4:25](#) ¶ "When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD your God *so as* to provoke Him to anger,

[Deut. 4:26](#) I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed.

[Deut. 4:27](#) "The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD drives you.

[Deut. 4:28](#) " There you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell.

[Deut. 4:29](#) " But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.

[Deut. 4:30](#) "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.

- Later at the point Moses concluded the giving of the covenant, He spoke these words

[Deut. 31:28](#) "Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call the heavens and the earth to witness against them.

[Deut. 31:29](#) "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

- Of course, by the time of Isaiah, Israel has become two nations, and both have been in violation of the covenant for centuries, to varying degrees
 - So Isaiah begins his vision explaining that the time of the judgment has begun with the two witnesses who were there in the beginning
 - V. 2 continues, sons I have reared but they revolted
 - God reared up, He established Israel, but rather than rely on God, they revolted against His authority
- And then Isaiah turns to one of his favorite literary techniques – sarcasm
 - Though an ox or even a lowly donkey know its master and its place of rest – animals that were considered dumb farm animals
 - The people of Israel don't even have that much understanding
 - If we were to rewrite this verse today, I would change the kind of animal & long-time students know exactly what kind of animal would be used instead....poodle

[Is. 1:4](#) ¶ Alas, sinful nation,
 People weighed down with iniquity,
 Offspring of evildoers,
 Sons who act corruptly!
 They have abandoned the LORD,
 They have despised the Holy One of Israel,
 They have turned away from Him.

[Is. 1:5](#) ¶ Where will you be stricken again,
 As you continue in *your* rebellion?
 The whole head is sick
 And the whole heart is faint.

[Is. 1:6](#) From the sole of the foot even to the head
 There is nothing sound in it,
Only bruises, welts and raw wounds,
 Not pressed out or bandaged,
 Nor softened with oil.

- Here are the details of the offenses of Israel (7)
 - Verse 4 opens the indictment
 - He begins with hoy, or woe
 - Sinful nation – goy – no better than Gentiles
 - And weighed down by their evil deeds
 - They are the children of evil rather than of God
 - Etc.
 - We're talking about the persistent pattern of Israel making idols for themselves, worshipping the pagan gods around them, practicing all kinds of abominations
 - Look at Manasseh...

[2Kings 21:1](#) ¶ Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hephzibah.

[2Kings 21:2](#) He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

[2Kings 21:3](#) For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them.

[2Kings 21:4](#) He built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name."

[2Kings 21:5](#) For he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

[2Kings 21:6](#) He made his son pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and used divination, and dealt with mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD provoking *Him to anger*.

- Then God asks in verse 5 rhetorically, where do you go from here?
 - How much worse do you want it to get?
 - He uses an analogy of a sick body to describe the nation's condition due to the consequences of her disobedience
 - From the sole to the head
 - The whole body bloody and wounded without bandage
 - Raw, exposed

[Is. 1:7](#) ¶ Your land is desolate,
Your cities are burned with fire,
Your fields — strangers are devouring them in your presence;
It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers.

[Is. 1:8](#) The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard,
Like a watchman's hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.

[Is. 1:9](#) Unless the LORD of hosts
Had left us a few survivors,
We would be like Sodom,
We would be like Gomorrah.

- As a result of their collective disobedience, the nation was already suffering under God's judgment
 - The land was suffering from war
 - The rising power of Assyria was already making its presence felt in both Israel and Judah

- The Assyrian King Sennacherib had already attacked forty six cities in Judah and carried a few hundred Jews captive
 - Verses 7 & 8 refer to these trials that came upon Judah
 - God is saying things have already been bad
 - Cities burned, fields unplanted, controlled by enemies
 - How much worse do you want it to get?
 - The nation had successfully repented those earlier hits, but Isaiah says it was only by God's hand that a remnant was spared
- The brief mention of survivors in verse 9 (sarid =remnant), raises a concept we will explore at length in Isaiah – it's one of his major themes
 - In describing Israel, the OT is always referring to the entity, not individual people within the whole
 - Israel was called as a people and nation to be holy
 - It must act together as a nation in that way or it failed to keep the covenant
 - It was not a covenant with certain people, but with the nation as a whole
 - When He entered into the covenant, God spoke these words

[Deut. 29:10](#) ¶ "You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your chiefs, your tribes, your elders and your officers, *even* all the men of Israel, [Deut. 29:11](#) your little ones, your wives, and the alien who is within your camps, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, [Deut. 29:12](#) that you may enter into the covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath which the LORD your God is making with you today, [Deut. 29:13](#) in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. [Deut. 29:14](#) ¶ "Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath, [Deut. 29:15](#) but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God and with those who are not with us here today

- The Old Covenant was with the nation of Israel, including those who came later

- Israel is like the water in Canyon Lake
 - On any given day, it contains certain molecules of water
 - Next year, a different set of molecule are there, but it's still Canyon Lake
- This concept of a covenant made with an entity gives rise to a couple of additional concepts, including the concept of a remnant
 - First, if perfect universal obedience is the requirement for Israel under the covenant, how could Israel have ever expected to meet its terms
 - How could even just one person?
 - They couldn't
 - Paul says in Gal 3

[Gal. 3:17](#) What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

[Gal. 3:18](#) For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

[Gal. 3:19](#) ¶ Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.

[Gal. 3:20](#) Now a mediator is not for one *party only*; whereas God is *only* one.

[Gal. 3:21](#) Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

[Gal. 3:22](#) But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

[Gal. 3:23](#) ¶ But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

[Gal. 3:24](#) Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

- On an individual level, the Law saved no one
 - Nevertheless, the nation as a whole was called to obey it
 - The Old Covenant bound Israel, and God will hold them to it's terms, but it's purpose wasn't to produce righteousness
 - It was to reveal the unrighteousness of men

- And ultimately drive men to faith in a redeemer
- As Paul says in Rom

[Rom. 4:13](#) ¶ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

[Rom. 4:14](#) For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;

[Rom. 4:15](#) for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.

- Secondly, the fact that the OT speaks to a nation under the terms of the OT gives rise to the concept of a remnant, a group within the larger entity that does obey
 - A faithful group that knows the Lord truly and follows Him in faith
 - Scriptures says there is always a remnant
 - God provide special mercy and protection for them, but yet they still find themselves caught up in many of the judgments that come upon the nation
 - Caleb and Joshua wandered for 40 years, Daniel led into captivity, Elijah suffered in the droughts,
- We call those that honored God's word and obeyed Him the remnant
 - Isaiah talks frequently about God preserving a remnant even in the midst of an apostate nation
 - Verse 9 alludes to God's preserving of a remnant
 - And Isaiah will give significant attention to how Israel as a nation will be forced to meet its obligations under the Old Covenant
- In contrast to the remnant, we have those in Israel who rebel
 - They either give no attention to the Old Covenant
 - Or their attention was the wrong kind
 - They sought to make the covenant a means to righteousness, seeking to make themselves righteous through performance of Law

- What do you think this last group might say to the accusations God is leveling against the nation in this indictment?

[Is. 1:10](#) ¶ Hear the word of the LORD,
 You rulers of Sodom;
 Give ear to the instruction of our God,
 You people of Gomorrah.

[Is. 1:11](#) "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?"
 Says the LORD.

"I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
 And the fat of fed cattle;
 And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats.

[Is. 1:12](#) "When you come to appear before Me,
 Who requires of you this trampling of My courts?"

[Is. 1:13](#) "Bring your worthless offerings no longer,
 Incense is an abomination to Me.
 New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies —
 I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly.

[Is. 1:14](#) "I hate your new moon *festivals* and your appointed feasts,
 They have become a burden to Me;
 I am weary of bearing *them*.

[Is. 1:15](#) "So when you spread out your hands *in prayer*,
 I will hide My eyes from you;
 Yes, even though you multiply prayers,
 I will not listen.
 Your hands are covered with blood.

- God sets aside their pious displays of worship that were not done in faith
 - They did two things
 - First, they multiplied sacrifices – large in quantity
 - Secondly, they sacrificed fat of fed cattle
 - In other words, the quality of their sacrifices were top notch too
 - This is the expected response of men engaged in a pious, self-serving, empty, ritualistic performance designed to impress themselves and others
 - This is what all men with evil hearts do
 - They fake it,
 - What they lack in truth they make up for in style

- Look at the array of activity
 - Sacrifices, coming before God regularly
 - Which He calls trampling his courts
 - Offerings, incense, festivals, Sabbaths, and their assemblies
 - God says He cannot endure the combination of their persistent sin combined with the superficial act of assembling to worship Him
 - In verse 14, one of the most haunting verses in Scripture
 - I hate your celebrations in my honor
- But from God's perspective, their sacrifices are cheap and worthless
 - Because they are hypocrisy
 - I am tired of it all, I grow weary of bearing them
 - God was paying attention, but His patience was wearing thin
 - So when they approach Him in prayer, He hides His eyes
 - Even multiplying their prayers, He will not listen
 - The hands you hold up in worship are covered in blood
- Now, Isaiah introduces a new theme, which we will only just introduce tonight
 - Forgiveness and redemption

[Is. 1:16](#) ¶ " Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;
Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight.
Cease to do evil,

[Is. 1:17](#) Learn to do good;
Seek justice,
Reprove the ruthless,
Defend the orphan,
Plead for the widow.

- In contrast to pious hypocrisy, God calls the nation to true worship
 - Look at the order

- First, wash themselves, become clean
 - Then cease doing evil
 - Then learn to do good
 - Then seek justice
 - Which consists of reprovng the ruthless
 - Defending the orphan
 - Pleading for the widow
- Do widows and orphans sound familiar?

[James 1:27](#) Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this: to visit **orphans** and widows in their distress, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world.

- These behaviors are the logical outworking of the prior steps
 - James was alluding to the entire chain in his letter

Isaiah 1B

- Last week we saw two of Isaiah's major themes on display
 - First the theme of Israel's sin
 - Their idolatry, their rejection of the Lord, their rebellion
 - And Isaiah began to allude to another favorite theme
 - The inevitability of God's judgment for sin
 - Tonight we are going to see Isaiah continue to advance those two themes
 - But we are also going to see Isaiah introduce his two remaining themes
 - God's sovereignty
 - And the coming salvation and redemption for Israel
 - Remembering that chapter 1 is a mini summary of the book and that chapters 1-5 are a more complete summary, we're going to press quite a way tonight
 - Including a fascinating and tantalizing look into the future with a detailed description of the Millennial Kingdom
- To start, let's pick up where we were last time, at the conclusion of God's great indictment of Israel, in keeping with the covenant they entered at Sinai
 - God called heavens and earth to witness against Israel that they had failed to keep the covenant
 - Worse, God compared them to Sodom and Gomorrah
 - They offered a false form of ritualistic worship rather than true religion, as James calls it
 - True worship born out of a faithful and grateful heart
 - So Isaiah moved to the theme of judgment declaring that God despised their worship and hid Himself from their prayers

- The hands they lifted up to God in prayer were covered in blood (unclean)
 - God then extends a call to be true in verse 16
 - Repentance, faith, righteous living, justice, mercy
- Now we start the next section of Isaiah's mini overview, in verses 18-20

[Is. 1:18](#) ¶ "Come now, and let us reason together,"

Says the LORD,
 " Though your sins are as scarlet,
 They will be as white as snow;
 Though they are red like crimson,
 They will be like wool.

[Is. 1:19](#) " If you consent and obey,
 You will eat the best of the land;

[Is. 1:20](#) "But if you refuse and rebel,
 You will be devoured by the sword."
 Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

- We remember that the form of this opening chapter is that of an indictment, charges against the accused
 - Here we see God calling the accused to work with the judge to arrive at a better outcome than judgment
 - In Hebrew the opening phrase in verse 18 is let us judge or adjudicate together
 - Using the image of red turning to white, God says your sins can be forgiven
 - Verse 19 gives the condition
 - If you consent or (abah) are willing
 - And if you obey (shama) hear (1000 times in the OT and the vast majority of the times it is translated hear in the sense of heed)
 - God offers to excuse their sin if they are willing to hear or heed
 - If they do, they will eat the best of the land

- If they don't, they are will be rebels and will be devoured by sword
 - God calls them to hear and heed. Hear and heed what? Isaiah hasn't explained that yet
 - At first glance, you might think it's a call to obey the Covenant,
 - But we know from New Testament scripture that they couldn't hope to keep that Covenant perfectly
 - And furthermore, the Old Covenant wasn't given to produce righteousness
 - So it must be some other call to hear that Isaiah is referencing
 - This gives us a good chance to see the circular manner of teaching at work
 - We will eventually get the answer to this question and others, but we wait until Isaiah's next iteration on this point of redemption
 - For now, Isaiah just introduces the idea of a way for redemption
- OK, so far we have a theme of man's sin, God's judgment and redemption
 - Now Isaiah brings these three together with the fourth theme, God's sovereignty
 - And he weaves them together in a nice little chiasm
 - In and out structure...vs. 21-26

[Is. 1:21](#) ¶ How the faithful city has become a harlot,
 She *who* was full of justice!
 Righteousness once lodged in her,
 But now murderers.

[Is. 1:22](#) Your silver has become dross,
 Your drink diluted with water.

[Is. 1:23](#) Your rulers are rebels
 And companions of thieves;
 Everyone loves a bribe
 And chases after rewards.
 They do not defend the orphan,
 Nor does the widow's plea come before them.

- Isaiah returns to his theme of sin in Israel
 - The city was once faithful and full of justice is now a harlot
 - In Scripture, God frequently using the comparison of an adulterous relationship with a prostitute to describe Israel's willingness to worship idols
 - Once they were righteous and now they are murderers
 - Their good things, like silver and fine drinks (alcoholic) have become the opposite (dross and watered down)
 - Finally, they are rotten from the head down
 - Their leaders are the chief rebels, companions of thieves
 - Everyone loves a bribe and chases after rewards
 - Good example of Isaiah's play on words (Fruchtenbaum's quote)
 - Finally another reference to formalistic, false religion
 - Failing to defend and protect the orphans and widow
 - Because they can't pay a bribe or make it worthwhile for the religious leader
- So look at the descent
 - A righteous city → a people polluted with sin → a corrupt leadership
 - Then the accent

[Is. 1:24](#) ¶ Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts,
The Mighty One of Israel, declares,
"Ah, I will be relieved of My adversaries
And avenge Myself on My foes.

[Is. 1:25](#) "I will also turn My hand against you,
And will smelt away your dross as with lye
And will remove all your alloy.

[Is. 1:26](#) "Then I will restore your judges as at the first,
And your counselors as at the beginning;
After that you will be called the city of righteousness,
A faithful city."

- Isaiah reverses the order in declaring the judgment and redemption themes
 - Punish the corrupt leaders → remove the polluted sins of the people → Then restore the city to righteousness
- Who initiates this turn around?
 - The Lord (His sovereignty)
- When is this time?
 - Not defined yet, but it's clearly future to Isaiah's day
 - And as we'll soon see it's future to us as well
- Also notice that God's plan of redemption for Israel is intimately connected to the fate of His city
 - Jerusalem is not just another city
 - It is the city of God and remains that way eternally
- Notice that His city will have judges again
 - These are not judges in courts but judges like the judges in the time of judges
 - Who will these judges be?

[1Cor. 6:2](#) Or do you not know that the saints will **judge** the world? If the world is **judged** by you, are you not competent *to constitute* the smallest law courts?

- Isaiah continues to juxtapose the two themes of judgment and redemption
 - But he begins to make numerous references to a future day
 - Building exchatology

[Is. 1:27](#) ¶ Zion will be redeemed with justice
And her repentant ones with righteousness.

[Is. 1:28](#) But transgressors and sinners will be crushed together,
And those who forsake the LORD will come to an end.

[Is. 1:29](#) Surely you will be ashamed of the oaks which you have desired,
And you will be embarrassed at the gardens which you have chosen.

[Is. 1:30](#) For you will be like an oak whose leaf fades away
Or as a garden that has no water.

[Is. 1:31](#) The strong man will become tinder,
 His work also a spark.
 Thus they shall both burn together
 And there will be none to quench *them*.

- Zion will be redeemed
 - The word literally means a price paid to redeem
 - But no details on what the price is or who pays it
 - Repentant ones will be with righteousness
 - In contrast, the sinners will be crushed together
 - Coming to an “end”
 - So Isaiah sets a stark choice of following God into righteousness
 - Or rebelling and coming to an end of sorts
 - They will look back with embarrassment at their idols (oaks) and their places of sin (gardens)
 - These idols will wither and die and these sinful pursuits will dry up
 - Look at verse 31
 - The strong man will become tinder
 - His work is the spark for the flame
 - They shall burn together
 - The strong man and his work
 - Nothing will quench them

[Rev. 20:10](#) And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[Rev. 21:7](#) “He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

[Rev. 21:8](#) “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

- So in Chap 1, Isaiah has already raised issues of Israel’s sin, their unfaithfulness to the Covenant and to their God
 - God’s justice to bring judgment against them
 - His promise to bring a full pardon and redemption for some but not all along with a complete restoration of the nation (i.e., not all redeemed, but all sinners gone)
 - Finally, the process will be by God’s sovereign authority
 - That’s our mini overview

[Is. 2:1](#) ¶ The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

[Is. 2:2](#) ¶ Now it will come about that

In the last days

The mountain of the house of the LORD

Will be established as the chief of the mountains,

And will be raised above the hills;

And all the nations will stream to it.

[Is. 2:3](#) And many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,

To the house of the God of Jacob;

That He may teach us concerning His ways

And that we may walk in His paths.”

For the law will go forth from Zion

And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

[Is. 2:4](#) And He will judge between the nations,

And will render decisions for many peoples;

And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not lift up sword against nation,

And never again will they learn war.

- Isaiah’s opening description here of the last days is so iconic, that one of Isaiah’s contemporaries, Micah, quotes these verses word for word.

- Perhaps God gave Micah the very same words, but if so then it only underscores how important it is to God that Israel and we understand and look forward to this day
- In the last days
 - This phrase it used a multiple places in both the OT and NT and it begs more question than it answers at least until we study it
 - From a prophet's perspective, the last days was a future day when God's work among and for men culminates according to His plan
 - In Hebrew culture, history is simply a matter of days
 - In fact, the name of the book Chronicles literally means "the words of the days"
 - The more interesting part of that phrase, of course, is the word last
 - Last in terms of what?
 - For example, elsewhere God uses the term eternity or forever to describe certain events or situations
 - We will dwell with God forever according to Revelation
 - So last days must refer to a period of time that has an end, which then leads to some new state that has no end
 - Or there could be a chain of beginnings and ends leading ultimately to an eternal state
- From the OT perspective, the last days was the final state of the world we have and know today
 - The NT confirms this view but extends by giving us greater understanding of how these last days play out
 - And then it explains what follows the last days in the new heavens and earth, something the OT prophets were never shown
- Isaiah begins describing a mountain of the house of the Lord that will become the chief mountain of the world

- And the Gentile people of the world will stream to it
 - The picture is rivers of people coming to honor God in His house which sits on top of a mountain higher than any other
 - The reference to height could be literal or it could be a metaphor for importance or honor
 - The most important place on earth
- The description here is of the kingdom the Lord establishes upon His return
 - We learn this most clearly later through later prophets

[Zech. 14:6](#) ¶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

[Zech. 14:8](#) ¶ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

[Zech. 14:9](#) ¶ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be *the only* one, and His name *the only* one.

[Zech. 14:10](#) ¶ All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses.

[Zech. 14:11](#) People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

- So the rest of the world is made virtually flat so that the mountain in Israel is visible from everywhere in Israel
 - This comes in the day with the Lord is king over all the earth
 - In that day He is the only one and His name the only one (not yet)
- Ezek 40-48 give a detailed description of this mountain and what's on top of it
 - The fourth Temple

Isaiah 2-3

- In chapters 2-5, we complete the overview
 - And to understand them properly, we need to take a bird's eye view of the material
 - First, look at 2:2
 - A new glorious future for Israel
 - Then 2:6
 - Sinful Israel
 - Then 2:12
 - A day of reckoning
 - Then 4:2
 - Back to glory
 - Then chapter 5
 - Describes the beginning of the Age of the Gentiles
 - The beginning of a long period of judgment against Israel for their sin

[Is. 2:1](#) ¶ The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

- This is the second instance of Isaiah announcing his prophecy came as a vision
 - It reflects how chapter 2 begins a new section of introduction

[Is. 2:2](#) ¶ Now it will come about that
 In the last days
 The mountain of the house of the LORD
 Will be established as the chief of the mountains,
 And will be raised above the hills;
 And all the nations will stream to it.

[Is. 2:3](#) And many peoples will come and say,
 I "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
 To the house of the God of Jacob;
 That He may teach us concerning His ways
 I And that we may walk in His paths."
 For the law will go forth from Zion
 And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

[Is. 2:4](#) And He will judge between the nations,
 And will render decisions for many peoples;
 And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.
 Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
 And never again will they learn war.

- Chapter 2 introduces two new details that continue to see expansion through the book
 - The promise of a future Kingdom
 - And the promise of a future period of reckoning
 - Tonight, let's use Isaiah's introduction on these two events to begin laying a foundation of understanding
- To start, Isaiah says the last days
 - From a prophet's perspective, the last days was a future day when God's work among and for men culminates according to His plan
 - A final period for this world
- Generally, the last days refers to two periods of time
 - The period of time that began with Christ's first coming and continues until His second coming

[Heb. 1:1](#) ¶ God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

[Heb. 1:2](#) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

[James 5:1](#) ¶ Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you.

[James 5:2](#) Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten.

[James 5:3](#) Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!

- Or more specifically, the term can reference the very end of this period of waiting for Christ's return

[2Tim. 3:1](#) ¶ But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

[2Tim. 3:2](#) For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

[2Tim. 3:3](#) unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

[2Tim. 3:4](#) treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

[2Tim. 3:5](#) holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

[2Pet. 3:3](#) Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,

[2Pet. 3:4](#) and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

- Finally, it can mean the transition from this world to the next, as Isaiah uses it here
 - The days when God fulfills all His promises toward Israel and brings their period of judgment to an end
- Isaiah begins Chapter 2 describing a mountain of the house of the Lord that will become the chief mountain of the world
 - And the Gentile people of the world will stream to it
 - As these Gentile nations stream to Jerusalem, they come for two reasons
 - To have an encounter with the Lord Who is there
 - And to learn and follow His ways - to be taught of God
 - Furthermore, the Lord will be called upon to judge between the nations and render decisions
 - So there must still be disagreements among the nations (Gentiles) - sin

- Nevertheless, there will be no war because the Lord's judgment will result in peaceful resolution to all conflicts
- From this scene, we know we're talking about a time when the Lord is present in Jerusalem
 - Therefore, it's a time following His return
 - Zech 14 gives us this same picture - The Lord's return is connected with the establishment of a high place for Jerusalem
 - This comes in the day with the Lord is king over all the earth
- Ezek 40-48 give a detailed description of this mountain and what's on top of it
 - The fourth Temple (2,500 square miles)
- If the Lord is ruling and judging among the Gentiles, what of the Jews during this time?
 - Do they need judging too?

[Jer. 31:31](#) "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

[Jer. 31:32](#) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

[Jer. 31:33](#) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

[Jer. 31:34](#) "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

- At the point that this new Kingdom begins, the Jewish nation will be entirely comprised of glorified followers of Christ
 - This is the fulfillment of Paul's statement in Romans 11:26 that all Israel will be saved
 - There will be no Jews with sin
- So Isaiah opens chapter 2 promising a future time when all will be right with Israel in their kingdom
 - But Gentiles will be there also, though the gentiles will still need judging

- This future time places Israel on the top and all Gentile nations underneath
- This is a reversal of the present times
 - You may remember I mentioned that Israel is currently in a period called the times of the Gentile
 - A time when Gentiles trample Jerusalem and Israel is under judgment
- We're going to look at that time in more detail in Chapter 5, but speaking of judgment, let's move forward with Isaiah

[Is. 2:5](#) Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

[Is. 2:6](#) For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob,
Because they are filled with influences from the east,
And they are soothsayers like the Philistines,
And they strike bargains with the children of foreigners.

[Is. 2:7](#) Their land has also been filled with silver and gold
And there is no end to their treasures;
Their land has also been filled with horses
And there is no end to their chariots.

[Is. 2:8](#) Their land has also been filled with idols;
They worship the work of their hands,
That which their fingers have made.

[Is. 2:9](#) So the common man has been humbled
And the man of importance has been abased,
But do not forgive them.

[Is. 2:10](#) Enter the rock and hide in the dust
From the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty.

[Is. 2:11](#) The proud look of man will be abased
And the loftiness of man will be humbled,
And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

- Now as Isaiah returns to Israel's rebellion, notice how he plays off of the vision of the future state of Israel
 - Interestingly, Isaiah never makes their future glory in the house of Israel conditional or contingent on their present day obedience
 - Remember, God has a plan for the nation of Israel, the entity
 - That entity will come through a series of events regardless of what the people who make up that entity do individually

- Like water in the lake
 - The One who established Israel out of nothing has the power to bring it into obedience when the appointed day comes
 - Meanwhile, the individual Jew who lives may or may not participate in that future glory
 - This why Isaiah can say in verse 1-4 that Israel will have this future
 - Then immediately call Israel to walk in the Light of the Lord
- First, Isaiah says God abandoned His people for a list of reasons
 - Had God abandoned Israel in Isaiah's day?
 - Not in the sense of human history
 - That was still about 100 years away (Chap 5)
 - But His judgments were no less certain at this point...all that remained was for time to pass
- So Isaiah speaks in the past tense concerning God's judgment
 - God's abandonment of Israel was purposeful and temporary
 - Isaiah will give us details later in his book concerning the nature of this coming abandonment and the purposes for it
 - For now, Isaiah shows the reasons why they deserve this judgment
- Notice in verse 6, how this passage is contrasted with the present house of Jacob
 - In contrast to the future day when the Gentiles will stream to hear the Lord's counsel,
 - But today, Israel goes out to the world to learn what it offers, false religion and the occult
 - This was a violation of Deut 18:10

Deut. 18:10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

- Then in verse 7, comes the second sin: dependence on foreign wealth

[Deut. 17:14](#) "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,'

[Deut. 17:15](#) you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman.

[Deut. 17:16](#) "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.'

[Deut. 17:17](#) "He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

- The land is filled with riches from other powers
 - Versus the new kingdom when the Gentile nations depend on the blessings that Israel offers
- And with the riches came the third sin in contrast to the coming kingdom: idols of the world
 - Rather than the Lord dwelling among them
- But God will bring judgment and humiliation
 - While they bowed down to idols, now they will be humbled
 - But the word for humbled in Hebrew is bowed down
 - So the thought is they bowed to idols so God will bow them down in humility
 - And the "man" has been brought low
 - And this coming humbling of the proud will involve no forgiveness - until God's wrath is spent
 - This future time of humbling is the perfect companion to the earlier discussion of a future time of glory
 - We have seen sin and judgment go hand in hand already
 - Here Isaiah will take it to a new level
 - Redemption = Messianic Kingdom
 - Judgment = Tribulation

[Is. 2:10](#) Enter the rock and hide in the dust

From the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty.

[Is. 2:11](#) The proud look of man will be abased

And the loftiness of man will be humbled,

And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

[Is. 2:12](#) For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning

Against everyone who is proud and lofty

And against everyone who is lifted up,

That he may be abased.

[Is. 2:13](#) And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and lifted up,

Against all the oaks of Bashan,

[Is. 2:14](#) Against all the lofty mountains,

Against all the hills that are lifted up,

[Is. 2:15](#) Against every high tower,

Against every fortified wall,

[Is. 2:16](#) Against all the ships of Tarshish

And against all the beautiful craft.

[Is. 2:17](#) The pride of man will be humbled

And the loftiness of men will be abased;

And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,

- The people of Israel are promised a time of God's judgment when they will hide in caves out of terror of the Lord
 - It's chief purpose will be to bring the loftiness of Israel low so that the Lord may be exalted in that day
 - And the effects of this day of reckoning isn't limited to Israel
 - Everyone who carries this same proud and loftiness is going to be abased (brought low)

[Rev. 6:12](#) ¶ I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red,

[Rev. 6:13](#) and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.

[Rev. 6:14](#) The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

[Rev. 6:15](#) ¶ Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

[Rev. 6:16](#) They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

[Rev. 6:17](#) For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

- Look at the rest of the effects of this time of reckoning:

[Is. 2:18](#) But the idols will completely vanish.

[Is. 2:19](#) Men will go into caves of the rocks
And into holes of the ground
Before the terror of the LORD
And the splendor of His majesty,
When He arises to make the earth tremble.

[Is. 2:20](#) In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats
Their idols of silver and their idols of gold,
Which they made for themselves to worship,

[Is. 2:21](#) In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs
Before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty,
When He arises to make the earth tremble.

[Is. 2:22](#) Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils;
For why should he be esteemed?

- Idols will be vanish from Israel
 - Men who are hiding in the dark recesses of caves from the shaking earth will toss their idols aside to the moles and the bats around them in the caves
 - Interestingly, what do moles and bats have in common - blindness
 - The spiritually blind are tossing their idols to the physically blind
 - And what are they tossing?
 - Silver and gold
 - Not wooden figurine - but wealth

"Idols are precious. They are always our hard-won silver and gold. That's why we prize them. They are beautiful, but also contemptible. J. R. R. Tolkien portrayed this in *The Lord of the Rings*. Everyone who wears the golden ring of power morphs into something weirdly subhuman, like Gollum, who cherishes it as 'My Precious.' So for Middle-earth to be saved, the ring must be thrown into the fire of Mount Doom and destroyed forever. Tolkien understood that the key to life is not only what we lay hold of but also what we throw away." -Raymond Ortlund

- Then Isaiah ends with a footnote, that they stop regarding and esteeming men (rather than God, which is the implication)
 - And from this line, Isaiah transitions to a focus on the corrupt leadership
 - This is a favorite topic of Isaiah's, just as it was a frequent criticism by Jesus of the Pharisees
 - God announces the systematic dismembering of the leadership in Israel during this day of reckoning

[Is. 3:1](#) ¶ For behold, the Lord GOD of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah
Both supply and support, the whole supply of bread
And the whole supply of water;

[Is. 3:2](#) The mighty man and the warrior,
The judge and the prophet,
The diviner and the elder,

[Is. 3:3](#) The captain of fifty and the honorable man,
The counselor and the expert artisan,
And the skillful enchanter.

[Is. 3:4](#) And I will make mere lads their princes,
And capricious children will rule over them,

[Is. 3:5](#) And the people will be oppressed,
Each one by another, and each one by his neighbor;
The youth will storm against the elder
And the inferior against the honorable.

[Is. 3:6](#) When a man lays hold of his brother in his father's house, saying,
I "You have a cloak, you shall be our ruler,
I And these ruins will be under your charge,"

[Is. 3:7](#) He will protest on that day, saying,
I "I will not be your healer,
For in my house there is neither bread nor cloak;
I You should not appoint me ruler of the people."

[Is. 3:8](#) For Jerusalem has stumbled and Judah has fallen,
Because their speech and their actions are against the LORD,
To rebel against His glorious presence.

[Is. 3:9](#) The expression of their faces bears witness against them,
And they display their sin like Sodom;
They do not even conceal it.
Woe to them!
For they have brought evil on themselves.

- God is going to remove both supply and support, the entire economic system they depend upon
 - How does Israel lose it's ability to find bread and water?

[Rev. 13:7](#) ¶ It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.

[Rev. 13:8](#) All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

[Rev. 13:16](#) And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,

[Rev. 13:17](#) and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

[Rev. 13:18](#) Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

- And then in verses 2-7 Isaiah describes God's plan to address the corrupt leadership in this time of reckoning
 - In vs.2-3 He'll remove all strong and competent leadership, whether corrupt or not
 - And in vs. 4-7 replaces them with incompetent and unwilling leaders
 - Consider the pressures in that day as the world is rocked
 - Who would want to be in charge in Israel?
- And how is God going to remove this leadership within Israel?

[Rev. 9:13](#) ¶ Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

[Rev. 9:14](#) one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

[Rev. 9:15](#) And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind.

[Rev. 9:16](#) The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

[Rev. 9:17](#) And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.

[Rev. 9:18](#) A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.

[Rev. 9:19](#) For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm.

[Rev. 9:20](#) ¶ The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;
[Rev. 9:21](#) and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

- Even in the midst of this onslaught, God is still able to rescue the righteous, of course

[Is. 3:10](#) Say to the righteous that it will go well with them,
 For they will eat the fruit of their actions.

[Is. 3:11](#) Woe to the wicked! It will go badly with him,
 For what he deserves will be done to him.

[Is. 3:12](#) O My people! Their oppressors are children,
 And women rule over them.
 O My people! Those who guide you lead you astray
 And confuse the direction of your paths.

[Is. 3:13](#) ¶ The LORD arises to contend,
 And stands to judge the people.

[Is. 3:14](#) The LORD enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people,
 I "It is you who have devoured the vineyard;
 The plunder of the poor is in your houses.

[Is. 3:15](#) "What do you mean by crushing My people
 I And grinding the face of the poor?"
 Declares the Lord GOD of hosts.

- The righteous have reason to hope
 - Righteousness is faith lived out
 - But the wicked have no such hope in Israel
 - This is a time of reckoning - payment for sin
 - And Isaiah reiterates that the oppressors are their own leaders
 - Who are like children
 - Which is why God is entering into judgment with His people

- Ezekiel said this about God’s plan for the time of Tribulation

[Ezek. 20:33](#) ¶ “As I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you.

[Ezek. 20:34](#) “I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out;

[Ezek. 20:35](#) and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.

[Ezek. 20:36](#) “As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you,” declares the Lord GOD.

[Ezek. 20:37](#) “I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;

[Ezek. 20:38](#) and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

- Just to make sure that the women don’t feel left out, Isaiah addresses them as well

[Is. 3:16](#) ¶ Moreover, the LORD said, “Because the daughters of Zion are proud
And walk with heads held high and seductive eyes,
And go along with mincing steps
And tinkle the bangles on their feet,

[Is. 3:17](#) Therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion with scabs,
I And the LORD will make their foreheads bare.”

[Is. 3:18](#) In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, headbands, crescent ornaments,

[Is. 3:19](#) dangling earrings, bracelets, veils,

[Is. 3:20](#) headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, perfume boxes, amulets,

[Is. 3:21](#) finger rings, nose rings,

[Is. 3:22](#) festal robes, outer tunics, cloaks, money purses,

[Is. 3:23](#) hand mirrors, undergarments, turbans and veils.

[Is. 3:24](#) Now it will come about that instead of sweet perfume there will be putrefaction;

Instead of a belt, a rope;

Instead of well-set hair, a plucked-out scalp;

Instead of fine clothes, a donning of sackcloth;

And branding instead of beauty.

[Is. 3:25](#) Your men will fall by the sword

And your mighty ones in battle.

[Is. 3:26](#) And her gates will lament and mourn,

And deserted she will sit on the ground.

- This is also a problem of authority among the women
 - Acting haughty and heads high meaning with pride
 - They seduce men into doing the wrong things

- So they are accessories to the crimes of their husbands
- Mincing steps, meaning an exaggerated small step to make sure their bangles ring on their feet
 - Showing off their wealth
- So God removes their beauty and wealth and comfort
 - All the things in which they place their pride and trust
- Even worst, they lose access to the men, the leaders and providers for the nation
 - See the beginning of chapter 4
 - Next week we return to glory

Isaiah 4-5

- In chapters 2-5, we complete the overview
 - We have already covered:
 - 2:2
 - A new glorious future for Israel
 - 2:6
 - Sinful Israel
 - 2:12
 - A day of reckoning
 - Now we return to finish the overview
 - 4:2
 - Return to looking at Israel's coming glory
 - Finally, chapter 5
 - Describes the beginning of the Age of the Gentiles
 - The beginning of a long period of judgment against Israel for their sin
- First, we need to complete the discussion of the day of reckoning, when Israel will receive the full measure of God's anger for their disobedience under the Old Covenant
 - We call this future time "Tribulation" based on New Testament teaching, which we will consider in the future as Isaiah returns to this topic
 - For now, we consider what he gives us in his introduction
 - Last week we left off looking at the condition of men in Israel
 - And we had just briefly considered the condition of women
 - Let's quickly finish our examination of the women's punishment and then move forward into the final two sections of the introduction

[Is. 3:16](#) ¶ Moreover, the LORD said, "Because the daughters of Zion are proud
And walk with heads held high and seductive eyes,
And go along with mincing steps
And tinkle the bangles on their feet,

[Is. 3:17](#) Therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion with scabs,
And the LORD will make their foreheads bare."

[Is. 3:18](#) In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, headbands,
crescent ornaments,

[Is. 3:19](#) dangling earrings, bracelets, veils,

[Is. 3:20](#) headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, perfume boxes, amulets,

[Is. 3:21](#) finger rings, nose rings,

[Is. 3:22](#) festal robes, outer tunics, cloaks, money purses,

[Is. 3:23](#) hand mirrors, undergarments, turbans and veils.

[Is. 3:24](#) Now it will come about that instead of sweet perfume there will be
putrefaction;

Instead of a belt, a rope;

Instead of well-set hair, a plucked-out scalp;

Instead of fine clothes, a donning of sackcloth;

And branding instead of beauty.

- We mentioned briefly last week how the women of tribulation were complicit in the nation's sin, but in their own way
 - They demonstrate pride and haughtiness and seek attention for their wealth
 - V.16 - walking in such a way so as to attract attention
 - We can assume that their wealth came as a consequence of their seductiveness
 - Husbands who gave them wealth by crushing the poor of Israel (verse 15)
 - Then in verses 18-23, he lists 21 items which will be removed
 - 3 x 7
 - Three is the number of God in complete form
 - Seven is the number of completion or perfection
 - It would seem that 21 signifies God at work in completing judgment
 - God reverses their circumstances in the Tribulation to remove their beauty and afflict them with scabs and their hair will fall out

- He removes all that causes them to see themselves as beautiful
 - How does this happen in Tribulation?
 - As we've done in the previous verses, we can forward to Revelation and see glimpses of what events might produce this outcome

[Rev. 16:8](#) ¶ The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire.

[Rev. 16:9](#) Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

[Rev. 16:10](#) ¶ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain,

[Rev. 16:11](#) and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

- The bowl judgments, which come near the end of the seven year Tribulation, produce tremendous suffering on Earth
 - Including this reference to sores - perhaps the scabs mentioned in Isaiah 4?
- What is God's purpose in these judgments, do you think
 - We notice from Revelation that they didn't arrive at repentance
 - Arguably, that's not their purpose
 - What purpose does Tribulation serve?
 - We will come back to this, as Isaiah does many times
 - But as a preview, consider how chapter 40 of Isaiah opens
 - Chapter 40 corresponds to Matthew, the start of "Second Isaiah" (New Testament)
 - [Is. 40:1](#) ¶ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

[Is. 40:2](#) Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

[Is. 40:3](#) A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.

[Is. 40:4](#) Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

[Is. 40:5](#) And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

- After Israel has received double for her sins, she sees her Deliverer arrive in glory
 - We will look much more closely at the purpose of Tribulation as we continue through Isaiah coming weeks
 - For now, let's move to the end of three and into four...

[Is. 3:25](#) Your men will fall by the sword
And your mighty ones in battle.

[Is. 3:26](#) And her gates will lament and mourn,
And deserted she will sit on the ground.

[Is. 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!"

- I read through 4:1 because it completes a thought for Isaiah
 - The Tribulation brings so much death among the Jewish men, that the women find their judgment in the lack of husbands
 - We said last week it was a source of shame for them to be without a husband
 - They call for a man to take away their reproach
 - Then in verse 2, Isaiah's tone changes sharply again

[Is. 4:2](#) ¶ In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel.

[Is. 4:3](#) It will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy — everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem.

[Is. 4:4](#) When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning,

[Is. 4:5](#) then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy.

[Is. 4:6](#) There will be a shelter to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain.

- Now we return to a discussion of Israel's coming age of glory
 - Beginning with a discussion of the Branch of the Lord
 - How many have heard of Isaiah 11 when it says:

[Is. 11:1](#) ¶ A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

[Is. 11:2](#) The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him — the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD —

- Well, here we see the Branch motif used to describe the coming Messiah first described
 - Naturally, this is part of that extended introduction or prelude to the book, so Isaiah throws out references here and there which he will follow up later with more detail
 - The Branch imagery conveys several ideas, which Isaiah will examine at points in the book
 - A branch is something that finds its source in something else, and is of the same material usually
 - In Christ's case, the branch image suggests the Messiah having his origin in the God of Israel
 - That isn't to suggest that God the Father made or created the Branch
 - But rather than the Son comes from the Father in the sense of the incarnation

- God becomes man and enters His creation in a new way
 - Thus He is a Branch from the Lord
 - Later, Isaiah will use the Branch image in an earthly way, to describe which family the Messiah will come from - Jesse
- In Isaiah 4, we are back to describing the Messianic Kingdom
 - We know this is speaking of the Messianic kingdom because of five details in this short passage
 - The first clue that we are looking at the Branch in His second coming is he was glorious and beautiful
 - He was not considered beautiful and glorious to Israel in his first arrival
 - Instead, he was despised and mocked and put to death
 - The second clue that this is the time of the Messianic kingdom is found in the second half of verse 2
 - The fruit of the earth is enjoyed by the survivors of Israel
 - Israel will receive this Branch and be blessed by Him on a physical Earth where they receive the Earth's produce
 - But only a surviving remnant will enjoy these blessings
 - The third clue is that those who are in this surviving group, according to verse 3, are called holy - all of them
 - Holy is the word qadosh, which can be holy or consecrated, or saints
 - So this is a time when all Israel consists of those who survive something, are present with the Lord, receive the fruit of the Earth, and are saints
 - The fourth clue is how they reach this state of holiness
 - Their sin has been washed away in verse 4 following a period of purging accomplished by a spirit of judgment and burning
 - Tribulation, which precedes Christ's return and the Messianic Kingdom
 -

- The final clue is found in verses 5 & 6
 - During this time, Israel will live around Mount Zion (which refers to the glory of Israel)
 - And there will be supernatural displays of God's glory protecting and caring for the nation
 - Smoke, fire, a canopy of glory
 - Clearly, these events have never happened in Israel since these words were written
 - It must refer to a future fulfillment in the Kingdom
- So, we've seen Isaiah describe Israel's sin, and her coming punishment in the Tribulation and her coming glory in the kingdom
 - But Isaiah's introduction is complete until he addresses another period of judgment which will arrive just a few decades after he wrote
 - And it continues today and will continue until the time of that glory in chapter 4
 - It's the times of the Gentile
 - A time when God uses Gentile nations to bring judgment against His people in the nation of Israel, beginning with the invasion of Babylon

[Is. 5:1](#) ¶ Let me sing now for my well-beloved
A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard.
My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

[Is. 5:2](#) He dug it all around, removed its stones,
And planted it with the choicest vine.
And He built a tower in the middle of it
And also hewed out a wine vat in it;
Then He expected it to produce good grapes,
But it produced only worthless ones.

[Is. 5:3](#) ¶ "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
Judge between Me and My vineyard.

[Is. 5:4](#) "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it?
Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones?

•

- Isaiah sings this song about His beloved (God) and God's vineyard
 - God dug around it, prepared the ground, planted the best vines and placed a tower, or watchtower to protect it, prepared a vat to receive the fruit
 - And He expected it to produce good grapes
 - Instead, it produced worthless ones (beushim = worthless = wild or stinking)
 - Then God asks Jerusalem's inhabitants to judge between God and his vineyard
 - That phrase means you decide how God should respond to this situation
 - So Judah becomes the judge so to speak
 - What more could God have done?
 - He prepared the land, made everything ready for the harvest
 - So why didn't the vine produce good grapes?
- At this point, Isaiah leaves the question unanswered as to why unanswered
 - It's a paradox because everything we indicates that the grapes should have been good - yet they weren't
 - Then Isaiah continues on to show what God will do since the vineyard didn't produce as expected

[Is. 5:5](#) "So now let Me tell you what I am going to do to My vineyard:
I will remove its hedge and it will be consumed;
I will break down its wall and it will become trampled ground.

[Is. 5:6](#) "I will lay it waste;
It will not be pruned or hoed,
But briars and thorns will come up.
I will also charge the clouds to rain no rain on it."

- God's response is a systematic dismantling and abandonment of the vineyard
 - After all, if God has done all that could be expected to produce good fruit but the fruit didn't come
 - Then there must be something wrong with the vineyard itself

- So God removes the hedges allowing it to be consumed by overgrowth and trampled by animals
- The ground will lie fallow, and weeds will take over
- No rain will come to keep the ground from producing
- Then Isaiah turns the corner and makes his point through this parable

[Is. 5:7](#) ¶ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel
And the men of Judah His delightful plant.
Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed;
For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress.

[Is. 5:8](#) ¶ Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field,
Until there is no more room,
So that you have to live alone in the midst of the land!

[Is. 5:9](#) In my ears the LORD of hosts has sworn, "Surely, many houses shall become desolate,
Even great and fine ones, without occupants.

[Is. 5:10](#) "For ten acres of vineyard will yield only one bath of wine,
And a homer of seed will yield but an ephah of grain."

[Is. 5:11](#) Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink,
Who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them!

[Is. 5:12](#) Their banquets are accompanied by lyre and harp, by tambourine and flute,
and by wine;
But they do not pay attention to the deeds of the LORD,
Nor do they consider the work of His hands.

- Surprise, but the analogy was talking about Israel all the time
 - Israel is the Vineyard and the people are the vines
 - God established them as a people expecting them to produce justice and righteousness
 - But they only produced bloodshed and distress
 - One letter difference in Hebrew between the pairs of words in v.7 - another Isaiah play on words
 - They were stinking grapes to God
 -

- So now, the analogy becomes difficult for Israel
 - Just as the vineyard was dismantled, so will Israel be, both the land itself and the people
 - Woe (hoy=judgment)
- The first woe falls on the land owners who disobeyed the Mosaic Law and took land and held on to it despite the Law's requirement to return it in the Year of Jubilee
 - This is how the men (and their wives) became rich at the expense of the poorer families
 - These houses would become desolate
 - Like vineyard becoming fallow land, the homes would be unoccupied
 - And the land they bought will only produce a tenth of it's normal harvest
- A second woe falls on those who resort to drunkenness
 - Both to those who rise early to drink and those who stay up late to drink
 - The emphasis is on drinking in excess, not drinking alcohol at all
 - And their sin is ultimately one of dissipation and idleness in the work God has appointed
- [Eph. 5:18](#) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is **dissipation**, but be filled with the Spirit,
 - These are symptomatic of Israel's sins, not the all inclusive list (see earlier lists)
 - Though God is not finished pronouncing woes, He nevertheless begins explaining what He is prepared to do in response

[Is. 5:13](#) ¶ Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge;
And their honorable men are famished,
And their multitude is parched with thirst.

[Is. 5:14](#) Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth without measure;

And Jerusalem's splendor, her multitude, her din of revelry and the jubilant within her, descend into it.

[Is. 5:15](#) So the common man will be humbled and the man of importance abased,
The eyes of the proud also will be abased.

[Is. 5:16](#) But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in judgment,
And the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.

[Is. 5:17](#) Then the lambs will graze as in their pasture,
And strangers will eat in the waste places of the wealthy.

- Therefore, His people go into exile
 - The word for exile is galah, which is to uncover or remove, specifically to carry away into captivity
 - This is their punishment for their lack of knowledge - a failure to heed God's word and the Covenant specifically
 - Just as with the vineyard, a chain of events will follow
 - The nation will see tremendous death
 - Sheol will have to enlarge it's throat to swallow all that will come to it
 - And all that rich splendor drops in
 - The effect is to humble those proud men and women
 - And therefore the Lord will be exalted in His judgment of sin because He showed Himself holy in righteousness
 - God receives as much glory and honor when He performs His role of judge over sin as when He extends mercy and grace
 - They are two sides of the same coin
 - With one, you can't appreciate or even understand the other
 - In the end, the land will be empty of it's people, and strangers will live there in their place

- The stinking grapes receive another round of woes as the chapter draws to a close

[Is. 5:18](#) ¶ Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood,
And sin as if with cart ropes;

[Is. 5:19](#) Who say, "Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see it;

And let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near
And come to pass, that we may know it!"

[Is. 5:20](#) Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness;
Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

[Is. 5:21](#) Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes
And clever in their own sight!

[Is. 5:22](#) Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine
And valiant men in mixing strong drink,

[Is. 5:23](#) Who justify the wicked for a bribe,
And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

- Isaiah presents another Shakespearean description here
 - God pronounces judgment on those who drag or pull behind themselves iniquity tied by their cords of lying and deceit like a ball and chain
 - And those cords are pulling carts like wheelbarrows full of their sin
 - Who mock God by demanding He show Himself and explain His purposes to their satisfaction
 - Judgment again to those who declare evil to be good and vice versa (very contemporary image)
 - Judgment again to those who think themselves wise and thus are clueless
 - And finally, judgment against those are esteemed (heroes = gibbor = mighty) within the culture for their exploits - hard living and injustice
 - They deny what is right to those under their control
- So here is God's pronouncement for Israel's coming judgment

[Is. 5:24](#) ¶ Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble
 And dry grass collapses into the flame,
 So their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust;
 For they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts
 And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 5:25](#) On this account the anger of the LORD has burned against His people,
 And He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them down.
 And the mountains quaked, and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of
 the streets.

For all this His anger is not spent,
 But His hand is still stretched out.

[Is. 5:26](#) ¶ He will also lift up a standard to the distant nation,
 And will whistle for it from the ends of the earth;
 And behold, it will come with speed swiftly.

[Is. 5:27](#) No one in it is weary or stumbles,
 None slumbers or sleeps;
 Nor is the belt at its waist undone,
 Nor its sandal strap broken.

[Is. 5:28](#) Its arrows are sharp and all its bows are bent;
 The hoofs of its horses seem like flint and its chariot wheels like a whirlwind.

[Is. 5:29](#) Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions;
 It growls as it seizes the prey
 And carries it off with no one to deliver it.

[Is. 5:30](#) And it will growl over it in that day like the roaring of the sea.
 If one looks to the land, behold, there is darkness and distress;
 Even the light is darkened by its clouds.

- Verse 1 repeats the summation of their offenses
 - They have rejected God's word particularly in the form of the Law
 - On this account (v.2) they are bring judged
 - God takes action, leaving the ground shaking and many corpses
 - And yet, notice His anger is not spent even after this event takes place
 - There will be more anger to come (Tribulation)
 - Now more specifically, He lifts up a standard to a distant nation
 - A standard is nes, which is a sign or a banner
 - He beckons that foreign nation, in other words

- That nation is Babylon, about 100 years after Isaiah wrote this
- It came quickly as a dominant world power which God established expressly for this purpose - to judge Israel
- In verse 27, you see the singlemindedness and urgency of their arrival
 - They take no time to relax and pause
- It's a fierce military force, attacking with great effectiveness
 - Israel doesn't stand a chance
- Interestingly, it is compared twice to a lion
 - That carries off its prey
 - The symbol of the Babylon monarchy was the lion
- This is the event that begins the times of the Gentiles, which we will consider a little more next week when we see Isaiah's calling in chapter 6
 - Matthew 21:33-45 for comparison
 - Sin in Israel was the product of leadership
 - Led to destruction in the earlier day and now again
 - The Pharisees understood that too

Isaiah 6

- Leaving Isaiah's introduction behind, we move into the book proper
 - Chapter 6 is famously the chapter where Isaiah receives his calling and commissioning as a prophet through a vision of some kind
 - Like John who "went up" into heaven in Rev 4
 - It's also a place where Isaiah receives what has to be one of the strangest and most intriguing missions in the history of missions

[Is. 6:1](#) ¶ In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.

[Is. 6:2](#) Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

[Is. 6:3](#) And one called out to another and said,
" Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts,
The whole earth is full of His glory."

[Is. 6:4](#) And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

[Is. 6:5](#) Then I said,
" Woe is me, for I am ruined!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I live among a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

[Is. 6:6](#) ¶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs.

[Is. 6:7](#) He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips;
and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven."

- Isaiah introduces his vision with a date: the year of King Uzziah's death
 - King Uzziah is an interesting character in scripture
 - A powerful man who brought great prosperity to Israel - best since Solomon
 - His last years were marked by leprosy brought by God as judgment

[2Chr. 26:15](#) In Jerusalem he made engines of war invented by skillful men to be on the towers and on the corners for the purpose of shooting arrows and great stones. Hence his fame spread afar, for he was marvelously helped until he was strong.

[2Chr. 26:16](#) ¶ But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

[2Chr. 26:17](#) Then Azariah the priest entered after him and with him eighty priests of the LORD, valiant men.

[2Chr. 26:18](#) They opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful and will have no honor from the LORD God."

[2Chr. 26:19](#) But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense.

[2Chr. 26:20](#) Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and behold, he was leprous on his forehead; and they hurried him out of there, and he himself also hastened to get out because the LORD had smitten him.

[2Chr. 26:21](#) King Uzziah was a leper to the day of his death; and he lived in a separate house, being a leper, for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. And Jotham his son was over the king's house judging the people of the land.

- Josephus adds that:

In the mean time a great [earthquake](#) shook the ground and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately.

- Uzziah died around 742 BC
- And it makes sense to conclude that Isaiah experienced this vision at the start of his ministry, before he received the words in chapters 1-5
- Isaiah then describes a vision of the Lord (Adonay)
 - He is seated on a throne, rum (exalted), nasah (lifted up)
 - The train of His robe filled the temple
 - Angelic beings standing above Him, each having six wings
 - Calling holy...similar to John's vision

[Rev. 4:6](#) Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. ¶ In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.

[Rev. 4:7](#) The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.

[Rev. 4:8](#) Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

- Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord and trembles
 - And declares that as a unclean man he is ruined because He has seen the Lord of hosts
 - First, consider Isaiah's reaction as an opportunity to get a sense, a glimpse of what fear of the Lord looks like
 - We love to compare ourselves to others to gain a sense of worth
 - Wrong standard - compare yourself to God and what happens - fear
 - We consider God and our future opportunity to live in His presence - this is something all but impossible to consider in our present condition
 - So we should look through the eyes of Isaiah and see ourselves in his place
 - We would feel the same fear, unimaginable
 - There is a fear of death
 - Then there is a fear of eternal condemnation
 - The Bible consistently teaches a principle that God's holiness is so unapproachable that it places anyone who has sin in mortal danger if they enter His presence
 - Because God's righteousness compels Him to bring judgment against sin

[Ex. 33:18](#) ¶ Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

[Ex. 33:19](#) ¶ And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

[Ex. 33:20](#) But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

- It's for this reason that Paul can say that no man has actually seen God's face:

[1Tim. 6:13](#) I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate,
[1Tim. 6:14](#) that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,
[1Tim. 6:15](#) which He will bring about at the proper time — He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords,
[1Tim. 6:16](#) who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

- So how is it that Isaiah can say here that he saw the Lord?
 - First, remember that the scene around the throne is not something that a man cannot see
 - Strictly speaking, it is the Father's "face" or the unapproachable light
 - We might say that the light of God is as difficult to see as the sun in the heavens
 - It's always above us, yet we live out entire life without actually looking at it except when it's low in the sky
 - In this case, Isaiah never saw the Father - He saw the member of the Godhead who was made to be seen by men

[John 12:36](#) "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." ¶ These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.

[John 12:37](#) But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him...

[John 12:41](#) These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

- So, this is a scene in which the preincarnate Christ is seated on the throne

[Col. 1:15](#) ¶ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

[Heb. 1:3](#) And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

-
- Isaiah mentions his sinfulness in connection to his lips
 - We know the Bible speaks in numerous places about how the mouth is a window into the heart
 - But in this case, Isaiah probably localized his sin to the lips in contrast to what he was seeing around him
 - Pure creatures singing nothing but praise to God
 - Oh that we could ever say the same about our our mouths - nothing but praise for God
- Then in response to Isaiah's guilt, one of these winged creatures took a burning coal from beneath the altar in heaven
 - There is an altar in Heaven! And altars are for sacrifice
 - And so this is the true altar upon which Christ's blood will be poured when He entered into the true tabernacle upon His ascension (Heb 9)
 - But at the time Isaiah is presented with this vision, this perfect sacrifice on this altar had not yet taken place
 - So there has not yet been a removal of sin through the blood of Christ
 - What could take place, therefore, was only a temporary covering or atoning for sin
 - Since no other blood is available (since the only blood sacrifice that takes place in God's throne room is Jesus' once for all offering - there are no animals sacrificed in heaven)
 - Therefore, fire must used to cleanse Isaiah
 - Since he mentions lips, God touches the fire to his lips
 - And then the creature says iniquity (guilt) is taken away

- And sin is forgiven (kaphar) atoned or covered
- Sin can only be covered before Christ's death and it is always temporary
- True removal of sin awaited Christ's death
- From the state of temporary atonement, Isaiah receives his commission

[Is. 6:8](#) Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

[Is. 6:9](#) He said, "Go, and tell this people:

'Keep on listening, but do not perceive;
Keep on looking, but do not understand.'

[Is. 6:10](#) "Render the hearts of this people insensitive,
Their ears dull,
And their eyes dim,
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
Hear with their ears,
Understand with their hearts,
And return and be healed."

[Is. 6:11](#) Then I said, "Lord, how long?" And He answered,
"Until cities are devastated and without inhabitant,
Houses are without people
And the land is utterly desolate,

[Is. 6:12](#) "The LORD has removed men far away,
And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

[Is. 6:13](#) "Yet there will be a tenth portion in it,
And it will again be subject to burning,
Like a terebinth or an oak
Whose stump remains when it is felled.
The holy seed is its stump."

- The Lord asks this fantastic question: Who shall I send, who will go for Us?
 - Isaiah's visions were truly special
 - He sees the Messiah on His throne
 - And he hears the revelation of the Trinity expressed, much as Moses did
 - I've always found this request a bit humorous because of the way I imagine the scene

- One of two ways...either Isaiah responds eagerly because he wants to be chosen (but then who else would God choose under the circumstances)?
 - Or Isaiah answers with a bit of trepidation after noticing that there is no one else
 - Either way, the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable
 - God wanted Isaiah to make the commitment to serve in this capacity
 - Once he raised his voice, he was a prophet for life
- His commission is quite unusual
 - He gets a mission destined to failure - 100% guaranteed
 - In verse 9 God says Go and tell this people (Israel)
 - Keep on listening, keep on looking (at the prophets and God's word)
 - But don't let these messengers nor their messages penetrate your understanding
 - Furthermore, Isaiah through his ministry will render the the hearts of the people insensitive
 - Insensitive is shamen, meaning to grow fat (fat, dumb and happy)
 - Dull ears, dim eyes
 - In simple words: Numb these people with your words, until they stop hearing you
 - Why?
 - Obviously, because if they listen to you, then they might see what's coming, recognize the seriousness of their circumstances and then seek forgiveness
 - And if they seek forgiveness, then God is obligated to receive them and provide that forgiveness
 - Why is this the case? What's God up to here?

- First, remember the basis for God's judgment on Israel through Isaiah
 - They violated the Old Covenant, and therefore God is obligated to carry out judgment for that sin
 - Isaiah's ministry begins the formal indictment and pronouncement of that judgment
 - That's why it's significant that this vision happened in the year of Uzziah's death
 - The year of Uzziah's death is also the year that Rome was established
 - God was turning a page in history at this moment, causing great Gentile nations to begin to rise, like the one mentioned in chapter 5 (Babylon)
 - God preparing to usher in the times of the Gentiles which lead us all the way until the Lord's return
 - And at the moment of the Lord's return, a loophole in God's Covenant with Israel will take effect
 - What loophole?
- First, we start in Deut chapter 28 shows the contrast of blessings versus curses:

[Deut. 28:1](#) ¶ " Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

[Deut. 28:2](#) "All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God...

- Twelve verses of blessing
- Then later, the curses:

[Deut. 28:15](#) ¶ " But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you...

- The curses last until verse 68 - 53 verses of curses
 - Could Israel have ever succeeded in meeting these terms?
 - The curses were all but assured

- Then in chapter 29, Moses summarizes their situation as they prepare to formally agree to the covenant

[Deut. 29:1](#) ¶ These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb.

[Deut. 29:2](#) ¶ And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land;

[Deut. 29:3](#) the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders.

[Deut. 29:4](#) "Yet to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.

- Sound familiar to Isaiah?
- Despite all that had happened to them in coming out of Egypt, they still had not been given the capacity to follow God truly - God wasn't ready yet
 - So in Deut 29 Moses relates how they will break the covenant and be scattered and judged for their disobedience
 - But in Deut 30, Moses describes a coming redemption

[Deut. 30:1](#) ¶ "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you,

[Deut. 30:2](#) and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons,

[Deut. 30:3](#) then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.

[Deut. 30:4](#) "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.

[Deut. 30:5](#) "The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

[Deut. 30:6](#) ¶ "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

[Deut. 30:7](#) "The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you.

[Deut. 30:8](#) "And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today.

- When God is ready, He says He will regather Israel (presently ongoing)

- And He will bless them in the Land
 - How can these things happen? How can Israel please God according to a covenant they can't keep?
- Notice He regathers them in conjunction with giving them a new heart, one capable of obeying the commandments of God
 - This has not happened yet (Jer 31:31)

[Jer. 31:31](#) ¶ "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

[Jer. 31:32](#) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

[Jer. 31:33](#) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

[Jer. 31:34](#) "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

- This is the moment of regeneration that comes upon Israel at the moment of Christ's return
- So on a future day, the nation is finally able to perform perfectly the requirements of the Old Covenant, because they won't be sinful people
 - They will be new creatures in spirit and body
- But until that day comes, God is not ready to open their eyes and unstop their ears for He doesn't want them to return until the appointed time
 - Because when Israel does return and seek forgiveness, God must give it to them
 - This brings us to the loophole I mentioned earlier
 - God added a promise in the terms of the OC that obligates Him to bring Israel the blessings of this covenant even if they have not met its terms

[Lev. 26:39](#) ` So those of you who may be left will rot away because of their iniquity in the lands of your enemies; and also because of the iniquities of their forefathers they will rot away with them.

[Lev. 26:40](#) ¶ ` If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me —

[Lev. 26:41](#) I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies — or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity,

[Lev. 26:42](#) then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

[Lev. 26:43](#) ` For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes.

[Lev. 26:44](#) ` Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.

[Lev. 26:45](#) ` But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD.'"

- If and when Israel confesses its sin and the sin of the forefathers in acting with hostility toward God - then God will honor the covenant made Abraham
 - But God has a moment when that turn of Israel toward God will happen

[Zech. 12:8](#) ` In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

[Zech. 12:9](#) ` And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

[Zech. 12:10](#) ¶ ` I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

[Zech. 12:11](#) ` In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

[Zech. 12:12](#) ` The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves;

[Zech. 12:13](#) the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves;

[Zech. 12:14](#) all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.

- This is the appointed moment for God to turn Israel
 - Notice the connections to the earlier verses we read
 - The nation is back in it's land (after regathering)
 - Their is national confessions and mourning over the past sins of their forefathers and the hostility in which they acted against God
 - They come to realization because of the pouring out of the Spirit of grace
 - Just Jer 31 promised - no one will need to teach another to know the Lord, for all will know Him
 - And in Deut 30 when God said in the day when you return to me with your whole heart, circumcise the hearts of your children and you will prosper as chief nation
 - In other words, as God places all these steps in place, He established that Israel's repentance under the Old Covenant brings that contract to an end and results in all the blessings materializing
 - But that outpouring can only happen when the nation has a changed heart and returns to God in unison
- God is going to hold that day off until He reaches His appointed time and pours out His Spirit
 - And in the meaning time, He carries out the curses as required
 - And God has purposed this period of judgment and waiting to give opportunity for the Gentiles

[John 12:37](#) But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

[John 12:38](#) This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"

[John 12:39](#) For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,

[John 12:40](#) " HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM."

[John 12:41](#) These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

- The rejection of Christ in His day was a part of God's plan to withhold forgiveness for Israel during that time
 - Isaiah's day is merely the beginning of that judgment

[Rom. 11:7](#) ¶ What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

[Rom. 11:8](#) just as it is written,

“GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR,
EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT,
DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY.”

[Rom. 11:9](#) And David says,

“LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP,
AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.

[Rom. 11:10](#) “LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT,
AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.”

[Rom. 11:11](#) ¶ I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

[Rom. 11:25](#) ¶ For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

[Rom. 11:26](#) and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,

“THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.”

[Rom. 11:27](#) “THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM,
WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”

[Rom. 11:28](#) From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;

[Rom. 11:29](#) for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

[Rom. 11:30](#) For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

[Rom. 11:31](#) so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

[Rom. 11:32](#) For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.

Isaiah 7

- Isaiah received a commission to present God's word to Israel, a word they weren't permitted to understand
 - They entered into a covenant with God to keep His law
 - When they broke it, God was not only within His rights to bring judgment, He was required to do so
 - The Law gave God the opportunity to declare His judgment on Israel during Isaiah's time
 - He would bring about the arrival of new Gentile kingdoms, use them to exact Israel's punishment
 - This period of judgment would last not just through Isaiah's lifetime, but all the way until a Messiah would come
 - But even that wouldn't end their punishment
 - For the sake of Gentiles, God would without mercy on Israel even past the coming of their Messiah
 - As John explained...

[John 12:37](#) But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

[John 12:38](#) This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"

[John 12:39](#) For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,

[John 12:40](#) " HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM."

[John 12:41](#) These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

- In a future day when the day is right for Jesus' return, God will remember His loophole in Lev 26 and bring mercy to Israel
 - And then they will know what they currently do not know

[Rom. 11:30](#) For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

[Rom. 11:31](#) so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

[Rom. 11:32](#) For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.

- With Isaiah's commissioning established, he moves next to a series of chapters (7-12) commonly called the book of Immanuel,
 - The name comes from three uses of the name Immanuel to describe a coming Messiah or savior for Israel
 - In chapter 7, we see the birth of Immanuel promised
 - In chapter 9, we see the birth is viewed as having already happened
 - In chapter 11 Immanuel is reigning as King
 - Throughout these chapters Isaiah writes in a way that is so artful and intricate, it's simply a marvel
 - The more I read it, the more I felt like I was seeing the wisdom of God on full display
 - Isaiah tells of future historical events in Judah and northern Israel, while weaving in references to God either delivering them to judgment or protecting them
 - And in these references, we find numerous references to Christ
 - So that these references instantly take on double meaning, and the majesty of how both meanings work together makes Shakespeare look like schoolyard poet
 - Chapters 7-9 play on a motif of children, which coincides with a reference to the birth of the Messiah
- The first event described is the coming Assyrian invasion of the northern kingdom and its threat to Judah

[Is. 7:1](#) ¶ Now it came about in the days of Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not conquer it.

- King Ahaz was the grandson of King Uzziah
 - Terrible king
 - Worshipped pagan gods
 - Sacrificed his own son in a pagan temple
 - Placed an idolatrous altar in the temple
- During the reign of King Ahaz, the Southern kingdom of Judah was under siege from two enemies allied together against the House of David.
 - The nation of Syria had joined forces with the Northern Kingdom of Israel to battle against Judah,
 - In 734 BC their armies traveled south and attacked Jerusalem.
 - Their military goal was to force Judah to join their alliance against a growing threat from the northern empire of Assyria.
 - King Ahaz refused to join their alliance, and instead he defended Jerusalem against Syria and Israel.
 - Though they were outnumbered, the Southern Kingdom successfully beat back the invaders and saved their beloved Jerusalem.
- Unfortunately, King Ahaz still faced a difficult situation.
 - The armies of Israel and Syria had been repelled,
 - Yet they hadn't been defeated.
 - They regrouped in Ephraim to the north within the Northern Kingdom of Israel to prepare for a second attack.
 - The prospect of more attacks left the nation of Judah trembling fearfully
 - And King Ahaz searching for a way to preserve his kingdom and defeat his enemies once and for all.
- Isaiah describes the fear in Judah this way:

[Is. 7:2](#) When it was reported to the house of David, saying, "The Arameans have camped in Ephraim," his heart and the hearts of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake with the wind.

- King Ahaz's options were limited.
 - Judah's army wasn't strong enough to defeat a second attack,
 - New threats were emerging in Edom and in Philistia.
 - The king could seek his own alliance with Assyria or Egypt, or Judah could remain neutral and try to defend itself alone.
- At this bleak moment, the faithfulness of our Lord appears.
 - The Lord sends His prophet Isaiah to visit King Ahaz with a better offer.
 - Isaiah is accompanied by his toddler son Shearjashub, which becomes significant later
 - The Lord reveals to Ahaz that He had been the One to defend Jerusalem against the first attack,
- And the Lord promises Ahaz He is prepared to defend the nation again.
 - Isaiah explains God's offer this way:

[Is. 7:3](#) ¶ Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway to the fuller's field,

[Is. 7:4](#) and say to him, 'Take care and be calm, have no fear and do not be fainthearted because of these two stubs of smoldering firebrands, on account of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah.

[Is. 7:5](#) 'Because Aram, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has planned evil against you, saying,

[Is. 7:6](#) "Let us go up against Judah and terrorize it, and make for ourselves a breach in its walls and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of it,"

[Is. 7:7](#) thus says the Lord GOD: "It shall not stand nor shall it come to pass.

[Is. 7:8](#) "For the head of Aram is Damascus and the head of Damascus is Rezin (now within another 65 years Ephraim will be shattered, so that it is no longer a people),

[Is. 7:9](#) and the head of Ephraim is Samaria and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you will not believe, you surely shall not last.'""

- The Lord send Isaiah and his son, whose name means a remnant shall return
 - God says tell the king to be calm and not afraid

- The two nations that came up against Jerusalem are but smoldering stubs now
- God was prepared to stop their repeated attacks
 - The head of these countries was their government and the head of government were these men
 - And the implication is that God can control these men, and in fact they serve as king because God has placed them there
 - And God pointed states they are the head of their countries, NOT the head of Judah
 - Meaning their plan will never succeed
- And Isaiah adds that in 65 years Ephraim won't even be a people any longer
 - Speaking of northern Israel
 - Assyrian will conquer them in 14 years after this prophecy, yet it will take another 51 years before Assyrian deports and scatters the inhabitants of Israel
 - So God was assuring Ahaz that Ephraim's days are numbered as it is
- As Isaiah explains, the Lord's offer held one condition.
 - He would stop the invading armies from the north but the king must believe in the Lord's offer of protection.
 - The king must place his trust exclusively in the Lord's protection.
 - He must not seek other alliances or make backup plans for defending the city.
 - It was an "all or nothing" offer.
 - As Isaiah says in verse 9: if you will not believe (in God's promise to defend the city), you surely shall not last.
 - Meaning, God would eventually destroy Ahaz's reign and if the king didn't believe God's promise

- God would still hold off these attackers for the sake of His promise to the house of David
- But a failure to believe would bring a future destruction for Ahaz as king
- Isaiah uses another play on words in Hebrew
 - Ex.: Don't confide/ don't abide, don't believe, don't receive
- This was a demanding condition
 - The Lord knew that the King's faith would waiver under the pressure of the moment.
 - Even the strongest faith would have wavered in the face of the approaching armies and the prospect of certain defeat,
 - So surely the king would question whether he should forgo taking action to defend the city.
 - How could he be expected to sit idle while a powerful enemy advances upon his nation?
- Because the Lord knew the king would need assurance to rest in His promise, in mercy and grace the Lord invites King Ahaz to request a sign.
 - The Lord's offer to Ahaz is recorded in Isaiah:

[Is. 7:10](#) ¶ Then the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying,
[Is. 7:11](#) "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; make it deep as Sheol or high as heaven."

- God told Ahaz he could ask for any sign he wanted,
 - And the Lord would perform the sign to confirm His promise.
 - A sign is generally a miraculous manifestation of God's power intended to confirm His promises and prove His power to keep His word
 - For example, the Lord gave Noah the sign of a rainbow as proof of His promise never to flood the world again.
- So what did Ahaz do in response to the Lord's gracious offer?
 - What miraculous sign did he request to bolster his faith?

- Surprisingly, he refused to name any sign.
- Isaiah records his response in the next verse:

[Is. 7:12](#) But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!

- At first reading, Ahaz's response sounds very respectful.
 - After all, doesn't scripture teach a man shouldn't test the Lord (Deut 6:16)?

[Deut. 6:16](#) ¶ "You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.

- Even King Ahaz himself cites the Law's restriction as his reason for spurning the prophet,
 - In reality King Ahaz was simply making excuses to Isaiah.
- When the Lord offers us an opportunity to request a sign, it's not a test to take Him up on His offer.
 - On the contrary, it's a show of faith when we are willing to accept a sign.
- Sadly, King Ahaz had no such faith
- Apparently, King Ahaz had already decided to seek another way to defend the city,
 - Ahaz had come to believe that Assyrian was a country he could bargain with and he had decided to seek an alliance with Assyrian against Syria and Israel
 - So he wasn't interested in relying on the Lord's promise to defend Jerusalem.
 - Rather than confess his lack of trust in God, the king speaks hypocritically, pretending to be respectful by quoting the Law,
 - Yet secretly doubting the Lord's promise to defend the city.
 - Ahaz trusted in himself rather than in God.
- Naturally, the Lord saw through the King's pious act,
 - And by the words of Isaiah, the Lord answers Ahaz this way:

[Is. 7:13](#) Then he said, "Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well?"

[Is. 7:14](#) "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

[Is. 7:15](#) "He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good.

- Scripture says that King Ahaz was a man who tried the patience of men
 - Now he had the audacity to try God's patience too
 - Therefore God decides the sign
- At this point we need to observe some subtle changes in Isaiah's words and the underlying Hebrew
 - In verse 13 Isaiah begins to address the house of David
 - Up to this point everything has been spoken to Ahaz personally
 - And all the personal references have been in the singular
 - You, singular
 - But now, Isaiah begins to speak to the House of David
 - And every Hebrew pronoun is now in the plural
 - Read it in the plural "you" to see how it changes
- The sign involves a virgin - a young woman who has never married - will bear a son whose name will be With us God
 - While the Son is still eating food common to infants, He already know to refuse evil and choose good
 - Meaning He will be sinless from birth and arrive under miraculous circumstances
 - We know this refers to the birth of Jesus

[Matt. 1:18](#) ¶ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

[Matt. 1:19](#) And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

[Matt. 1:20](#) But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

[Matt. 1:21](#) "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

[Matt. 1:22](#) Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

[Matt. 1:23](#) "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

- Interestingly, the Hebrew definitive article says "the" virgin, not "a" virgin
 - Using the definitive article of "the" implies this is the virgin spoken of earlier
 - Since there is no reference to a virgin in any earlier verse of Isaiah, it leaves us asking what other prominent mention of a virgin would have been familiar to Isaiah and his audience
 - The only other mention of a virgin birth in all the Old Testament comes in Genesis 3:15

[Gen. 3:15](#) And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed; <-- the woman's "seed" = virgin birth
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel."

- Isaiah says "the" virgin to emphasize this is the fulfillment of God's earlier promise to provide a solution for man's sin
 - Just as Matthew explains
- There has been a lot of debate over whether this promise might also related to something in Ahaz's day
 - The very nature of a sign from God requires that it be something miraculous

- If it were natural and normal, then it wouldn't carry much weight as a sign or proof
 - So the birth of a child from a virgin fits the requirements for a sign
- Yet if the only time a virgin birth has ever happened was 700 years later at Jesus' birth, how can this prophecy be considered a sign for Ahaz?
 - Well, first remember that the words of this prophecy were spoken in the plural to the house of David, not to Ahaz singularly
 - So these verses are spoken beyond the moment as a sign to Israel regarding God's deliverance
 - He had offered Ahaz a sign for God's deliverance in Ahaz's day
 - But when Ahaz refused to ask, God promised a sign to the entire disobedient nation
 - Specifically, that the Throne of David would see its eternal King come as promised
- Secondly, God does give Ahaz a sign for his time, in the very next verses
 - It's hard to see, because God has woven it into Isaiah's words so artfully

[Is. 7:16](#) "For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken.

[Is. 7:17](#) "The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house such days as have never come since the day that Ephraim separated from Judah, the king of Assyria."

- First thing to notice is that the Hebrew pronoun for you returns to the singular in these verses
 - Isaiah has begun to talk to Ahaz personally now
 - Secondly, The word for child in verse 14 is harah, which means an infant
 - The word for boy in verse 16 is naar, which means lad or toddler
 - Isaiah is talking about a different boy now
 - He's talking about the young son he's brought with him to this meeting with Ahaz

- Shearjashub's name means a remnant will return
- Before this boy is old enough to do the right thing, the two kings will be dispatched by God
 - If the reference was still talking about Jesus, then the description would make no sense
 - There was never a time when Jesus was too young to know to refuse evil
 - Isaiah just described him as a boy who could refuse evil from birth
 - This is a different boy who knows sin
 - It's Isaiah's son
- God is keeping his promise to destroy these kingdoms because He was faithful to His promise to David
 - But Ahaz didn't demonstrate faith in God's promise, so God was going to cut him off
 - Since he was willing to get into bed with Assyrian, he was now going to have to lie in it
 - Though God would dispose these two threatening kings, He would allow Assyrian to invade Judah just long enough to cause Ahaz distress though He allowed Ahaz to survive the attacks

[2Chr. 28:19](#) For the LORD humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was very unfaithful to the LORD.

[2Chr. 28:20](#) So Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him.

[2Chr. 28:21](#) Although Ahaz took a portion out of the house of the LORD and out of the palace of the king and of the princes, and gave it to the king of Assyria, it did not help him.

[2Chr. 28:22](#) ¶ Now in the time of his distress this same King Ahaz became yet more unfaithful to the LORD.

[2Chr. 28:23](#) For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they became the downfall of him and all Israel.

[2Chr. 28:24](#) Moreover, when Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces; and he closed the doors of the house of the LORD and made altars for himself in every corner of Jerusalem.

[2Chr. 28:25](#) In every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers, to anger.

- Isaiah describes that invasion in the rest of chapter 7

[Is. 7:18](#) ¶ In that day the LORD will whistle for the fly that is in the remotest part of the rivers of Egypt and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

[Is. 7:19](#) They will all come and settle on the steep ravines, on the ledges of the cliffs, on all the thorn bushes and on all the watering places.

[Is. 7:20](#) ¶ In that day the Lord will shave with a razor, hired from regions beyond the Euphrates (that is, with the king of Assyria), the head and the hair of the legs; and it will also remove the beard.

[Is. 7:21](#) ¶ Now in that day a man may keep alive a heifer and a pair of sheep;

[Is. 7:22](#) and because of the abundance of the milk produced he will eat curds, for everyone that is left within the land will eat curds and honey.

[Is. 7:23](#) ¶ And it will come about in that day, that every place where there used to be a thousand vines, valued at a thousand shekels of silver, will become briars and thorns.

[Is. 7:24](#) People will come there with bows and arrows because all the land will be briars and thorns.

[Is. 7:25](#) As for all the hills which used to be cultivated with the hoe, you will not go there for fear of briars and thorns; but they will become a place for pasturing oxen and for sheep to trample.

- Isaiah describes armies meeting for battle like flies and bees settling on Judah
 - Assyria will have conquered Syria and Israel and will March south toward Egypt
 - Meanwhile, Egypt will March north to engage the approaching Assyria in battle
 - They will meet in Judah, and the battle will rage there
 - The result of the battle is total destruction of the land
 - Few cattle, so that they must be preserved for milk production
 - All the vineyards will be reduced to thorn bushes in which people will hunt for game
 - This destruction comes upon Judah because their leader refused to believe in God's promises of deliverance
- There are two interesting sequels to this story
 - First, two decades later Ahaz's son, Hezekiah was king still struggling under Assyrian domination brought upon the nation because his father refused to trust God

- Hezekiah repeats his father's mistake by rebelling against God's instructions
 - This time by rebellion against Assyria though God tells Hezekiah to not to rebel
 - God brings the Assyrians back again to Judah destroying many cities
 - They come up to Jerusalem and seize the city

[Is. 36:1](#) ¶ Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.

[Is. 36:2](#) And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field.

- Did you notice the location?
 - Hezekiah met the prime minister of Assyria at the same spot where his own father had committed the sin that resulted in Assyria's domination of Judah
- The second sequel relates to the virgin birth
 - When Ahaz stood and heard God promise to protect his nation, he offered a sign to Ahaz as proof that God's provision would be sufficient and they should trust in it
 - Judah's leadership in the person of Ahaz rejected God's sign
 - And because Ahaz rejected God's sign, God brought judgment not only against the man Ahaz, but also upon his entire nation that he represented
 - And God used a Gentile nation to exact that punishment by utterly destroying the cities
 - Seven centuries later, (notice the number seven), God brought the sign Isaiah promised
 - A virgin birth in Bethlehem
 - God gave the nation the sign of a child born of a virgin as His proof of his promise to deliver the nation of Israel from its enemies, including the ultimate enemy, Satan, the serpent of old
 - But the leaders of Israel didn't accept that provision

- They rejected God's sign, the Child Immanuel,
- And when Israel's leadership rejected their God's sign, God brought a sign of His own

[Luke 13:34](#) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

[Luke 13:35](#) "Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

- God used a Gentile nation - the Roman Empire - to bring utter destruction upon Jerusalem and the people of Israel, scattering them as Assyria had scattered the northern kingdom centuries earlier
- Oh, the depths of God's wisdom

Isaiah 8

- Continue the Book of Immanuel, within Isaiah
 - Chapter 7 began this subsection featuring prophecy of a coming Messiah in the form of Immanuel, the Child Who is with us
 - The previous chapter spoke of His future birth
 - This chapter will pick up at a point after the Messiah's birth
 - The Child motif is embedded in another story of Israel's disobedience and God's plan to bring purposeful judgment in the meantime
 - Even as God promises a Savior for a future day

[Is. 8:1](#) Then the LORD said to me, "Take for yourself a large tablet and write on it in ordinary letters: Swift is the booty, speedy is the prey.

[Is. 8:2](#) "And I will take to Myself faithful witnesses for testimony, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah."

- Chapter 8 opens with the Lord instructing Isaiah to make a sign
 - The word for tablet in Hebrew indicates a large placard or sign
 - Something you hang up to be seen
 - On the placard Isaiah is told to write a common phrase of war
 - Swift is the booty or speeding to the plunder
 - Speedy is the prey or hurrying to the spoil
 - Soldiers shouted this phrase as they ran into battle
 - By the nature of the tablet, we understand this is meant to be a public sign announcing something
 - God also directs that two men were to stand as witnesses of Isaiah's writing - Uriah and Zechariah
 - Zechariah we know nothing about
 - Uriah was a priest that set up false altars under King Ahaz, so he's not exactly a good guy in Israel

- Obviously, God doesn't select these men for their faithfulness to Him
 - Rather they will be faithful witnesses because they will be reliable in their testimony
 - They will be able to say that what Isaiah prophesied did come true
- What is God up to here?
 - Well, first consider that God wants Isaiah to prepare a public announcement of impending war
 - And then God implies that this coming war is a judgment against the people when He invites two faithful or reliable witnesses to observe the announcement
 - The Law provided a purpose for two witnesses:

[Deut. 17:6](#) On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.

- Putting all this together, we understand God is pronouncing judgement on the nation
 - Sure enough, look what comes next

[Is. 8:3](#) So I approached the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz;

[Is. 8:4](#) for before the boy knows how to cry out 'My father' or 'My mother,' the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria."

- As Isaiah has a child by his wife, the prophetess, God tells him to name the son maher-shalal-hash-baz
 - What do you think that name means?
 - Essentially the same thing: spoil speeds for a nation
 - The first written word has now become a word in the flesh
 - Here we begin to see the Child motif returning, with Christ in view

- In the case of Isaiah's son, before he can cry out "My father" or "my mother," the wealth of Damascus and Samaria will be carried away
 - The Hebrew words for Father and Mother are two syllable words
 - God predicts the coming Assyrian invasion of the alliance of Syrian and the Northern Kingdom of Israel who had conspired to attack Judah
 - This is the judgment upon the North for their sinful rejection of God and His Covenant
 - God elaborates further...

[Is. 8:5](#) ¶ Again the LORD spoke to me further, saying,

[Is. 8:6](#) "Inasmuch as these people have rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah
And rejoice in Rezin and the son of Remaliah;

[Is. 8:7](#) "Now therefore, behold, the Lord is about to bring on them the strong and abundant waters of the Euphrates,
Even the king of Assyria and all his glory;
And it will rise up over all its channels and go over all its banks.

[Is. 8:8](#) "Then it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass through,
It will reach even to the neck;
And the spread of its wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.

- These people rejected the gentle waters that fed into Jerusalem's main water supply
 - These waters were quite, steady, reliable
 - They filled the pool of Siloam
 - It was this pool that God used to represent His quiet, steady faithfulness to His people
 - The people of the Northern Kingdom has rejected this source for water
 - And they ran to establish their own kingdom in the North
- And the people of Israel had rejoiced in the downfall of the kings of Syria and Israel - actually preferring the arriving Assyrians as liberators
 - But this coming flow of water from the Euphrates will not be quiet and steady
 - It will come like a flood and overtake the nation and go even further
 - The reference to Euphrates invokes the world vs. God

- It will overflow it's banks and continue on to Judah
 - Reaching even to the neck
 - What Isaiah means is up to the neck but not over the head
 - When Assyrian moved south into Judah in 701 BC they seized 46 Jewish cities, but they never captured Jerusalem
 - Assyrians dominated most of the settled world for nearly 200 years
- And the army will fill the land like a bird spreading it's wings over the land
 - Then Isaiah refers to Judah as Immanuel's land
- So the Lord uses Isaiah to tell Judah that Assyrian is coming, they will come swiftly as an arm of God's judgment against Israel and Judah
 - It will be to Israel's total end but it will not completely remove Judah from the Land
 - God confirms His lesson...

[Is. 8:9](#) ¶ " Be broken, O peoples, and be shattered;
And give ear, all remote places of the earth.
Gird yourselves, yet be shattered;
Gird yourselves, yet be shattered.

[Is. 8:10](#) " Devise a plan, but it will be thwarted;
State a proposal, but it will not stand,
For God is with us."

The Septuagint reads:

[Is. 8:9](#) Know, ye Gentiles, and be conquered; hearken ye, even to the extremity of the earth: be conquered, after ye strengthened yourselves; for even if ye should again strengthen yourselves, ye shall again be conquered.

[Is. 8:10](#) And whatsoever counsel ye shall take, the Lord shall bring it to nought; and whatsoever word ye shall speak, it shall not stand among you: for God is with us.

Dead Sea Scrolls:

[Is. 8:9](#) Band together, nations, but be shattered. Listen, all distant countries, gird yourselves but be shattered.

[Is. 8:10](#) Take counsel together, but it will be brought to nothing. Speak a word, but it will not stand. For Immanuel!

- There are two meanings here
 - First, God is stating the simple truth that any plan or conspiracy to bring down the house of David will be thwarted by God until the virgin birth
 - In other words, God will ensure that any Gentile attack will be shattered because God is intent on preserving the house of David for the sake of Immanuel, the Child He has promised
 - Secondly, God is about breaking the pride and stubborn will and disobedience of people
 - He does it first to His people of Israel, but the lesson doesn't end there
 - All the remote places of the Earth will know of this shattering and should learn from it
 - They may seek to strengthen themselves by their own work or knowledge or power, but God will always be stronger
 - But He desires to shatter us not so that we may be crushed, but so that we may be shattered
 - And in the place of human schemes and power, God will establish true power and wisdom through Immanuel
 - We must be brought low before we may be exalted
 - We must repent before we can be brought to glory in faith
 - And the power to bring low and the power to raise up again is God's alone through Christ
 - There is here a subtle but unmistakable gospel message building through the events of Israel
- Now as this invading army comes upon Judah, Isaiah will still be a resident of the city
 - So God gives Isaiah specific instructions for how to react when it happens

[Is. 8:11](#) ¶ For thus the LORD spoke to me with mighty power and instructed me not to walk in the way of this people, saying,

[Is. 8:12](#) "You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!'

In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy,
And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it.

- Isaiah was prohibited from agreeing with the views of the population of Jerusalem
 - They attributed their circumstances to a conspiracy
 - Remember their king has decided to align with Assyrian in hope to counter the aggression of Israel and Syrian
 - And now their "friends" have attacked them - like Russian and Germany in WWII
 - And they will live in fear and dread of what will happen
 - But Isaiah should show no fear, not of Assyria and not of Israel and Syria before Assyria
- Instead, it is God Himself who Isaiah should fear and respect

[Is. 8:13](#) "It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy.

And He shall be your fear,
And He shall be your dread.

[Is. 8:14](#) "Then He shall become a sanctuary;

But to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over,
And a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

[Is. 8:15](#) "Many will stumble over them,

Then they will fall and be broken;
They will even be snared and caught."

- God will be Isaiah's sanctuary for him and the rest of the remnant living in Jerusalem
 - But God has determined to be a stone to strike Israel and a rock to stumble over
 - And a snare to trap the inhabitants of Jerusalem
 - Many among those in the city will stumble and fall and be broken and snared by God's hand
 - You probably noticed a secondary meaning in these words

- The second story is again about the Messiah
 - The Messiah is the Holy One
 - He is the One to fear
 - He is a sanctuary to those who seek after Him
 - But He will become a snare or a trap to expose the Jewish people in His day
 - Jesus Himself says he is the subject of this prophecy in Matt 21:44:

[Matt. 21:42](#) ¶ Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?"

[Matt. 21:43](#) "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.

[Matt. 21:44](#) "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."

- Paul makes use of Isaiah's double meaning when he explains why the Jews rejected their Messiah

[Rom. 9:30](#) ¶ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith;

[Rom. 9:31](#) but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it.

[Rom. 9:32](#) Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone."

- is Isn't it amazing how the way God weaves together a message for Israel concerning the coming Assyrian invasion
- With a story about a coming Savior who would shatter pride and rebellion among the Gentiles while yet remaining a barrier to the Jewish nation as a part of God's judgment
- Isaiah ends the chapter by returning to the first person to explain how he reacted to God's instructions

[Is. 8:16](#) ¶ Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

[Is. 8:17](#) And I will wait for the LORD who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; I will even look eagerly for Him.

[Is. 8:18](#) Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.

- I really like the way the Septuagint renders verse 16
 - It says:

[Is. 8:16](#) Then shall those who seal themselves that they may learn the law be made manifest.

- Let those who believe the Lord's directions seal themselves and commit to His Law - or to His word - and stand apart in doing so
 - Let the faithful remnant emerge in response to the Lord's revelation
 - And this remnant is identifiable by their willingness to consult and follow God's word
- And then as their representative, Isaiah declares that he will wait for the Lord even as He brings this judgment
 - I will look eagerly for Him
 - Looking for God references looking forward to Messiah
- Then Isaiah says that he and his children are signs and wonders in Israel
 - How? Consider their names:
 - Maher-shalal Hash Baz means spoil speeds for a nation
 - Shear-Jashub means a remnant will return
 - Isaiah means Salvation of Jehovah
 - Isaiah and his sons tell the story of God's plan for Israel through their names
- In fact, the rest of the book of Immanuel tells the story of these three names
 - See chapter 9:

[Is. 9:12](#) The Arameans on the east and the Philistines on the west;
 And they devour Israel with gaping jaws.
 In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away
 And His hand is still stretched out.

- See chapter 10:

[Is. 10:20](#) ¶ Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 10:21](#) A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.

- Then see 11:1-2

[Is. 11:1](#) ¶ Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
 And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

[Is. 11:2](#) The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,
 The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
 The spirit of counsel and strength,
 The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

- So Isaiah and his family are living testimony to God's plan for Israel
 - And they themselves look forward to Jesus' day

[Is. 8:19](#) ¶ When they say to you, "Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter," should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?

[Is. 8:20](#) To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.

[Is. 8:21](#) They will pass through the land hard-pressed and famished, and it will turn out that when they are hungry, they will be enraged and curse their king and their God as they face upward.

[Is. 8:22](#) Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be driven away into darkness.

- Now in contrast to those who will rely on God's word, Isaiah issues a warning against listening to the world's spiritual guidance
 - Mediums and spiritists
 - The world will consult worldly sources for counsel in the midst of their difficult circumstances

- Isaiah's use of those terms to capture ungodly counsel are not euphemistic
 - Often the true source of knowledge that the world seeks finds its source in the demonic realm
 - And it finds it's way to us by way of mediums and spiritists
- As Isaiah says, why should we consult the dead on behalf of the living?
 - Should we attempt to reach the dead by way of mediums for the sake of the living?
 - Clearly, the answer is no
- Rather, we should turn to the Law and Prophets - which means turning to the word of God
 - And if those we consult do not respond from this source, they are not of the dawn
 - They are not of the remnant
 - These will be the ones who pass through the land during God's judgment and be subjected to harsh treatment and starvation
 - And they will respond by looking upward and cursing God
 - And they will be in darkness, anguish, gloom
 - In chapter 9, Isaiah quickly turns the feeling around and brings light into this darkness

[Is. 9:1](#) But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

[Is. 9:2](#) The people who walk in darkness
Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.

[Is. 9:3](#) You shall multiply the nation,
You shall increase their gladness;
They will be glad in Your presence
As with the gladness of harvest,
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

[Is. 9:4](#) For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders,
The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.

- The her here is Israel who was placed into gloom by the Assyrian army
 - The land of Zebulun and Naphtali are two of the tribes in northern Israel
 - Specifically, they are regions immediately around the Sea of Galilee
 - Capernaum was located in Zebulun and Nazareth was located in Naphtali
 - These regions would see Jesus first years Earthly ministry
 - God treated them with contempt for their sin
 - But one day God will make these lands glorious in both Jesus first and second comings
 - In verses 2 through 4 Isaiah describes this coming light that will shine over the land
 - A time of gladness and without the yoke or burden upon Israel
 - In other words, God's judging is a present reality in Isaiah's day but in included plenty of clues to God's plan for a future redemption too

Isaiah 9-10

- Isaiah 9-11 continue the book of Immanuel while revealing the prophecy found in the names of Isaiah's two son and Isaiah himself
 - Last week we saw the turn from gloomy prediction at the end of 8 to a hopeful scene in chapter 9
 - Speaking of a glory that would eventually visit the Galilee

[Is. 9:1](#) ¶ But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

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Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.

[Is. 9:3](#) You shall multiply the nation,
You shall increase their gladness;
They will be glad in Your presence
As with the gladness of harvest,
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

- Here's one of many examples where specific details of the Messiah's life are included in OT prophecy
 - And yet they are virtually unrecognizable until the Messiah has been revealed
 - This is often the very purpose of prophecy
 - To verify or validate God's purposes at a future time by showing that God was at work long before the events of our day
 - Yet He hides the meaning to ensure it doesn't come to light prematurely
 - Here, we see Immanuel's arrival associated with glory for the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, two areas that were until that time held in contempt
 - Nothing good comes from Nazareth (John 1:46)
 - But in these two areas of Israel we find Capernum and Nazareth, where Jesus grew up and ministered extensively

- Notice also the references to people there seeing a great light
 - As John describes Jesus
 - And the people will be glad in Your presence
 - Clearly Isaiah is alluding to Jesus - Immanuel - God with us
 - But to the one who doesn't understand the prophecy, Isaiah just sounds like he's describing the restoration of Israel after the Assyrian invasion
 - Remember this is in keeping with God's decree that Isaiah's ministry wouldn't produce a successful result in Isaiah's day
- But look a little more closely
 - Isaiah is also weaving in references to the second coming of Christ
 - The people who walk in darkness will see a great light

[Zech. 14:5](#)Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

[Zech. 14:6](#) In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

- He will multiply the nation...
 - Millennial kingdom??
 - But again, if you aren't made aware of the connection, it seems to be a description of how God frees Israel from an Earthly oppressor
 - In fact, look where Isaiah goes next:
- [Is. 9:4](#) For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders,
The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.
- [Is. 9:5](#) For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult,
And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.
- Here again, sounds like the overthrow of a tyrannical armed force
 - But this is not actually a description of God defeating the Assyrians

- There is another tyrannical force that God is vowing to destroy
- An Oppressor who is much stronger than Assyria and who holds many more captives than Assyria will ever hold

○ And this enemy is defeated by a child, Immanuel:

[Is. 9:6](#) For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

[Is. 9:7](#) There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
From then on and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

- Now look back at verse 4 in light of what we have just read
 - What yoke is being broken do you think?
 - What rod of oppression?
 - Ultimately, it refers to the bondage of sin to the enemy, Satan
 - And the establishment of the the Kingdom and the Davidic throne
- Now in verse 8 through the end of the chapter and even into 10, we enter into a new division of the book of Immanuel reflecting Isaiah's son Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz
 - The spoil speeds, the pray hastens
 - Here we have the bringing low the hautiness of man

[Is. 9:8](#) The Lord sends a message against Jacob,
And it falls on Israel.

[Is. 9:9](#) And all the people know it,
That is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria,
Asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart:

[Is. 9:10](#) "The bricks have fallen down,
But we will rebuild with smooth stones;
The sycamores have been cut down,
But we will replace them with cedars."

[Is. 9:11](#) Therefore the LORD raises against them adversaries from Rezin
And spurs their enemies on,

[Is. 9:12](#) The Arameans on the east and the Philistines on the west;
And they devour Israel with gaping jaws.
In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away
And His hand is still stretched out.

- The Lord is sending a message to Jacob (all tribes)
 - But it falls (naphal = brings down or fallen) Israel
 - And in verse 9, the people will know this is from God, but that knowledge won't save them
 - Just as in the day of Tribulation

[Rev. 16:9](#) Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they **blasphemed** the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

- Even as the Assyrians begin to conquer the north, they people declare in verse 10 that they can overcome in their own power
 - Pride is the most convincing liar
 - Their pride is met by the Lord pushing Israel's enemies all the more
 - Historically, the Assyrians push into Israel from the east, while the Syrians invade from the north, and the Philistines will invade from the south
- Even after the destruction is done, God's anger won't be exhausted, Isaiah says
 - And rightly so, because look at their response

[Is. 9:13](#) ¶ Yet the people do not turn back to Him who struck them,
Nor do they seek the LORD of hosts.

[Is. 9:14](#) So the LORD cuts off head and tail from Israel,
Both palm branch and bulrush in a single day.

[Is. 9:15](#) The head is the elder and honorable man,
And the prophet who teaches falsehood is the tail.

[Is. 9:16](#) For those who guide this people are leading them astray;
And those who are guided by them are brought to confusion.

[Is. 9:17](#) Therefore the Lord does not take pleasure in their young men,
Nor does He have pity on their orphans or their widows;
For every one of them is godless and an evildoer,

[Is. 9:18](#) ¶ For wickedness burns like a fire;
It consumes briars and thorns;
It even sets the thickets of the forest aflame
And they roll upward in a column of smoke.

[Is. 9:19](#) By the fury of the LORD of hosts the land is burned up,
And the people are like fuel for the fire;
No man spares his brother.

[Is. 9:20](#) They slice off what is on the right hand but still are hungry,
And they eat what is on the left hand but they are not satisfied;
Each of them eats the flesh of his own arm.

[Is. 9:21](#) Manasseh devours Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh,
And together they are against Judah.
In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away
And His hand is still stretched out.
And every mouth is speaking foolishness.
In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away
And His hand is still stretched out.

- As in the time of Tribulation, God's judgment doesn't result repentance
 - They do not turn back, which is "shub" or repent
 - This is not surprising, because Scripture makes clear judgment isn't for the purpose of conversion
 - It is the natural expression of a holy and just God against sin
 - What brings conversion?

[Rom. 2:4](#) Or do you think lightly of the riches of His **kindness** and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the **kindness** of God leads you to repentance?

- And in keeping with God's charge to Isaiah in Chapter 6, He's not ready yet to display kindness and bring repentance
 - That awaits a future day for Israel
- God purposes to cut off head and tail
 - It's a great picture of the two roles of leader and prophet among the people
 - The leaders are the "head" and they direct the people into sin and idolatry
 - People follow their leaders for better or worse

- And the prophets are the tail
 - In many wild animals, the tail is a signal for other animals
 - It lets the rest of the herd know if danger is approaching
 - The false prophets didn't warn the people of the leaders' sin and of God's judgment of sin
 - They gave no warning, so they are cut off as well
- And when the head and tail are rotten, everyone suffers
 - First, all had participated in the sin
 - The fact that some were led astray isn't an excuse in God's eyes
 - All are guilty
 - Secondly, our status or station in life doesn't mitigate our guilt
 - We might take pity in human terms for someone who is orphaned or widowed, but God doesn't assign special dispensation to those categories
 - All sinned against the covenant, He says, so all will be caught up in the judgment
- And as God eliminates leaders, the populace dissolves into civil war
 - Tribes fighting each other (devouring their own flesh)
 - And all against Judah
 - Remember the northern tribes were apostate
 - They had rebelled against God and His law back when they divided the Kingdom and opposed Solomon's son
 - They have been rebels from the beginning
- Moving into chapter 10, Isaiah adds a bit of social commentary against the leaders in his day, the men who would fall to this judgment

[Is. 10:1](#) ¶ Woe to those who enact evil statutes
And to those who constantly record unjust decisions,

[Is. 10:2](#) So as to deprive the needy of justice
And rob the poor of My people of their rights,
So that widows may be their spoil
And that they may plunder the orphans.

[Is. 10:3](#) Now what will you do in the day of punishment,
And in the devastation which will come from afar?
To whom will you flee for help?
And where will you leave your wealth?

[Is. 10:4](#) Nothing remains but to crouch among the captives
Or fall among the slain.
In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away
And His hand is still stretched out.

- Remembering that the word woe means judgment, Isaiah declares their is inevitably going to be judgment against those who do evil
 - In the case of northern Israel, the evil took the form of evil statutes
 - In contrast to God's holy Law
 - And unjust decision making
 - In contrast to God's perfect justice
 - Isaiah lists some of their injustices and evil laws, and then he asks how they hope to escape God's wrath?
 - Where do you go for rescue?
 - And how do you preserve your wealth, which was a source of power for these people
 - They will simply fall with the rest
 - In verse 2, we have the tie to Isaiah's son
 - The phrase: widows are their spoil and orphans their plunder uses two Hebrew words placed together
 - Shalal bazaar, which immediately reminds us of Isaiah's son Maher Shalal Hash Baz
- Now Isaiah begins to transition to the next theme associated with his second son Shear Jashub (A remnant returns)

- The new section begins by addressing Assyria's role in God's plan and their own failures and coming judgment

[Is. 10:5](#) Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger

And the staff in whose hands is My indignation,

[Is. 10:6](#) I send it against a godless nation

And commission it against the people of My fury

To capture booty and to seize plunder,

And to trample them down like mud in the streets.

[Is. 10:7](#) Yet it does not so intend,

Nor does it plan so in its heart,

But rather it is its purpose to destroy

And to cut off many nations.

[Is. 10:8](#) For it says, "Are not my princes all kings?"

[Is. 10:9](#) "Is not Calno like Carchemish,

Or Hamath like Arpad,

Or Samaria like Damascus?"

[Is. 10:10](#) "As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of the idols,

Whose graven images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria,

[Is. 10:11](#) Shall I not do to Jerusalem and her images

Just as I have done to Samaria and her idols?"

- God begins declaring woe against Assyria as well
 - They were God's appointed instrument for judgment against Israel
 - That's an assumed thought by itself
 - God directed an entire nation of people to do His specific will
 - He sent it against a godless nation (Israel) as an expression of His fury
 - Passages like this are important counsel for us, because they remind us that God's power in the course of human affairs is limitless
 - We cannot set boundaries upon God by teaching that He loves us too much to impose Himself upon us
 - As if unrestrained human liberty and right of free choice may be a litmus test for or definition of love
 - God defines love as grace, which by its very nature interrupts the normal course of human events
 - Here we see God directing human activity in a very specific way

- But in verse 7, God declares that Assyria failed to live up to their commission
 - They do not intend nor plan in their heart to do as God directed
 - That is to bring down Israel alone
 - God's plan was focused on the Northern kingdom only
 - But Assyria chose to go too far and attempted to cut off many nations, including Judah in the south
 - Specifically, they assume in verse 9 that all kings and all kingdoms are the same, so all are valid target
 - But they were wrong
 - God only intended that Israel would be their target
 - So in verse 11, the Assyrians decided that Jerusalem as no different than Samaria (Israel's capital)
 - But there was a world of difference
 - Samaria was a house of idol worship
 - But Jerusalem was and is God's holy city
 - When Assyrian made the mistake of assuming all earthly kingdoms are equal, they sinned
 - We can make the same mistake today
 - Though the earthly government of Israel today is not living in a way that pleases God, nevertheless the nation is still special to God
 - We must never make the distinction of assessing Israel's worth by judging the actions of the people or the political entity
- Now we might ask did Assyria understand that their commission from God was directed at Israel?
 - In 2Kings 18, when the king of Assyria's representatives were speaking with king of Judah in Jerusalem, they mention their commissioning from God

[2Kings 18:25](#) "Have I now come up without the LORD'S approval against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'""

- Actually, the Assyrian's statement was wrong
 - God had not sent them to destroy Jerusalem, only Israel
 - But the Assyrians weren't making that distinction
 - Remember, God would not allow Judah to disappear for the sake of Immanuel
- So God declares judgment against the Assyrians for acting presumptuously

[Is. 10:12](#) ¶ So it will be that when the Lord has completed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will say, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the pomp of his haughtiness."

[Is. 10:13](#) For he has said,

"By the power of my hand and by my wisdom I did this,
 For I have understanding;
 And I removed the boundaries of the peoples
 And plundered their treasures,
 And like a mighty man I brought down their inhabitants,

[Is. 10:14](#) And my hand reached to the riches of the peoples like a nest,
 And as one gathers abandoned eggs, I gathered all the earth;
 And there was not one that flapped its wing or opened its beak or chirped."

[Is. 10:15](#) ¶ Is the axe to boast itself over the one who chops with it?
 Is the saw to exalt itself over the one who wields it?
 That would be like a club wielding those who lift it,
 Or like a rod lifting him who is not wood.

[Is. 10:16](#) Therefore the Lord, the GOD of hosts, will send a wasting disease among his stout warriors;

And under his glory a fire will be kindled like a burning flame.

[Is. 10:17](#) And the light of Israel will become a fire and his Holy One a flame,
 And it will burn and devour his thorns and his briars in a single day.

[Is. 10:18](#) And He will destroy the glory of his forest and of his fruitful garden, both soul and body,

And it will be as when a sick man wastes away.

[Is. 10:19](#) And the rest of the trees of his forest will be so small in number
 That a child could write them down.

- God declares a dramatic and comprehensive judgment Assyria
 - The actual judgment is described in detail in Isaiah 37
 - Here Isaiah simply promises it will come and it will be total
 - He begins by allowing Assyria's own thoughts and words to stand in judgment against the nation

- First, they attribute their own success to their strength and wisdom
 - Numerical strength and military might
 - And the human wisdom in their libraries and wise men
- Secondly, they attribute their success to their wealth, which they obtained largely from plundering other nations
 - And there was nothing the other nations could do or say about it
 - Assyria's domination was complete in its day
- But then in verse 15, God replies
 - This dialog is reminiscent of the conversation found in Job in some ways
 - God says can the tool boast of its power?
 - When the axe lies on the ground, does it have power?
 - Only when an arm picks it up and uses it does it have power
 - And it's power is in direct proportion to the strength of that arm
 - Assyria was like an axe or saw or club or rod
 - It did what the Master determined it should do
 - But if that tool begins to take credit for its work, it offends the Master who wields it
 - Therefore, God judges Assyria in a way that highlights their sin
 - God is often shown to do this in Scripture
 - He selects a form of judgment that underscores the nature of the sin
 - Assyria was proud and sure of its own might, so God took away its might
 - Look at Isaiah 37:35-36:

[Is. 37:35](#) 'For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake.'"

[Is. 37:36](#) ¶ Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, all of these were dead.

- Notice in Isaiah 10:17, the destruction of Assyria comes at the hand of the Holy One of Israel
 - Who is that? Christ Himself
 - Now look at Isaiah 37:35-36
 - Who accomplishes the destruction of the Assyrian army?
 - The Angel of the lord, Christ
 - In one day, the bulk of the Assyrian, the source of their might and pride, is gone
 - For the sake of Judah, for Immanuel
 - Now in verse 20, Isaiah makes a fascinating transition

[Is. 10:20](#) Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 10:21](#) A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.

[Is. 10:22](#) For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea,
Only a remnant within them will return;
A destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.

[Is. 10:23](#) For a complete destruction, one that is decreed, the Lord GOD of hosts will execute in the midst of the whole land.

[Is. 10:24](#) ¶ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of hosts, "O My people who dwell in Zion, do not fear the Assyrian who strikes you with the rod and lifts up his staff against you, the way Egypt did.

[Is. 10:25](#) "For in a very little while My indignation against you will be spent and My anger will be directed to their destruction."

[Is. 10:26](#) The LORD of hosts will arouse a scourge against him like the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and His staff will be over the sea and He will lift it up the way He did in Egypt.

[Is. 10:27](#) So it will be in that day, that his burden will be removed from your shoulders and his yoke from your neck, and the yoke will be broken because of fatness.

[Is. 10:28](#) ¶ He has come against Aiath,
He has passed through Migron;
At Michmash he deposited his baggage.

[Is. 10:29](#) They have gone through the pass, saying,
“Geba will be our lodging place.”

Ramah is terrified, and Gibeah of Saul has fled away.

[Is. 10:30](#) Cry aloud with your voice, O daughter of Gallim!
Pay attention, Laishah and wretched Anathoth!

[Is. 10:31](#) Madmenah has fled.

The inhabitants of Gebim have sought refuge.

[Is. 10:32](#) Yet today he will halt at Nob;

He shakes his fist at the mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

[Is. 10:33](#) ¶ Behold, the Lord, the GOD of hosts, will lop off the boughs with a terrible crash;

Those also who are tall in stature will be cut down
And those who are lofty will be abased.

[Is. 10:34](#) He will cut down the thickets of the forest with an iron axe,
And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty One.

- Notice first how Isaiah opens this passage
 - In that day
 - This is a term that references a future day, not the day of Assyria
 - I realize that may sound counterintuitive to us, since it seems to emphasize the same day not a different day
 - But in the Hebrew phrase, it can be interpreted as “In that day to come,” where the word “that” references a special day everyone awaits
 - In other words, it references the day of Christ’s Second Coming
 - We can know this is the intended focus by the fact that Isaiah has come back to the theme of a remnant again
 - In fact, in verse 21 he references the name of his second son, Shear Jashub
 - Look at the language that follows as well
 - None of the remnant will ever again rely on the one who struck them, meaning the enemy Satan

- They will instead rely on Christ - obvious not what happened in the destruction of Assyria...it's still to come
 - Then God emphasizes again the difference between the entity of Israel and the prospects for any given individual within the nation
 - The entity of Israel is assured a future in glory
 - But as to whether any given individual in the nation shares in that future is an open question
 - Some will, many will not
- And then Isaiah gives an indication for why that will be, for why some are there but others are not
 - It's because God will bring a righteous destruction against the nation, beginning with the Assyrians and later the Babylonians and Romans and ultimately the Antichrist
 - And the destruction will be complete in the sense that it no one in the land can escape it, and the entire land will be consumed
 - But not that all Jews will be destroyed...he just said that a remnant will remain
 - Throughout the rest of this passage Isaiah uses terminology that also appears later in chapter 28 when Isaiah describes the coming Tribulation
 - So this is a preview of that coming day of judgment for Israel
 - But it's also clear that Isaiah is speaking primarily about the distress of the Assyrian invasion of Judah
 - And He tells Judah and Jerusalem not to be distressed when they face that trial, because the Lord will come to their aid as Isaiah describes in Chapter 36
 - But look at Isaiah and God ultimately is connecting the two events
 - The Assyrian Army is a picture of the Antichrist's forces in his day
 - The trials and distress of the Assyrian attack on Jerusalem are a picture of the Antichrist's attack and siege of Jerusalem in the last days

- The Assyrians are sent by God to bring His judgment against Israel, but they go too far and wish to put an end to Jerusalem
 - Just as the Antichrist is appointed to bring judgment against Israel in that future day, but he goes too far and seeks to destroy the Jews altogether
- God promises to rescue Judah against the Assyrian army and does so for the sake of Immanuel
 - So that Judah will be around to receive the Christ Child in His first coming
- Likewise, God promises to preserve Jerusalem against the might of the Antichrist's forces
 - So that Jerusalem will survive to receive the return of Christ who comes in response to the Jewish call (Zech 12)
- God saves Jerusalem from the Assyrians by bringing Christ as the Angel of the Lord to slay the Assyrian army in a single blow
 - Christ returns on the clouds with a sword in His mouth to destroy the armies of the Antichrist with a single word
- Obviously, Isaiah is positioning the events of Assyrian in his day as a prophetic picture of what will happen to Judah in a future as well
 -

Isaiah 11-12

- The end of Isaiah 10 offers a fascinating preview of how the final days of Tribulation will play out
 - But it gives us that picture by describing a different event
 - The events of Assyria's failure to capture Jerusalem
 - God protected Jerusalem from an over-ambitious Assyrian army
 - And He did so to ensure Jerusalem would survive to give birth the Immanuel Christ child
 - But in those events, God pictures a future event as well
 - Where an enemy army advances upon Jerusalem and reaches the doorstep of the city only to be destroyed in the end
 - So that the city might be saved for Christ's second coming
 - Glance at the final versus of Chapter 10
 - In 28-32 Isaiah lists a series of place names, each place is a step closer to Jerusalem
 - Representing the army's relentless progression toward the city
 - But in the end, the Lord saves the day for Jerusalem (vs. 33-34)
- Also remember, that this final section of Immanuel follows the same pattern as the last two
 - The first two sections fit the prophetic names of his two sons, while this section fits Isaiah's name himself
 - Isaiah means "Salvation is of the Lord"
 - Sure enough, chapter 11 opens with a description of this salvation

[Is. 11:1](#) Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

[Is. 11:2](#) The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,

The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
 The spirit of counsel and strength,
 The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

[Is. 11:3](#) And He will delight in the fear of the LORD,
 And He will not judge by what His eyes see,
 Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;

[Is. 11:4](#) But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
 And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth;
 And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
 And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.

[Is. 11:5](#) Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins,
 And faithfulness the belt about His waist.

- How familiar are these verses...and yet look at them again, especially within the context of the book of Immanuel
 - Isaiah uses the branch motif again to describe the arrival of Jesus, Immanuel
 - What a great poetic transition from chapter 10 to chapter 11
 - Assyria was like the great trees of Lebanon, cut down by the Lord
 - And in the ashes of that defeat, we have a branch springing forth
 - The picture is of rebirth and hope in the midst of defeat of God's enemies
 - And He comes from the stem of Jesse, who was David's father
 - In other words, the branch comes from the line of David, the line of Judah and the kings
 - But why mention Jesse rather David directly?
 - Because the arrival of Immanuel isn't like a king, not initially
 - Rather Immanuel comes as a poor child in Bethlehem
 - Just as Jesse lived, a poor shepherd
 - But a branch from Jesse's root will bear fruit
- Now look at this person
 - He will have the Spirit of the Lord upon Him

- In fact, He will the full measure of the Spirit, all seven attributes of the Spirit of God
 - Of the Lord, of wisdom, understanding, of counsel, of strength, knowledge, and fear
- These seven attributes aren't necessarily all we can say to describe the Spirit, but by choosing seven attributes, Isaiah communicates the full measure of the Spirit is present in the Messiah
 - Similar to the throne room scene in Revelation

[Rev. 4:5](#) Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

- Chapter 4 and 5 of Revelation are a scene in the Heavenly throne room following the Rapture of the Church
 - Since the Church has been removed from the Earth, the Spirit Who indwelt believers is also gone
 - And the count of seven Spirits in Revelation represents the fullness of the Holy Spirit - all of Him is in Heaven
 - Since none of Him is left behind after the Rapture
- Likewise, here we see seven used as a symbol to mean the complete influence and presence of the Spirit rests on Immanuel
- Up to this point, this description has focused on Christ's arrival as the Child, Immanuel
 - We see the reference to a humble beginning like Jesse and as a shoot beginning to grow
 - Of the Spirit resting upon Him as He did when Jesus was a Child
 - But then in verse 3 it seems to change
 - He will judge in a way that shows a true fear of the Lord
 - Rather than judging in the way regular men do
 - Limited by only what they can see or hear
 - Instead, He judges with perfect righteousness

- And perfect fairness for the afflicted
 - And He has the power to enforce His decrees and judgments
 - Striking the earth with His word (v4)
 - A word that is so sure and strong, it can't be ignored or broken
 - It can defeat His enemies
 - He is clothed by righteousness and and faithfulness
- When will this Child rule the earth in this way?
 - Not during His first coming
 - Obviously, we transition seamlessly to a description of His rule on earth during His Second Coming and Kingdom
 - So, let's note that even as 11 opens with the Child in view, it quickly moves to looking at Christ ruling on Earth as King
 - This makes sense especially in light of how we left chapter 10
 - The end of chapter 10 was picturing the end of Tribulation and the description of the Antichrist
 - In that day, the arrival of Christ initiates the beginning of the 1,000 kingdom
 - Similarly, chapter 11 focuses on the kingdom, the time when Christ reigns
 - Coming as it does on the heel of the description of the Assyrian army's destruction
- Knowing that we're talking about a time when Christ is ruling on Earth, what do we learn about that time?

[Is. 11:6](#) ¶ And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
 And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
 And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
 And a little boy will lead them.

[Is. 11:7](#) Also the cow and the bear will graze,
 Their young will lie down together,
 And the lion will eat straw like the ox.

[Is. 11:8](#) The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,
 And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.

[Is. 11:9](#) They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,
 For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
 As the waters cover the sea.

[Is. 11:10](#) ¶ Then in that day
 The nations will resort to the root of Jesse,
 Who will stand as a signal for the peoples;
 And His resting place will be glorious.

- Classic verses open this passage
 - Some misquote these verses as the lion and the lamb lie down together
 - Actually, that's true too, though the words don't appear that way in Scripture
 - Because Isaiah is describing a new order that exists during the Kingdom time
 - Consider the clues Isaiah gives us
 - Wolf, lamb, leopard, goat, calf, lion, and yearling all lie down together
 - If you tried to recreate this scene today, you would quickly unleash a tornado of fur, and claws and teeth
 - Why? because we're talking about predators and prey coexisting in harmony - something we don't see today
 - And all the while, a young child can lead them without being in danger himself
 - What does such a scene set in the time of the Messianic Kingdom imply?
 - The animals cease living off one another's flesh
 - They are no longer carnivorous

- They return to eating only plants - as it was when they were first created
- This is confirmed by verse 7
 - The cow grazes (it's nice to know somethings don't change)
 - But so does the bear, which is normally an omnivore
 - But the bear's young no longer pose a threat to the cow's young
 - And the lion, which today is a carnivore, will eat straw in the future
- The final important clue is given in 8 and 9
 - The nursing child can play safely by a cobra home
 - And even place his hand in the viper's den without fear
 - If haven't figured our what's going on here by now, verse 8 makes the answer abundantly clear
- Can you think of another place in Scripture where a humans and snake have a significant encounter
 - Adam and Woman and the serpent
 - And the result of that encounter was a curse coming upon the earth bringing physical death and enmity between snakes and people among other things

[Gen. 3:14](#) The LORD God said to the serpent,
 “ Because you have done this,
 Cursed are you more than all cattle,
 And more than every beast of the field;
 On your belly you will go,
 And dust you will eat
 All the days of your life;

[Gen. 3:15](#) And I will put enmity
 Between you and the woman,
 And between your seed and her seed;
 He shall bruise you on the head,
 And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

[Gen. 3:17](#) Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

Cursed is the ground because of you;
In toil you will eat of it
All the days of your life.

[Gen. 3:18](#) "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;
And you will eat the plants of the field;

[Gen. 3:19](#) By the sweat of your face
You will eat bread,
Till you return to the ground,
Because from it you were taken;
For you are dust,
And to dust you shall return."

- As a result of the fall, God placed enmity between the serpent and man
 - And He brought physical death into the creation when He declared that all men must return to dust - physical death
 - This has been the state of creation since the fall
 - And death extended into all the Earth
 - Because the ground itself is cursed, so that all that comes from it is likewise under the curse of death
 - Later in Genesis 9, God brought about the killing and eating of animals

[Gen. 9:1](#) ¶ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, " Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

[Gen. 9:2](#) "The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given.

[Gen. 9:3](#) "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant.

- Did you notice that God wisely gave animals the fear of predators, including the fear of mankind
 - For now man would be hunting animals for food, having already been given plants to eat
- So what's changed in Isaiah 11?
 - During the Kingdom, the animals are losing their predator-prey instincts

- They no longer need to attack because they no longer eat meat
 - Likewise, men are no longer threaten by wild animals
 - And even the snake and the child are safe together
 - All the consequences of the Fall seem to be reversed
- Isaiah is describing during the Kingdom a clear reversal of the curse instituted at the fall
 - And a return to the circumstances that existed in Eden
 - Animals eating plants, no one hurting or destroying another
 - Just as God designed Creation from the beginning
 - The Fall produced spiritual death > physical death > world under curse
 - The Salvation of God yields new spiritual life > incorruptible body > new heavens and earth
- And Isaiah says this renewed state of creation would exist in all God's holy mountain
 - In Scripture, a mountain is a favorite metaphor to picture a kingdom
 - Daniel 2 is perhaps the best known example of this

[Dan. 2:31](#) ¶ "You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.

[Dan. 2:32](#) "The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,

[Dan. 2:33](#) its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

[Dan. 2:34](#) "You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

[Dan. 2:35](#) "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

- Later Daniel explains the meaning of the stone that turns into a mountain

[Dan. 2:44](#) "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

- So a mountain is a favorite symbol for God's kingdom
 - And on this Holy mountain, no harm will come to animals or child
- So Jesus rules over a different kind of Creation, one that reflects God's original plan
 - Moving forward, we learn more about the Kingdom

[Is. 11:10](#) ¶ Then in that day

The nations will resort to the root of Jesse,
Who will stand as a signal for the peoples;
And His resting place will be glorious.

[Is. 11:11](#) ¶ Then it will happen on that day that the Lord

Will again recover the second time with His hand
The remnant of His people, who will remain,
From Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath,
And from the islands of the sea.

[Is. 11:12](#) And He will lift up a standard for the nations

And assemble the banished ones of Israel,
And will gather the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.

[Is. 11:13](#) Then the jealousy of Ephraim will depart,

And those who harass Judah will be cut off;
Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,
And Judah will not harass Ephraim.

- In the day of the kingdom, the nations will resort to Christ
 - Resort is darash or seek after, but in the sense of investigate or inquire after
 - The Lord's presence in the world causes the Gentiles to flow toward Jerusalem to seek after Christ
 - And they find Him in a glorious repose
 - And in that day, the Lord will have regathered the nation of Israel into their land
 - Notably Isaiah calls this regathering a second regathering
 - At the time he wrote those words, there hadn't yet been a dispersion, much less a first regathering

- One regathering happens after the Babylonian captivity, though that one wasn't worldwide and only involved Judah
 - But this second one is many times more impressive
 - It includes both Judah and Israel and it draws Jews from the four corners of the earth
- And as the two halves of Israelites rejoin, there is no animosity between them
 - Ephraim is used here to represent the northern kingdom of Israel because it had a historical role in opposing God and opposing Judah
 - It was a rival for the location of the tabernacle with Judah
 - But it was frequently disobedient and unfaithful
 - The eventual rejoining of Israel and Judah is also pictured by Ezekiel when he

[Ezek. 37:15](#) ¶ The word of the LORD came again to me saying,

[Ezek. 37:16](#) "And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.'

[Ezek. 37:17](#) "Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand.

[Ezek. 37:18](#) "When the sons of your people speak to you saying, 'Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?'

[Ezek. 37:19](#) say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'"

- These two reunited nations of Jews then work together to subdue their enemies

[Is. 11:14](#) They will swoop down on the slopes of the Philistines on the west;
 Together they will plunder the sons of the east;
 They will possess Edom and Moab,
 And the sons of Ammon will be subject to them.

[Is. 11:15](#) And the LORD will utterly destroy
 The tongue of the Sea of Egypt;
 And He will wave His hand over the River
 With His scorching wind;
 And He will strike it into seven streams
 And make men walk over dry-shod.

[Is. 11:16](#) And there will be a highway from Assyria
 For the remnant of His people who will be left,

Just as there was for Israel
In the day that they came up out of the land of Egypt.

- Judah and Ephraim will be victorious over their historic enemies and plunder or remove their wealth
 - Both the enemies on the west, and the east
 - Also, the historic barriers that have prevented the Jews from returning to their land will be removed supernaturally
 - First, the tongue of the Sea of Egypt is removed
 - Today we call this body of water the Gulf of Suez
 - It's a major obstacle to travel by land into Israel
 - Likewise, the River, which means the Euphrates River, is a major obstacle for travel to Israel from the east
 - God smashes it into seven streams, meaning it is no longer an obstacle
 - These specific occurrences are probably examples of how He will remake the earth in the days of the kingdom
 - And these changes are both literal and at least somewhat symbolic
 - They reflect the removal of all the historic barriers to Israel at peace in their land
 - That's also clear in the reference to a highway from Assyria that will transport Israel back into their land
 - In contrast to the way God will transport Israel out by Assyria

[Is. 12:1](#) ¶ Then you will say on that day,
“ I will give thanks to You, O LORD;
For although You were angry with me,
Your anger is turned away,
And You comfort me.

[Is. 12:2](#) “Behold, God is my salvation,
I will trust and not be afraid;
For the LORD GOD is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation.”

[Is. 12:3](#) Therefore you will joyously draw water
From the springs of salvation.

[Is. 12:4](#) And in that day you will say,
“ Give thanks to the LORD, call on His name.
Make known His deeds among the peoples;
Make them remember that His name is exalted.”

[Is. 12:5](#) Praise the LORD in song, for He has done excellent things;
Let this be known throughout the earth.

[Is. 12:6](#) Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion,
For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

- Now in chapter 12, we have a song sung by Israel to close out the book of Immanuel
 - You may have noticed the phrase God is my salvation in verse 2, which is the reference to Isaiah’s name
 - This completes the three names of Isaiah and his sons, and thus completes the book of Immanuel
 - Why a song here?
 - Well first, look it is a song of thanksgiving
 - It recounts God’s faithfulness to bring Israel back even by His anger
 - It expresses Israel’s joy for their promises having been made complete in the Kingdom
 - This is similar to the song the Jews sang when God gathered them out of Egypt and protected them from their enemies

[Ex. 15:1](#) ¶ Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said,
“ I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted;
The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.

[Ex. 15:2](#) “ The LORD is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation;
This is my God, and I will praise Him;
My father’s God, and I will extol Him.

Isaiah 13 & 14

- Now we start a new section of Isaiah

[Is. 13:1](#) The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

- This section runs into chapter 23, and it chronicles the coming judgment against a host of nations who have stood against Israel
 - But as usual, there's more than meets the eye in these chapters.
 - Starting tonight, as we look at the nation of Babylon
- In these chapters, we'll see burdens or heavy messages proclaimed against not only Babylon but also Moab, Philistines, Egypt, Arabia and others
 - In most cases, the burden is a literal judgment against the contemporary nations in Isaiah's day or in a nearby future day
 - Even Babylon fits this pattern
 - In chapter 21, Isaiah describes the coming judgment of Babylon at the hands of the Medo Persians
 - But in other cases, particularly in the case of Babylon, there is an important second meaning also described
 - Tonight, the oracle concerning Babylon begins by addressing that future fulfillment
 - So to understand what Isaiah is teaching today and in future weeks, we have to take some time to understand all the ways scripture uses the place name Babylon
- There are four ways scripture uses the name Babylon
 - First, there is the ancient kingdom founded by Nimrod, in which the tower of Babel was constructed after the flood
 - Located in Mesopotamia
 - Secondly, there is kingdom of Babylon ruled by Nebechednezzar
 - The nation that occupied modern day Iraq and Mesopotamia

- Third, there is a physical city reconstructed in the last days from which the antichrist rules the world (Rev 14, 17, 18)
 - It's located in Mesopotamia, modern-day Iraq
- There is a fourth meaning as well
 - To figure out the fourth meaning, we need to take a moment and make some observations concerning the first three places.
 - All three mentions of Babylon are of a physical city located in the same place
 - Mesopotamia
 - What other notable event took place in Mesopotamia?
 - The Garden was located there, and the Fall occurred there
 - What kinds of kingdoms and activities mark this place?
 - It is the place where the enemy worked to bring mankind into slavery to him
 - It is the place of the first manmade kingdom, Babel, that sought to challenge God's authority
 - According to scripture, Babel was the place where idol worship began
 - Occultism begins there
 - Later it is the place God calls Abraham out from so he could be sent to the promised land
 - Then it is the place for the kingdom of Babylon, the first of a series of Gentile world powers God would send to judge His people's sin
 - Later it will again become the dominant seat of world power from where the enemy will rule having indwelt the antichrist's body
- In other words, Babylon's history allows it to stand as a symbol or representative for the enemy's effort to corrupt God's people and steal His glory

- More specifically, Babylon comes to personify false religion in any form
 - Remember, the enemy “wins” anytime the true Gospel is countered by a false view, regardless of what that view may be
 - So, we might think that there are various choices competing for our allegiance and faith
 - But in reality there are only two
 - There is God and His Son and the Gospel He made known
 - And there is everything else (pie chart)
 - And everything else can be called “Babylon” in that all these lies find their source in the father of lies, Satan, and they all got their start in Mesopotamia (Babylon)
 - If someone comes from England, we call them English
 - If someone comes from Canada, we call them Canadian
 - If something comes from, originates, from Mesopotamia, we call it Babylon
 - So, the fourth meaning of the term Babylon in scripture is to mean the enemies counterfeit system of faith, a religion of lies that goes by many names
 - But always leads to the same place
 - It is a system of deception and evil that began in the Garden, continued in Babel, was at work in Babylon during Isaiah’s day
 - And will once again take hold of the world in a future day
- Before we return to Isaiah, let me show you a vivid depiction of this truth in Scripture in Revelation

[Rev. 17:3](#) And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

[Rev. 17:4](#) The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,

[Rev. 17:5](#) and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

[Rev. 17:6](#) And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.

- Mother of harlots
 - What's a harlot? A counterfeit love
 - So a false counterfeit faith or religion is like a harlot in the way a harlot counterfeits something good (marriage), but it corrupts and leads to destruction
 - So a false religion is a harlot in comparison to the true Gospel
 - What is the mother of all harlots? The one who gave birth to all the counterfeits
 - Spiritual Babylon is the mother of all false religions, for it's where the enemy gave them their start

[Rev. 17:14](#) "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

[Rev. 17:15](#) ¶ And he said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.

- This harlot sits atop all people and nations
 - No one and no where is immune from it's influence
 - Even those of us who know the Lord were at an earlier point under the influence of this harlot
 - We were rescued from it

[Rev. 17:18](#) "The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

[Rev. 18:1](#) ¶ After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory.

[Rev. 18:2](#) And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, " Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

[Rev. 18:3](#) "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality."

- Here again we see that Babylon is a great city, but it reigns over the kings of the earth
 - Literally, this will be true in the last days
 - And the influence of Spiritual Babylon is such that many nations and leaders have drunk her intoxicating lies
 - Leading to many evil and corrupt leaders yesterday, today and into the future until Christ sets up His perfect government
 - And many businessman have lived according to the enemy's seductive power to bend human lust and pride to his own evil purposes
 - Babylon has been at work in the heart of every person throughout the ages, and it is a force that must be judged
 - God will judge not only the physical place and the people in it, but He will also judge the religious system represented by the name Babylon
 - It would be like saying we are not only going to destroy England, and every Englishman, but also the English language and culture with it.
- With that background, consider Isaiah's burden for the harlot, Babylon
 - We start with a long passage, so that we get the entire context
 -

- [Is. 13:2](#) Lift up a standard on the bare hill,
Raise your voice to them,
Wave the hand that they may enter the doors of the nobles.
- [Is. 13:3](#) I have commanded My consecrated ones,
I have even called My mighty warriors,
My proudly exulting ones,
To execute My anger.
- [Is. 13:4](#) A sound of tumult on the mountains,
Like that of many people!
A sound of the uproar of kingdoms,
Of nations gathered together!
The LORD of hosts is mustering the army for battle.
- [Is. 13:5](#) They are coming from a far country,
From the farthest horizons,
The LORD and His instruments of indignation,
To destroy the whole land.
- [Is. 13:6](#) Wail, for the day of the LORD is near!
It will come as destruction from the Almighty.
- [Is. 13:7](#) Therefore all hands will fall limp,
I And every man's heart will melt.
- [Is. 13:8](#) They will be terrified,
Pains and anguish will take hold of them;
They will writhe like a woman in labor,
They will look at one another in astonishment,
Their faces aflame.
- [Is. 13:9](#) Behold, the day of the LORD is coming,
Cruel, with fury and burning anger,
To make the land a desolation;
And He will exterminate its sinners from it.
- [Is. 13:10](#) For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not flash forth their light;
The sun will be dark when it rises
And the moon will not shed its light.
- [Is. 13:11](#) Thus I will punish the world for its evil
And the wicked for their iniquity;
I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud
And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.
- [Is. 13:12](#) I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold
And mankind than the gold of Ophir.
- [Is. 13:13](#) Therefore I will make the heavens tremble,
And the earth will be shaken from its place
At the fury of the LORD of hosts
In the day of His burning anger.

[Is. 13:14](#) And it will be that like a hunted gazelle,
Or like sheep with none to gather them,
They will each turn to his own people,
And each one flee to his own land.

[Is. 13:15](#) Anyone who is found will be thrust through,
And anyone who is captured will fall by the sword.

[Is. 13:16](#) Their little ones also will be dashed to pieces
Before their eyes;
Their houses will be plundered
And their wives ravished.

- We need the entire context to understand the setting here
 - First, the opening verses make it clear we are looking at a battle
 - Lift up a standard, raise a call to men who execute God's wrath
 - A thunderous roar of people gathered for battle, mustered by God
 - They come from far around to destroy a certain land
 - Clearly, God is bring about this event to serve some greater purpose
 - Then in verse 6 we get our first hint of a time marker
 - The day of the Lord
 - Repeated in verse 9
 - What does the "day of the Lord" mean? Tribulation
 - Around those verses, we get our confirmation that this is Tribulation
 - It is a time of destruction from God
 - Every man's heart will melt, all hands are limp
 - It is a cruel fire that exterminates the land
 - And it removes sinners from the land (not something that has happened yet)
 - Then as we move into verse 10 and beyond, we see clear confirmation that this is an unprecedented time of supernatural judgment
 - No moon, no stars, no sun

- And it's a punishment for the world and it results in the end of the proud
- Men become scarce and the earth trembles under God's fury
 - Remember, that the natural destruction of an invading army is combined with the supernatural destruction God brings during Tribulation
 - God is at work in many ways during Tribulation
 - So when the world finally turns on Babylon in the last days, it comes in part by the work of a world army that God raises up to destroy the city itself
 - Which explains the explanations in verse 14-16
- So far, we know we're looking at a destruction of Babylon during a period of unprecedented worldwide destruction aimed at exterminating sinners
 - Then we get a puzzling reference

[Is. 13:17](#) Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them,
Who will not value silver or take pleasure in gold.

[Is. 13:18](#) And their bows will mow down the young men,
They will not even have compassion on the fruit of the womb,
Nor will their eye pity children.

[Is. 13:19](#) And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride,
Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

[Is. 13:20](#) It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation;
Nor will the Arab pitch his tent there,
Nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there.

[Is. 13:21](#) But desert creatures will lie down there,
And their houses will be full of owls;
Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there.

[Is. 13:22](#) Hyenas will howl in their fortified towers
And jackals in their luxurious palaces.
Her fateful time also will soon come
And her days will not be prolonged.

- Why is this a puzzling passage?
 - Well, at first glance it seems to transition from the time of Tribulation to the time of the Medo Persians and their conquering of Babylon in 540 BC
 - Many comes to these verses and leave with that understanding

- But a careful inspection of the text, makes that interpretation impossible
 - First, let's define the term Medes
 - In Hebrew, the term is Maday, who was a son of Japheth, son of Noah
 - Maday settled in present day Iran
 - His name later became associated with the people who occupied that land, the Medes
 - But prophetic scripture commonly uses ancient names to reference modern people groups
 - Look back in chapter 11:11, we're told that the regathering of Israel in the time prior to Christ's return will come from
 - Cush, Elam, Shinar among other places
 - Cush is modern day Ethiopia, a place Ham's descendants settled
 - Elam is a son of Shem, who settled in western Iran
 - Shinar is another name for Babylon, modern day Iraq
 - So the Bible often refers to ancient names, often names connected to the direct descendants of Noah, to describe modern locations
 - Therefore, we can't assume that the use of the name Medes necessarily means the same Medes that invaded in 540 BC
 - It can just as likely refer to a later group of Medes, even if by then they are using a different name (like Iranians)
- Secondly, consider that God often repeats circumstances in new ways to reinforce old points
 - Just like the invasion of Judah by Assyrian mirrors or pictures the antichrist's invasion of Judah in a later day

- Similarly, we shouldn't be surprised if God used the invasion of Babylon by Medo Persians in 540 BC as a prophetic picture of a later invasion by another group of Medes during Tribulation
- A closer look at the details of the invasion that Isaiah describes tells us this is exactly what God does
 - After the Medes invade and destroy every person and level the city
 - It will resemble what was left after God judged Sodom and Gomorrah
 - In other words, nothing
 - Furthermore, it will never be inhabited again
 - Isaiah goes a step further and says an Arab will never live there again
 - Nor will sheep ever be able to graze there again
 - Only desert creatures will live there
 - It's literally the end of Babylon, as Revelation 18 describes
- After the Medes entered Babylon in 540 BC, there wasn't even a fight
 - The King of Babylon, Belshazzar, was killed
 - He was killed by an executioner, because there was no battle at all
 - The city surrendered
 - And it continued to exist intact for another 40 years
 - Even when it was finally abandoned Arabs still occupied the region
 - And today there is a city around the ancient ruins
 - The details of Isaiah's prophecy simply haven't happened yet
 - Leading us to conclude that God will raise up a new form of Babylon the city, as He promises, and that will lead to another invasion of an army from Medes from Persian
- So Isaiah delivered a burden of was of a coming judgment of Babylon during Tribulation that is accomplished in part by an army of many nations led by Medes, who destroy the city utterly

- Now what follows chronologically from these events?
 - If I'm right that this is Tribulation, then we know that the new kingdom follows, with Christ ruling from Israel
 - And Israel dwelling peacefully in its land
- Sure enough, look at the rest of this oracle in chapter 14

[Is. 14:1](#) ¶ When the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.

[Is. 14:2](#) The peoples will take them along and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as an inheritance in the land of the LORD as male servants and female servants; and they will take their captors captive and will rule over their oppressors.

- The time that follows is described as a time when God in compassion again chooses Israel
 - Settles them in their land
 - Strangers will attach themselves to the house of Jacob (Gentile believers)
 - The peoples of the world will serve Israel as servants
 - And those who were previously their oppressors will be subject to Israel's rule as the chief nation of the earth, according to God's purpose
 - These are classic descriptions of Israel during the Messianic Kingdom
 - Now Isaiah offers us this humorous and intriguing scene

[Is. 14:3](#) And it will be in the day when the LORD gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved,

[Is. 14:4](#) that you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon, and say,

I "How the oppressor has ceased,
And how fury has ceased!

[Is. 14:5](#) "The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked,
The scepter of rulers

[Is. 14:6](#) Which used to strike the peoples in fury with unceasing strokes,
Which subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution.

[Is. 14:7](#) "The whole earth is at rest and is quiet;
They break forth into shouts of joy.

[Is. 14:8](#) "Even the cypress trees rejoice over you, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying,
I 'Since you were laid low, no tree cutter comes up against us.'

- The setting hasn't changed here...Isaiah says it's still "in that day"
 - A time when the Lord has given Israel and those attached to her "rest from pain" and harsh service
 - That they will finally be able to take up a taunt against the king of Babylon
 - Who is the king of Babylon?
 - Neb? Belshazzar? Some other king?
 - Well, if we're talking about the time immediately following Tribulation, then it makes little sense to feature Neb or another ancient king
 - Instead, it makes sense that the king described here is one who ruled Babylon in the days immediately prior to this moment
 - The king of Babylon during Tribulation, who is the antichrist, who dies at mid Tribulation
 - The second half of Tribulation, the antichrist's body continues to live, but only because Satan brings it back to life and inhabits it
 - But the antichrist is a man, whose soul descends to hell once he dies like any other man
 - And here we see a wild description of what that descent into hell looks like
 - With Israel taunting his descent
- First, we're told the antichrist is a man who used to strike the nations in fury and persecution
 - But now the whole earth is quiet and at rest
 - Another clue that we're in the time of the Messianic kingdom
 - Total peace on earth with Christ ruling

[Is. 14:9](#) " Sheol from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come;
It arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth;
It raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones.

[Is. 14:10](#) " They will all respond and say to you,
I 'Even you have been made weak as we,

You have become like us.

[Is. 14:11](#) 'Your pomp and the music of your harps
Have been brought down to Sheol;
Maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you
I And worms are your covering.'

[Is. 14:12](#) "How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!

[Is. 14:13](#) "But you said in your heart,
I 'I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.

[Is. 14:14](#) 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I I will make myself like the Most High.'

[Is. 14:15](#) "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit.

[Is. 14:16](#) "Those who see you will gaze at you,
They will ponder over you, saying,
I 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
Who shook kingdoms,

[Is. 14:17](#) Who made the world like a wilderness
And overthrew its cities,
I Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?'

[Is. 14:18](#) "All the kings of the nations lie in glory,
Each in his own tomb.

[Is. 14:19](#) "But you have been cast out of your tomb
Like a rejected branch,
Clothed with the slain who are pierced with a sword,
Who go down to the stones of the pit
Like a trampled corpse.

[Is. 14:20](#) "You will not be united with them in burial,
Because you have ruined your country,
You have slain your people.
May the offspring of evildoers not be mentioned forever.

[Is. 14:21](#) "Prepare for his sons a place of slaughter
Because of the iniquity of their fathers.
They must not arise and take possession of the earth
I And fill the face of the world with cities."

- What a compelling and power testimony
 - The imagery here is simply stunning
 - While the description is poetic to a degree

- It's really gripping to consider the possibility that many of these details may be literal descriptions of life in hell
 - First, there's the prospect that a new arrival are nothing notable, such that it takes the arrival of someone as important as the antichrist to stir up excitement in this place
 - Isaiah describes a scene of other leaders of earth living in hell (I have a few favorites I hope are included in this group) who greet the arriving antichrist
 - And they are astonished to learn he shares their fate
 - He was so powerful and awesome in his day, they can't believe he's here too
- Then look in verse 12...the sense of the text changes
 - The earlier comments regarding the earthly king change to emphasize another leader
 - They call him the star of the morning, son of the dawn
 - The term star of the morning in Hebrew is He El, which in Latin is lucifer
 - It's reminiscent of the Morning star (2Pet 1:19; Rev 22) - Christ
 - One who claims to be Christ, is now mock him because he obviously wasn't God after all
 - In verse 13 this character is quoted as saying he would have entered heaven and had a throne above God Himself
 - And he sat on the mount of the assembly (the temple in Jerusalem)
 - He would be like the Most High (v.14)
 - Instead, he is sent down to Sheol, to the pit
 - This pit is the same as the abyss of Rev 20
- So of course we're talking about Satan
 - The transition between describing the man who is antichrist and the power behind the man, Satan, is not unusual in Scripture

- Ezekiel does a similar transition in Ezek 27
- In verse 16, the text transitions back to the man, the antichrist,
 - There is a contrast between what this man said and did on earth with what has transpired now that he has died
 - Even his body doesn't receive the treatment others received
 - Unlike other kings who received a proper burial, the antichrist's body goes without burial, because it is still walking the earth inhabited by Satan
 - And even the antichrist's natural children are condemned to die so that he may have no one to inherit his earthly throne (v.21)
- The oracle against Babylon ends with a summary of God's judgment

[Is. 14:22](#) "I will rise up against them," declares the LORD of hosts, "and will cut off from Babylon name and survivors, offspring and posterity," declares the LORD.

[Is. 14:23](#) "I will also make it a possession for the hedgehog and swamps of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction," declares the LORD of hosts.

[Is. 14:24](#) The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand,

[Is. 14:25](#) to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulder.

[Is. 14:26](#) "This is the plan devised against the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations.

[Is. 14:27](#) "For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?"

- To summarize, God said it, so count on it.
 - Next week we pick up at the end of 14 with a short oracle against the Philistines
 - Followed by Moab in 15, Edom in 16 and Damascus in 17

Isaiah 15, 16 & 17

- Continuing with the prophet's oracles against Israel's foes
 - Remember, all these nations were enemies of Israel and Judah
 - But they were also at times nations that unfaithful Israel turned to for strength or rescue or spiritual direction
- So now we move to Philistia

[Is. 14:28](#) In the year that King Ahaz died this oracle came:

[Is. 14:29](#) "Do not rejoice, O Philistia, all of you,
Because the rod that struck you is broken;
For from the serpent's root a viper will come out,
And its fruit will be a flying serpent.

[Is. 14:30](#) "Those who are most helpless will eat,
And the needy will lie down in security;
I will destroy your root with famine,
And it will kill off your survivors.

[Is. 14:31](#) "Wail, O gate; cry, O city;
Melt away, O Philistia, all of you;
For smoke comes from the north,
And there is no straggler in his ranks.

[Is. 14:32](#) "How then will one answer the messengers of the nation?
That the LORD has founded Zion,
And the afflicted of His people will seek refuge in it."

- Isaiah dates this prophecy to the year of Ahaz's death, 715-720 BC
 - Isaiah doesn't date his prophecies very often, so the date is clearly significant to understanding the prophecy
 - In this case, it explains the meaning of verse 29
 - Ahaz's death was a turning point for Philistia
 - They had benefited under Ahaz's rule because he was weak and ineffective
 - Philistia's territory expanded into Israel during this time
 - They rejoiced at Assyria's conquering of Israel and into Judah
 - The rod they are glad to see struck is the House of David

- But from this event their own destruction will come
- The serpent to viper to flying serpent is a description of how things go from bad to worse for Philistia
- God's judgment comes in in phases against this people
 - The first step in the progression is the serpent
 - Relatively harmless as Ahaz was

[2Chr. 28:18](#) The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland and of the Negev of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages, and they settled there.
[2Chr. 28:19](#) For the LORD humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was very unfaithful to the LORD.

- Philistia eventually comprised five major city states with five independent kings
 - Askelon, Ashdod, Gaza, Ekron, Gath
- But then a viper comes from Ahaz
 - Hezekiah

[2Kings 18:6](#) For he clung to the LORD; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses.
[2Kings 18:7](#) And the LORD was with him; wherever he went he prospered. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him.
[2Kings 18:8](#) He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.

- He beats them back
- The finally, the viper is a flying serpent
 - The ultimate destruction is the flying serpent, or dragon
 - Who is the dragon in scripture?
 - Satan (Rev 20:2)
 - Remembering that God uses one place name to characterize the the enemy and his work in the world - Babylon
 - Who is it that ultimately destroys the Philistine people?

- Babylon
- Finally, let's look at the extent of the destruction
 - In verse 30 and onward, Isaiah contrasts those of Israel, who the Philistines taunt, with that of the Philistines themselves
 - The Jews are helpless and needy, but they are safe
 - The Philistines will die of starvation and war
 - The enemy will come from the north without a straggler among them
 - Very powerful, swift like we've seen Babylon described already
- The contrast concludes with Isaiah saying that Israel will return
 - The obvious comparison goes unanswered
 - Meaning that Isaiah's failure to mention the Philistines' future implies that they have no future
 - Sure enough, the entire culture ceased to exist about the 5th century BC

[Is. 15:1](#) ¶ The oracle concerning Moab.

Surely in a night Ar of Moab is devastated and ruined;
Surely in a night Kir of Moab is devastated and ruined.

[Is. 15:2](#) They have gone up to the temple and to Dibon, even to the high places to weep.

Moab wails over Nebo and Medeba;
Everyone's head is bald and every beard is cut off.

[Is. 15:3](#) In their streets they have girded themselves with sackcloth;
On their housetops and in their squares
Everyone is wailing, dissolved in tears.

[Is. 15:4](#) Heshbon and Elealeh also cry out,
Their voice is heard all the way to Jahaz;
Therefore the armed men of Moab cry aloud;
His soul trembles within him.

[Is. 15:5](#) My heart cries out for Moab;
His fugitives are as far as Zoar and Eglath-shelishiyah,
For they go up the ascent of Luhith weeping;
Surely on the road to Horonaim they raise a cry of distress over their ruin.

[Is. 15:6](#) For the waters of Nimrim are desolate.
Surely the grass is withered, the tender grass died out,
There is no green thing.

[Is. 15:7](#) Therefore the abundance which they have acquired and stored up
They carry off over the brook of Arabim.

[Is. 15:8](#) For the cry of distress has gone around the territory of Moab,
Its wail goes as far as Eglaim and its wailing even to Beer-elim.

[Is. 15:9](#) For the waters of Dimon are full of blood;
Surely I will bring added woes upon Dimon,
A lion upon the fugitives of Moab and upon the remnant of the land.

- This oracle includes all of 15, which we read and goes into 16
 - Moab is present day western Jordan, opposite Israel across the Jordan river
 - It was founded by one of the incestuous sons of Lot's daughters
 - The people had long been enemies of Israel
 - There were also times when the two nations were relatively peaceful
 - They were a center of idol worship, and that influence spilled over into Israel
 - As we enter this third oracle, let's start to look for a larger pattern in these oracles
 - The first was Babylon demonstrating God's providence over the course of human history to bring the enemy to destruction
 - And God's people to glory
 - The second was the Philistia that demonstrated the temporary weakening over even disappearance of the Davidic throne didn't mean it's end
 - It will eventually return in glory
 - All those who oppose it will come to an end
 - Now we look at Moab...keep your eye out for another piece in this pattern
- This highlight some key points
 - In verse 1, Ar was the capital city and Kir their most fortified city
 - Both will fall in a night and quickly
 - In the following verses, we see several places named

- All are centers of idol worship
 - Nebo is the place Moses died
- Naturally, the citizens wail and weep over the destruction of these places
- In verses 6-8 the completeness of the destruction is evident
 - Rivers drying up
 - Land made desolate
 - The wealth of the nation carried off
- In verse 9, those who escape and run are confronted by lions
- Then we move into chapter 16, still looking at Moab

[Is. 16:1](#) ¶ Send the tribute lamb to the ruler of the land,
From Sela by way of the wilderness to the mountain of the daughter of Zion.

[Is. 16:2](#) Then, like fleeing birds or scattered nestlings,
The daughters of Moab will be at the fords of the Arnon.

[Is. 16:3](#) “Give us advice, make a decision;
Cast your shadow like night at high noon;
Hide the outcasts, do not betray the fugitive.

[Is. 16:4](#) “Let the outcasts of Moab stay with you;
Be a hiding place to them from the destroyer.”
For the extortioner has come to an end, destruction has ceased,
Oppressors have completely disappeared from the land.

[Is. 16:5](#) A throne will even be established in lovingkindness,
And a judge will sit on it in faithfulness in the tent of David;
Moreover, he will seek justice
And be prompt in righteousness.

- Up to this point, we have no timeline for this destruction
 - But now the tone changes dramatically
 - Isaiah says to Moab send a tribute lamb to the ruler of the land
 - Sela was a city in southern most Moab
 - The daughter of Zion is Mt Moriah
 - Send a tribute lamb from Moab to Jerusalem

- Sending a lamb was not literal, though the image of a lamb certainly catches our attention
 - The closest comparable phrase for us today might be to wave the white flag
 - Smoke the peace pipe
 - Make peace with Israel
- Seems like an interesting transition here
 - Isaiah hasn't offered Babylon or Philistia any hope for escape for God's judgment
 - But here he seems to open a door for Moab's redemption
- Isaiah sets up the framework for a salvation for Moab, but it depends on certain things
 - First, in verse 2-3, Moab is seen like scattering birds
 - Unsure of where to go
 - At the fjords of the Armon river, which leads to the Dead Sea
 - They are hesitant and unsure where to go, as they flee those who attack them
 - Isaiah records their confusion in verse 3, "give us advice, make a decision"
 - Then in verse 3 Isaiah switches to describing Judah's part
 - They are to act like a giant shadow for these fugitives, hiding them from their attackers
 - In verse 4, Isaiah instructs Israel to allow their fugitives to stay with them
 - Until the danger has passed for them
- When and how does this unnamed danger pass?
 - Well look at verse 5, a throne is established in lovingkindness
 - A faithful Judge sits in the tent of David
 - One who seeks justice and righteousness

- Who is that? Jesus, of course
- When does this happen? The Messianic Kingdom, of course
- What is Isaiah offering here?
 - Those who are the remnant of Moab may have opportunity to flee into Israel
 - And if they are willing to seek refuge with their earthly enemy
 - They are protected in the camp of Israel and will enjoy their protection
 - Ultimately, the Moabite remnant will share in the glory of the kingdom when Christ rules
- How is this fulfilled?
 - Well, we know at least one famous Moabite who fits this pattern
 - A woman who sought refuge in Israel and is counted in the genealogy of Christ Himself - Ruth
 - But Isaiah makes clear that this offer for protection is made for a small number of Moabites
 - Then Isaiah returns to the oracle with another about face

[Is. 16:6](#) We have heard of the pride of Moab, an excessive pride;
Even of his arrogance, pride, and fury;
His idle boasts are false.

[Is. 16:7](#) Therefore Moab will wail; everyone of Moab will wail.
You will moan for the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth
As those who are utterly stricken.

[Is. 16:8](#) For the fields of Heshbon have withered, the vines of Sibmah as well;
The lords of the nations have trampled down its choice clusters
Which reached as far as Jazer and wandered to the deserts;
Its tendrils spread themselves out and passed over the sea.

[Is. 16:9](#) Therefore I will weep bitterly for Jazer, for the vine of Sibmah;
I will drench you with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh;
For the shouting over your summer fruits and your harvest has fallen away.

[Is. 16:10](#) Gladness and joy are taken away from the fruitful field;
In the vineyards also there will be no cries of joy or jubilant shouting,
No treader treads out wine in the presses,
For I have made the shouting to cease.

[Is. 16:11](#) Therefore my heart intones like a harp for Moab
And my inward feelings for Kir-hareseth.

[Is. 16:12](#) So it will come about when Moab presents himself,
When he wearies himself upon his high place
And comes to his sanctuary to pray,
That he will not prevail.

- Now the oracle turns back to describing the destruction of the nation as a whole
 - The Moabites are marked by their pride
 - Which is the ultimate undoing of every man
 - So their pride brings them down
 - The people will wail
 - Their prized vineyards will wither
 - Their vineyards were as famous in that day as Napa Valley today
 - In fact, there's some humor here in verses 9-10
 - Isaiah himself will weep over their destruction because he says he misses their fruit of the vine
 - He is sad over the loss of the wine, as we would be over the loss of Napa perhaps
 - The fortified city Kir (Kir-haraseth in verse 11) guarded that region
- But in the end, verse 12, the pagan prayers of Moab will go unanswered and they will perish, apart from a small remnant that will be allowed to remain
 - Now at this point we still don't know when this will occur, and therefore what destruction Isaiah is referencing
 - But then we get that information in verses 13 & 14

[Is. 16:13](#) This is the word which the LORD spoke earlier concerning Moab.

[Is. 16:14](#) But now the LORD speaks, saying, "Within three years, as a hired man would count them, the glory of Moab will be degraded along with all his great population, and his remnant will be very small and impotent."

- In verse 13, Isaiah clarifies that the earlier verses concerning Moab had been spoken earlier
 - When, we don't know
 - But now Isaiah says he received a second word from the Lord that gave a timetable
 - Within three years
 - "As a hired man counts"
 - This expression is probably easy to understand
 - When you are hired, you are an indentured servant
 - You spend your time counting down the days
 - Like when I was at the Academy
 - In other words, the three years will be precise, you can bet on it
 - By that time, the glory of Moab will be gone along with it's population
 - But a remnant will be permitted to remain
 - This remnant will eventually make it's way into the Messianic Kingdom
- Based on this tight timeline, we know that Isaiah was talking about the Assyrians, who invaded and wiped Moab off the map in 701 BC
- Remember the puzzle we discussed earlier?
 - With the motif being Israel's enemies, what have learned through the example of Moab?
 - Babylon was a message of how the enemy and his forces go down in flames, but Israel rises from the ashes
 - Philistines taught that the throne of David will rise again, even if it appears to have faded, and it will crush all opposition
 - Now in Moab, we see the Lord offer refuge for a small remnant of Israel's enemies, who will be sheltered in Israel's shadow and share in her kingdom
 - The Gentiles attached to the Jewish Messiah

- Next we come to Damascus and Samaria (which was northern Israel)

[Is. 17:1](#) The oracle concerning Damascus.

“Behold, Damascus is about to be removed from being a city
And will become a fallen ruin.

[Is. 17:2](#) “The cities of Aroer are forsaken;

They will be for flocks to lie down in,
And there will be no one to frighten them.

[Is. 17:3](#) “The fortified city will disappear from Ephraim,

And sovereignty from Damascus
And the remnant of Aram;
They will be like the glory of the sons of Israel,”
Declares the LORD of hosts.

- Isaiah starts with Damascus, which is the capital of Syria
 - Damascus will be destroyed, as the other cities mentioned before
 - But here we see a fallen ruin
 - And pasture ground remaining for animals
 - But the people will be gone
 - Likewise, Ephraim will see its fortified city disappear
 - Remembering that Northern Israel and Samaria had united against Judah
 - Isaiah then uses his trademark sarcasm to great effect in verse 3
 - He says that the glory of Damascus and Ephraim will be like the glory of the sons of Israel
 - Well the glory of Israel had departed because of their unfaithfulness
 - So there is no glory in Israel, hence none in Damascus or Ephraim either
- It's important to remember that Ephraim is still part of Jacob, Israel
 - They are apostate and are going to receive judgment, as Isaiah describes here
 - But in the end, God will return to these tribes just as He will for the tribes in Judah

- Therefore, Isaiah couples the prophecy of judgment with a promise of redemption for Ephraim

[Is. 17:4](#) Now in that day the glory of Jacob will fade,
And the fatness of his flesh will become lean.

[Is. 17:5](#) It will be even like the reaper gathering the standing grain,
As his arm harvests the ears,
Or it will be like one gleaning ears of grain
In the valley of Rephaim.

[Is. 17:6](#) Yet gleanings will be left in it like the shaking of an olive tree,
Two or three olives on the topmost bough,
Four or five on the branches of a fruitful tree,
Declares the LORD, the God of Israel.

- In that day, the day that this destruction will arrive (at the hands of the Assyrians)
 - The glory of Jacob (the northern tribes) will fade
 - He becomes a lean nation with only two tribes still intact
 - But Isaiah describes that time as one like a gathering of wheat
 - Even when all the grain has been gathered, there is always some left behind
 - Like a few forgotten olives at the top of a tree
 - Or a fruit untouched branches on a fruit tree
 - The Remnant, again
 - God promises that this destruction still provides a remnant of Israel that will continue on

[Is. 17:7](#) In that day man will have regard for his Maker
And his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 17:8](#) He will not have regard for the altars, the work of his hands,
Nor will he look to that which his fingers have made,
Even the Asherim and incense stands.

[Is. 17:9](#) In that day their strong cities will be like forsaken places in the forest,
Or like branches which they abandoned before the sons of Israel;
And the land will be a desolation.

[Is. 17:10](#) For you have forgotten the God of your salvation
 And have not remembered the rock of your refuge.
 Therefore you plant delightful plants
 And set them with vine slips of a strange god.

[Is. 17:11](#) In the day that you plant it you carefully fence it in,
 And in the morning you bring your seed to blossom;
 But the harvest will be a heap
 In a day of sickness and incurable pain.

- In that day again, the day of judgment
 - Men have regard for your Maker
 - For the Holy One of Israel
 - This may sound hopeful, but it's more sardonic
 - Simply because all their altars and false gods will have been destroyed, they are left with nothing else to worship except their Maker
 - He won't be able to look to the work of his hands and worship it because it's gone
 - The point is a loss of opportunity rather than a change of heart (v.8)
- In fact, look at the rest of the description
 - Their "strong" cities will be forsaken in the desert
 - Their land desolate
 - They have forgotten the God of their salvation
 - They serve and honor a strange god
 - But as much as they cultivate their vines for unholy purposes, their harvest will come to nothing but sickness and pain
- Now as the burden for Damascus and Ephraim comes to an end, Isaiah includes a curious scene
 -

[Is. 17:12](#) Alas, the uproar of many peoples
 Who roar like the roaring of the seas,
 And the rumbling of nations
 Who rush on like the rumbling of mighty waters!

[Is. 17:13](#) The nations rumble on like the rumbling of many waters,
 But He will rebuke them and they will flee far away,
 And be chased like chaff in the mountains before the wind,
 Or like whirling dust before a gale.

[Is. 17:14](#) At evening time, behold, there is terror!
 Before morning they are no more.
 Such will be the portion of those who plunder us
 And the lot of those who pillage us.

- This description describes judgment against Damascus and Northern Israel as it occurred
 - But the passage mentions many nations rumbling (or a loud crashing)
 - Like mighty waters, which is often a reference to a great army
 - At their advance, God rebukes them and they flee
 - Chased into the mountains like chaff in the wind or whirling dust
 - This leaves us wondering a little
 - It could reference the way God repelled the attack of Syria and Israel against Judah in advance of the Assyrian invasion
 - But where are the many nations?
 - Or it could refer to the antichrist's forces who invade in a similar way to threaten Jerusalem at the end of Tribulation
 - But then what does "fleeing" mean, since we know Christ destroys them such that there are no survivors
 - Could be a blending of both, or something I'm missing
- Finally, what's the puzzle piece here?
 - Just as God won't punish all Israel's enemies, in that He is making a provision for Gentiles (Moab)
 - Likewise, He is also will to judge sin among His own people Israel

Isaiah 18-20-

- The next oracle against Israel's neighbors and foes
 - Still looking at an overall pattern
 - Babylon was a message of how the enemy and his forces go down in flames, but Israel rises from the ashes
 - Philistines taught that the throne of David will rise again, even if it appears to have faded, and it will crush all opposition
 - Moab taught that the Lord will offer refuge to a small remnant of Israel's enemies (gentiles), who will be sheltered in Israel's shadow and share in her kingdom
 - But if God is willing to offer mercy for some gentiles, He is equally willing to hold Israel accountable and will bring judgment against Ephraim
 - Now we look at Cush, which is the ancient name for the land of Ethiopia

[Is. 18:1](#) Alas, oh land of whirring wings
Which lies beyond the rivers of Cush,

[Is. 18:2](#) Which sends envoys by the sea,
Even in papyrus vessels on the surface of the waters.
Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth,
To a people feared far and wide,
A powerful and oppressive nation
Whose land the rivers divide.

[Is. 18:3](#) All you inhabitants of the world and dwellers on earth,
As soon as a standard is raised on the mountains, you will see it,
And as soon as the trumpet is blown, you will hear it.

[Is. 18:4](#) For thus the LORD has told me,
"I will look from My dwelling place quietly
Like dazzling heat in the sunshine,
Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."

- Following the same pattern we've been using, we want to know what country first
 - The land beyond the rivers of Cush (and divided by rivers in v.2)
 - Cush is Ethiopia (Psa 68:31 uses the same Hebrew word)

- And even though it says the land “beyond the rivers,” remember from whose perspective this scene is described - the Jewish perspective
- If you were in Israel looking in Ethiopia’s direction, you look south, southwest
- The first thing in your line of sight is the northeast corner of Ethiopia, where two rivers dominate the geography: the Blue Nile and the Atbara rivers
 - The land beyond those rivers is still Ethiopia
- Verse 2 describes the people of this land
 - Sea-going people, on distinctive ships who sails resembled wings of an insect (v.1)
 - They were tall and had minimal body hair (smooth) by Jewish standards
 - They were powerful and feared nation
 - Josephus identifies Ethiopia as the kingdom Sheba, as in the Queen of Sheba
- Then Isaiah says that there will be a signal, a standard raised on the mountains that every human on earth will see
 - For the Lord will emerge from his dwelling place...quietly
 - But the word shaqat also means to grant relief
 - The Lord appears like a dazzling hot sunshine, and like a refreshing cloud
 - Consider these verses

[Zech. 14:5](#) You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

[Zech. 14:6](#) ¶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

[Zech. 14:8](#) ¶ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

[Zech. 14:9](#) ¶ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

[Rev. 19:11](#) ¶ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

[Rev. 19:12](#) His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

[Rev. 19:13](#) He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

[Rev. 19:14](#) And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

- So it seems that v.3 refers to a worldwide sign, like the one referenced in Zech 14
- And v.4 talks about the Lord leaving His dwelling place to bring relief
 - Looking like a sun shining and a refreshing cloud (could this be the cloud of saints following after?)
 - Or maybe a reference to the living waters that will flow after His arrival?
- Ostensively, we're talking about Ethiopia's future judgment in return for her opposition to Israel
 - But Isaiah has obviously decided to take this conversation much further than just Ethiopia
 - Isaiah's describing the return of the Lord
 - Remember the two levels of Isaiah's teaching in this section

[Is. 18:5](#) For before the harvest, as soon as the bud blossoms
And the flower becomes a ripening grape,
Then He will cut off the sprigs with pruning knives
And remove and cut away the spreading branches.

[Is. 18:6](#) They will be left together for mountain birds of prey,
And for the beasts of the earth;
And the birds of prey will spend the summer feeding on them,
And all the beasts of the earth will spend harvest time on them.

[Is. 18:7](#) At that time a gift of homage will be brought to the LORD of hosts
 From a people tall and smooth,
 Even from a people feared far and wide,
 A powerful and oppressive nation,
 Whose land the rivers divide —
 To the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, even Mount Zion.

- Now we look at timing a little
 - v.5 says that all of this will happen like when buds are blooming and branches are spreading
 - Grape flowers are blooming ready to become grapes
 - We know that grape vines and fig trees are consistently used in Scripture to describe the nation of Israel
 - So here we have Israel blooming

[Matt. 24:32](#) ¶ “Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;
[Matt. 24:33](#) so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.

- But suddenly the vine is pruned
 - The image is one of prematurely pruning
 - The events occur when it's least expected, before anyone was ready

[Matt. 24:36](#) ¶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.
[Matt. 24:37](#) “For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.
[Matt. 24:38](#) “For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,
[Matt. 24:39](#) and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- Then in verse 6, Isaiah gets to the meat of the judgment it seems
 - “They” are left for the birds to feast on them over the entire summer

[Rev. 19:15](#) From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

[Rev. 19:16](#) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

[Rev. 19:17](#) ¶ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,

[Rev. 19:18](#) so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

[Rev. 19:19](#) ¶ And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

[Rev. 19:20](#) And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

[Rev. 19:21](#) And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- Finally, a gift of homage to the Lord results
 - People coming to the Lord, including the tall and smooth of Ethiopia
 - Coming to Mt Zion in peace rather than as an oppressor
 - Of course, this is the Messianic kingdom that follows Christ's return, taking hold with Christ ruling from the Mountain
- In total, it's a great picture of the Lord's return built into an oracle concerning Ethiopia
 -
- There's a beautiful symmetry to Isaiah's writing here...a chiasm
 - Verse 1 & 2...wings and rivers dividing, tall smooth men, coming to attack Jerusalem
 - In verse 6 & 7...wings, rivers dividing, tall smooth men, coming to praise the Lord
 - Verse 3... signs to the nations of Christ's arrival
 - Verse 5...a sign to the World of his imminent return
 - Verse 5 is the chiasm, Israel's blossoming again on the world stage

- What's our puzzle piece here?
 - Babylon = enemy and his forces will be defeated, but Israel rises from the ashes
 - Philistines = throne of David will rise again, even if it appears to have faded, and it will crush all opposition
 - Moab = the Lord will offer refuge to a small remnant of gentiles, sheltered in Israel's promises and share in her kingdom
 - God will hold Israel accountable and will bring judgment against Ephraim
 - Cush = Israel's enemies will be transformed into nations that pay homage to Zion

[Is. 19:1](#) ¶ The oracle concerning Egypt.

Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and is about to come to Egypt;
The idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence,
And the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them.

[Is. 19:2](#) "So I will incite Egyptians against Egyptians;
And they will each fight against his brother and each against his neighbor,
City against city and kingdom against kingdom.

[Is. 19:3](#) "Then the spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them;
And I will confound their strategy,
So that they will resort to idols and ghosts of the dead
And to mediums and spiritists.

[Is. 19:4](#) "Moreover, I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel master,
And a mighty king will rule over them," declares the Lord GOD of hosts.

[Is. 19:5](#) ¶ The waters from the sea will dry up,
And the river will be parched and dry.

[Is. 19:6](#) The canals will emit a stench,
The streams of Egypt will thin out and dry up;
The reeds and rushes will rot away.

[Is. 19:7](#) The bulrushes by the Nile, by the edge of the Nile
And all the sown fields by the Nile
Will become dry, be driven away, and be no more.

[Is. 19:8](#) And the fishermen will lament,
And all those who cast a line into the Nile will mourn,
And those who spread nets on the waters will pine away.

[Is. 19:9](#) Moreover, the manufacturers of linen made from combed flax
And the weavers of white cloth will be utterly dejected.

[Is. 19:10](#) And the pillars of Egypt will be crushed;
All the hired laborers will be grieved in soul.

- Clearly this is Egypt
 - Egypt has had a much more detailed involvement in Israel's past
 - So much so that the nation of Egypt itself is used at times in Scripture as a picture of the unbelieving sinful world
 - Egypt was famously Israel's oppressor during the time of Moses
 - And in later centuries they continued to form a threat to Israel, initiating four separate wars against Israel
 - And even today
 - Not surprisingly, this oracle includes much more discussion of specific judgments than the past couple of oracles
 - Verse 1 establishes that the instigator for all that will happen is God
 - Though there are natural events, like civil war, they are still all triggered and controlled by God
 - For example, v.2 says "I" meaning God
 - God will stir up a civil war
 - Ultimately leading to a despot rising to power and ruling in a cruel fashion over the people
 - Over its long history, Egypt has experienced many civil wars and cruel pharaohs, so it's not easy to identify which one (or ones) are in view here
 - God goes further and will break down their social and religious pillars
 - And He will disrupt their natural resources, particularly the important river system of Egypt in the Nile valley
 - This would be devastating to Egypt
 - Their entire economy, as represented by laborers, will be in shambles

[Is. 19:11](#) ¶ The princes of Zoan are mere fools;
 The advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has become stupid.
 How can you men say to Pharaoh,
 "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"?

[Is. 19:12](#) Well then, where are your wise men?
 Please let them tell you,
 And let them understand what the LORD of hosts
 Has purposed against Egypt.

[Is. 19:13](#) The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly,
 The princes of Memphis are deluded;
 Those who are the cornerstone of her tribes
 Have led Egypt astray.

[Is. 19:14](#) The LORD has mixed within her a spirit of distortion;
 They have led Egypt astray in all that it does,
 As a drunken man staggers in his vomit.

[Is. 19:15](#) There will be no work for Egypt
 Which its head or tail, its palm branch or bulrush, may do.

- In response to these calamities, Pharaoh seeks the advice of wise men, sorcerers and spiritists
 - They come from Zoan and Memphis, which are both major cities in southern Egypt
 - God mocks their supposed wisdom
 - Asking how can they hope to understand God through human wisdom
 - God points to the leaders and assign blame to them for leading the people astray
 - Leading them into wars against Israel and leading them in to idol worship
 - God then goes so far in v.14 as to purposefully delude and distort their understanding to cause the nation of Egypt to go even further astray
 - Ultimately leading to total unemployment and the abandonment of the land
 - Ezekiel covers this same event

[Ezek. 29:8](#) ¶ 'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will bring upon you a sword and I will cut off from you man and beast.

[Ezek. 29:9](#) "The land of Egypt will become a desolation and waste. Then they will know that I am the LORD. ¶ Because you said, 'The Nile is mine, and I have made it,'

[Ezek. 29:10](#) therefore, behold, I am against you and against your rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene and even to the border of Ethiopia.

[Ezek. 29:11](#) "A man's foot will not pass through it, and the foot of a beast will not pass through it, and it will not be inhabited for forty years.

[Ezek. 29:12](#) "So I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated lands. And her cities, in the midst of cities that are laid waste, will be desolate forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands."

- We haven't seen this happen yet
 - So in a future day to come, God brings this judgment against Egypt
 - Empty for forty years
 - The scene gets more curious
- Back to Isaiah...

[Is. 19:16](#) ¶ In that day the Egyptians will become like women, and they will tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which He is going to wave over them.

[Is. 19:17](#) The land of Judah will become a terror to Egypt; everyone to whom it is mentioned will be in dread of it, because of the purpose of the LORD of hosts which He is purposing against them.

[Is. 19:18](#) ¶ In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing allegiance to the LORD of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction.

[Is. 19:19](#) ¶ In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD near its border.

[Is. 19:20](#) It will become a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them.

[Is. 19:21](#) Thus the LORD will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the LORD and perform it.

[Is. 19:22](#) The LORD will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to the LORD, and He will respond to them and will heal them.

- Now Isaiah begins to use an important and familiar phrase to introduce each new point...in that day
 - When we see this phrase, we know it looks forward to a prophetic day and it begins to suggest a certain special time as we've seen before
 - Let's look at the details to see if we recognize them to be the same "day" as the one Isaiah has spoken about before
 - First, Egyptians tremble in dread of Israel
 - Because of what God does on behalf of Israel
 - Judah becoming a terror to Egypt
 - The five major cities of Egypt begin to speak in the language of Canaan, which means in Hebrew
 - And they swear an allegiance to the Lord
 - And a city is renamed City of Destruction which is also translated city of sun
 - And they set up altars to the Lord rather than pagan altars
 - Then they cry out for God to save them, and he respond by sending them a savior and champion who is God himself (v.20)
 - God makes Himself known to Egypt and they will know Him and worship and sacrifice to Him
 - The strike God delivers is one that ultimately prompts healing (v. 22)
- Now we see clearly which "day" Isaiah means when he says in that day
 - The day of Tribulation followed by Jesus return and reign in the kingdom
 - A day when nations like Egypt are brought under judgment but then some are saved in faith as gentiles to join the kingdom
 - So the events Isaiah describes at the beginning of the chapter are events that occur during Tribulation
 - When rivers dry up and an evil despot (antichrist) takes rule over them and civil wars break out among the people

- And false prophets rise up to explain the calamities of Tribulation in false reasoning that God creates to confuse them

[2Th. 2:8](#) Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;

[2Th. 2:9](#) that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,

[2Th. 2:10](#) and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

[2Th. 2:11](#) For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,

[2Th. 2:12](#) in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

- Compare this language to the language we read in Isaiah v.14
- When the antichrist is revealed in the world, God sends a deluding influence on the nations so that they believe the lies of the enemy the antichrist and follow his rule
 - This is a part of God's judgment on the nations
 - Ultimately, the purpose of His strike we're told is to heal them (v. 22)
- Finishing Isaiah 19

[Is. 19:23](#) ¶ In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians will come into Egypt and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

[Is. 19:24](#) ¶ In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth,

[Is. 19:25](#) whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

- Still in that day...
 - We find a road being established from Egypt to Assyria and a common heart established to worship God: Egypt, Assyria, and Israel
 - Could Jews in Isaiah's day imagine that?
 - Under the Romans such a road existed, called the Via Maris
 - The road by the sea, because it went by the Med sea

- But Roman times can't be the time of fulfillment for this prophecy because there was no common worship established between these three nations
 - Much less a common worship of Yahweh
- Today the Via Maris is gone, because the borders between Egypt and Israel and Israel and Syria are sealed
 - This is also a future day, in the Millennial kingdom when the world is united under Christ's rule
- But how do we reconcile this with the Ezekiel passage about 40 years of empty land in Egypt?
 - Well, back to Ezekiel

[Ezek. 29:13](#) ¶ For thus says the Lord GOD, "At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered.

[Ezek. 29:14](#) "I will turn the fortunes of Egypt and make them return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they will be a lowly kingdom.

[Ezek. 29:15](#) "It will be the lowest of the kingdoms, and it will never again lift itself up above the nations. And I will make them so small that they will not rule over the nations.

[Ezek. 29:16](#) "And it will never again be the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing to mind the iniquity of their having turned to Egypt. Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD."'''

- At the end of the forty years, the land is inhabited again, but now they are a lowly nation
 - They are the least of the world's nations
 - And yet in v.16, they will know the Lord as God
- So this must be in the Messianic kingdom, after Christ's return
 - So it's reasonable to assume that the 40 years of emptiness are the first forty years of the kingdom
 - This is a part of Egypt's punishment
 - And then when people do return, the nation will become the least of all nations on earth
 - So while Israel was forced to spend 40 years wander outside their land after leaving Egypt

- Likewise, the Egyptians will have to spend the first 40 years of the kingdom living in other lands as exiles themselves
- So what's the puzzle piece for Egypt
 - Well, interestingly for both Ethiopia and Egypt, we've only see Isaiah talking about the secondary level prophecy (the one that involves the last days)
 - There hasn't been a near-term prophecy for judging these nations
 - It seems like that piece was missing for both
 - And it was because Isaiah saves it for chapter 20 when both nations receive God's judgment at the same time
 -

[Is. 20:1](#) ¶ In the year that the commander came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and captured it,

[Is. 20:2](#) at that time the LORD spoke through Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go and loosen the sackcloth from your hips and take your shoes off your feet." And he did so, going naked and barefoot.

[Is. 20:3](#) And the LORD said, "Even as My servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot three years as a sign and token against Egypt and Cush,

[Is. 20:4](#) so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old, naked and barefoot with buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.

[Is. 20:5](#) "Then they will be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush their hope and Egypt their boast.

[Is. 20:6](#) "So the inhabitants of this coastland will say in that day, 'Behold, such is our hope, where we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and we, how shall we escape?'"

- In 711 BC, Egypt began encouraging the Philistine city state of Ashdod to resist Assyrian rule
 - They promised to send help in their fight but never did
 - The people of Judah had aligned themselves with Ethiopia and Egypt against Assyria
 - So God wants to send Judah a message of what to expect
 - He tells Isaiah to parade around naked for three years

- At the end of three years, Isaiah gets to explain what the message means
 - The point of the message is to illustrate in graphic and humiliating terms what was going to happen to Ethiopia and Egypt at the hands of the Assyrians
 - And for Judah, it will be a shame to them, because they placed their faith and hope in those allies instead of in God (vs.5-6)
 - So here is the near-term prophetic judgment against these nations
- So what is the puzzle piece we see with Egypt?
 - Babylon = enemy and his forces will be defeated, but Israel rises from the ashes
 - Philistines = throne of David will rise again, even if it appears to have faded, and it will crush all opposition
 - Moab = the Lord will offer refuge to a small remnant of gentiles, sheltered in Israel's promises and share in her kingdom
 - God will hold Israel accountable and will bring judgment against Ephraim
 - Cush = Israel's enemies will be transformed into nations that pay homage to Zion
 - Egypt = But the healing of these nations is not without consequences for their sins against Israel, even leading to consequences in the kingdom
- Next we return to Babylon
 - Remember that with each nation, we had a near-term prophetic message and a long-term, eschatological message (end times message)
 - But with Babylon, we only got the long-term message in chapter 13 & 14
 - We never got the near-term judgment...that comes in chapter 21 & 22
 - It reflects the importance of Babylon that it receives so much attention

Isaiah 21-22

- A new oracle
 - About Babylon

[Is. 21:1](#) The oracle concerning the wilderness of the sea.

As windstorms in the Negev sweep on,
It comes from the wilderness, from a terrifying land.

[Is. 21:2](#) A harsh vision has been shown to me;

The treacherous one still deals treacherously, and the destroyer still destroys.
Go up, Elam, lay siege, Media;
I have made an end of all the groaning she has caused.

[Is. 21:3](#) For this reason my loins are full of anguish;

Pains have seized me like the pains of a woman in labor.
I am so bewildered I cannot hear, so terrified I cannot see.

[Is. 21:4](#) My mind reels, horror overwhelms me;

The twilight I longed for has been turned for me into trembling.

[Is. 21:5](#) They set the table, they spread out the cloth, they eat, they drink;

“Rise up, captains, oil the shields,”

[Is. 21:6](#) For thus the Lord says to me,

“Go, station the lookout, let him report what he sees.

[Is. 21:7](#) “When he sees riders, horsemen in pairs,

A train of donkeys, a train of camels,
Let him pay close attention, very close attention.”

[Is. 21:8](#) Then the lookout called,

“O Lord, I stand continually by day on the watchtower,
And I am stationed every night at my guard post.

[Is. 21:9](#) “Now behold, here comes a troop of riders, horsemen in pairs.”

And one said, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon;
And all the images of her gods are shattered on the ground.”

[Is. 21:10](#) O my threshed people, and my afflicted of the threshing floor!

What I have heard from the LORD of hosts,
The God of Israel, I make known to you.

- It begins describing the wilderness of the sea
 - Obscure reference we know means Babylon because of verse 9
 - And her destruction is compared to a sirocco desert wind
 - The vision of her future is a harsh one Isaiah says
 - Babylon is a picture of the enemy
 - And that interpretation fits this description too

- A treacherous one and a destroyer, is still that way
 - Meaning Satan is always the same and never changes
- So in response, God declares that Elam and Media will go up and lay siege
 - To make an end to the groaning that Babylon has caused
- About this point, you might be thinking like me in asking is this a description of God's judgment on Babylon in Isaiah's day or of the ultimate Babylon, the Harlot...the false religion of Satan?
 - Elam and the Medes formed the Medo Persian empire, which
 - So God declares that this nation is raised to
 - The answer is yes
 - First, look at the details from the perspective of the destruction of Babylon in Isaiah's day
- In verse 3- 4, Isaiah says he's reeling from the sight of what will come upon Babylon
 - It terrifies Isaiah to consider what's coming upon Babylon
 - But in contrast, the Babylonians will be oblivious and eating calming (v.5)
 - They will suddenly have to rise to oil their shields (defense against arrows)
 - Dan 5 gives us that story of the Babylonians eating when God reveals their coming judgment by Medo Persian
 - The Babylonians were taken by surprise and conquered in 539 BC
 - Then in vs.6-9, God reports what will happen through the eyes of a watchman
 - The watchman has to wait a while to see anything
 - Almost to the point of doubting anything will happen
 - Because there is a long period between Isaiah's promise and the reality of Babylon's fall

- But then he sees troops advancing in pairs, the standard way the Persian marched according to the Greek historian, Xenophon
 - Then Babylon falls
- This is historically accurate
 - And this short 10 verse section is merely an introduction to a much longer 6-chapter section in Isaiah 43-48 where he will discuss God's judgment against Babylon in even more detail
- For now consider it from the second prophetic perspective
 - In particular, note verse 9
 - Fallen, fallen is Babylon

[Rev. 18:1](#) ¶ After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory.

[Rev. 18:2](#) And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, " Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

[Rev. 18:3](#) "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality."

[Rev. 18:4](#) ¶ I heard another voice from heaven, saying, " Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues;

[Rev. 18:5](#) for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

[Rev. 18:6](#) " Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her.

- The reference seems to connect this time of future judgment against the false religion of Babylon
 - When both the city and its false god is judged (see v.9)
 - We'll wait for Isaiah of 43 for more discussion
 - For now, know this completes the oracle of Babylon's by providing the near-term prophecy for destruction at the hands of the Medo Persians
- And if you think this section is a bit to obscure, look at what comes next

[Is. 21:11](#) ¶ The oracle concerning Edom.
 One keeps calling to me from Seir,
 "Watchman, how far gone is the night?
 Watchman, how far gone is the night?"

[Is. 21:12](#) The watchman says,
 "Morning comes but also night.
 If you would inquire, inquire;
 Come back again."

- This oracle is about Edom, that's the easy part
 - Edom is a long-time enemy of Israel (present day southern Jordan and parts of the Arabian peninsula)
 - Founded by Esau's descendants, and it was always a people set against their distant brothers in Israel
 - Next to Babylon, Edom is the most despised nation in God's eyes
 - Isaiah says one is calling him from Seir, the main mountain in Edom
 - The words used here are especially important
 - The word for Edom is actual Idumea
 - The place that King Herod came from (not a Jew)
 - The word Idumea means a deep, utter silence
 - You see the same word used in Psa 31:17,

[Psa. 31:17](#) Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I call upon You;
 Let the wicked be put to shame, let them be silent in Sheol.

- It's the silence of eternal death
- So this is an oracle concerning Edom, but with the play on words it implies Edom will enter a deathly, eternal silence
- And in this oracle the watchman keeps asking how far gone is the night?
 - How much longer before it's light?
 - He asks it repeatedly, and the Hebrew changes slightly
 - In the second version, it indicates, "What part of the night is it? How long do we wait before the night passes?"

- Then suddenly, v.12 switches to Aramaic (all Hebrew prior to this), which was the language Jesus spoke when He walked the Earth
 - Morning comes, but it will still be night for Edom
 - In other words, when the world is brought out of darkness (i.e., night) and into light (i.e., morning), Edom doesn't get relief...it stays in night
 - Then Isaiah says to some in Edom at that time, if you would inquire or search, then do so
 - And then come back (or turn back), in the sense of conversion or turning to something new
 - Without other Scripture, we would be hopelessly lost in understanding these two verses
 - Some of our additional understanding will come from Isaiah 34 and 53
 - But we'll save those for later
 - For now, we can look at a few other places to understand this promise of eternal darkness for Edom and combined with a call in Aramaic for some to "return"

[Jer. 49:13](#) "For I have sworn by Myself," declares the LORD, "that **Bozrah** will become an object of horror, a reproach, a ruin and a curse; and all its cities will become perpetual ruins."

[Jer. 49:14](#) ¶ I have heard a message from the LORD,
And an envoy is sent among the nations, saying,
"Gather yourselves together and come against her,
And rise up for battle!"

[Jer. 49:15](#) "For behold, I have made you small among the nations,
Despised among men.

[Jer. 49:16](#) "As for the terror of you,
The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,
O you who live in the clefts of the rock,
Who occupy the height of the hill.
Though you make your nest as high as an eagle's,
I will bring you down from there," declares the LORD.

[Jer. 49:17](#) ¶ "Edom will become an object of horror; everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss at all its wounds.

[Jer. 49:18](#) "Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors," says the LORD, "no one will live there, nor will a son of man reside in it.

[Jer. 49:19](#) “ Behold, one will come up like a lion from the thickets of the Jordan against a perennially watered pasture; for in an instant I will make him run away from it, and whoever is chosen I shall appoint over it. For who is like Me, and who will summon Me into court? And who then is the shepherd who can stand against Me?”

[Jer. 49:20](#) ¶ Therefore hear the plan of the LORD which He has planned against Edom, and His purposes which He has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: surely they will drag them off, even the little ones of the flock; surely He will make their pasture desolate because of them.

[Jer. 49:21](#) The earth has quaked at the noise of their downfall. There is an outcry! The noise of it has been heard at the Red Sea.

- Historically, Edom saw their destruction as a nation at the hands of the Romans
 - But the destruction Jeremiah talks about seems much greater...it's to be a perpetual ruin
 - That hasn't happened yet
 - So the ultimate fulfillment of these verses for Edom awaits a future day
 - Plus the references to eternal darkness and the call to return back don't make sense in the case of the Roman conquering
 - Like all of Isaiah's prophecies, we're looking at both a near term fulfillment (Romans) and a future promise woven together
- To identify what the future fulfillment will be, I need to give you some additional background briefly
 - Using symbols, Rev 12 describes Israel (the woman) being persecuted by Satan (the dragon) and God responding by giving Israel a special refuge in the desert (*listen to our Revelation study to learn the details*)
 - And we're told that this remnant of Israel is protected in this refuge for 3.5 years until Christ's return
 - Micah describes this provision for the Jewish remnant this way:

[Mic. 2:12](#) ¶ “I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob,
I will surely gather the remnant of Israel.
I will put them together like sheep in the fold;
Like a flock in the midst of its pasture
They will be noisy with men.

[Mic. 2:13](#) "The breaker goes up before them;
They break out, pass through the gate and go out by it.
So their king goes on before them,
And the LORD at their head."

- In verse 12, the Hebrew is very important
 - God will put Israel together like sheep in a fold, protecting them during the second half of Tribulation
 - But the word for fold is a unique Hebrew word that only appears here in scripture
 - It's the Hebrew word botsrah
 - The usual word for fold is miklaah (Hab 3:17)
 - This word is botsrah, the same word in Jer 49:13
 - It also means fold, like a pen
 - But it clearly connects back to the place in Edom
- So God places the Jews fleeing the Antichrist in Botsrah, which is modern city of Petra
 - Where Raiders of the Lost Ark 3 was filmed
 - Part of Edom
- Then at the end of Tribulation as Christ returns to rescue the Jewish people from
- We see this if we skip ahead to Isa 63:

[Is. 63:1](#) ¶ Who is this who comes from Edom,
With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah,
This One who is majestic in His apparel,
Marching in the greatness of His strength?
"It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

[Is. 63:2](#) Why is Your apparel red,
And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

[Is. 63:3](#) " I have trodden the wine trough alone,
And from the peoples there was no man with Me.
I also trod them in My anger
And trampled them in My wrath;
And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments,
And I stained all My raiment.

[Is. 63:4](#) "For the day of vengeance was in My heart,
And My year of redemption has come.

[Is. 63:5](#) "I looked, and there was no one to help,
And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold;
So My own arm brought salvation to Me,
And My wrath upheld Me.

[Is. 63:6](#) "I trod down the peoples in My anger
And made them drunk in My wrath,
And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

- Who is this Who comes from Edom and Bozrah having destroyed the people there in a day of vengeance?
 - Christ, who at His second coming rescues the Jews hiding in Botzrah Micah 2:13 while destroying the city and making it an eternal waste
 - This is why Isaiah can say in chapter 21 that when morning comes (Christ's return) it will still be night for Edom
 - Yet there is also a call in Aramaic for the Jews to come back, return with Christ to Mt Zion
 - So for Edom, the puzzle piece is that upon His return the Lord will prepare a place of rescue for Israel from within their enemy's land
 - And destroy them as an eternal testimony
- Finally, chapter 21 gives us another short description of a judgment against Arabia

[Is. 21:13](#) The oracle about Arabia.
In the thickets of Arabia you must spend the night,
O caravans of Dedanites.

[Is. 21:14](#) Bring water for the thirsty,
O inhabitants of the land of Tema,
Meet the fugitive with bread.

[Is. 21:15](#) For they have fled from the swords,
From the drawn sword, and from the bent bow
And from the press of battle.

[Is. 21:16](#) ¶ For thus the Lord said to me, "In a year, as a hired man would count it, all the splendor of Kedar will terminate;

[Is. 21:17](#) and the remainder of the number of bowmen, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be few; for the LORD God of Israel has spoken."

- Arabia is a region consisting of multiple Arab tribes
 - Today those tribes have been unified into a single kingdom headed by the Saudi tribe, so we have Saudi Arabia
 - In these verses you see the region described in terms of the tribes of Isaiah's day
 - The Dedan and Tema and Kedar tribes
 - In the span of one year, Isaiah says, these tribes will experience war too
 - As Assyria pressed south and invading nation after nation, the refugees flooded in Arabia
 - Eventually the Assyrians invaded and conquered Arabia and these tribes too
 - There doesn't seem to be any distant prophetic significance to these verses, though this region is closely connected to Edom and may be caught up in Edom future destruction
- Chapter deals entirely with Jerusalem itself

[Is. 22:1](#) The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops?

[Is. 22:2](#) You who were full of noise,

You boisterous town, you exultant city;
Your slain were not slain with the sword,
Nor did they die in battle.

[Is. 22:3](#) All your rulers have fled together,

And have been captured without the bow;
All of you who were found were taken captive together,
Though they had fled far away.

[Is. 22:4](#) Therefore I say, "Turn your eyes away from me,

Let me weep bitterly,
Do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people."

[Is. 22:5](#) For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day of panic, subjugation and confusion

In the valley of vision,
A breaking down of walls
And a crying to the mountain.

[Is. 22:6](#) Elam took up the quiver

With the chariots, infantry and horsemen;
And Kir uncovered the shield.

[Is. 22:7](#) Then your choicest valleys were full of chariots,
And the horsemen took up fixed positions at the gate.

[Is. 22:8](#) And He removed the defense of Judah.

In that day you depended on the weapons of the house of the forest,

[Is. 22:9](#) And you saw that the breaches

In the wall of the city of David were many;

And you collected the waters of the lower pool.

[Is. 22:10](#) Then you counted the houses of Jerusalem

And tore down houses to fortify the wall.

[Is. 22:11](#) And you made a reservoir between the two walls

For the waters of the old pool.

But you did not depend on Him who made it,

Nor did you take into consideration Him who planned it long ago.

[Is. 22:12](#) Therefore in that day the Lord GOD of hosts called you to weeping, to wailing,

To shaving the head and to wearing sackcloth.

[Is. 22:13](#) Instead, there is gaiety and gladness,

Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep,

Eating of meat and drinking of wine:

“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die.”

[Is. 22:14](#) But the LORD of hosts revealed Himself to me,

“Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you

Until you die,” says the Lord GOD of hosts.

- Isaiah speaks against Jerusalem, which is the valley of vision
 - It's the place in which Isaiah lives and receives his visions
 - And the mountains that surround Jerusalem give the impression that it is in a valley
 - Other details tell us this is Jerusalem (v.9 & 10)
 - The proud and confident population of Jerusalem are described in v. 2
 - But Isaiah says their sin won't be judged by the sword
 - They will starve to death
 - This comes from the siege of the city by Babylon almost 100 years after Isaiah wrote his book
 - Elam and Kir are the ancient names for the Mesopotamia, or Babylon
 - They attack the city and break through the walls
 - This is a day brought by the Lord as judgment for Israel's sins as a nation

- So it's a national judgment

[2Chr. 36:15](#) ¶ The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place;

[2Chr. 36:16](#) but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy.

[2Chr. 36:17](#) Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave them all into his hand.

- Jeremiah's lamentations describe the mourning of Jerusalem during this terrible time

[Lam. 4:9](#) Better are those slain with the sword

Than those slain with hunger;

For they pine away, being stricken

For lack of the fruits of the field.

[Lam. 4:10](#) The hands of compassionate women

Boiled their own children;

They became food for them

Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

[Lam. 4:11](#) The LORD has accomplished His wrath,

He has poured out His fierce anger;

And He has kindled a fire in Zion

Which has consumed its foundations.

[Lam. 4:12](#) The kings of the earth did not believe,

Nor did any of the inhabitants of the world,

That the adversary and the enemy

Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.

- The latter verses I read in Isaiah 22 discuss the ways the people try to fortify the walls and avoid capture
- And then Isaiah moves our focus to an earlier time and upon two specific people
 - These are men who lived in Jerusalem during the siege of the Assyrians upon Jerusalem
 - He uses them as examples of faithfulness vs. unfaithfulness among the leaders of Israel

- Remember, the captivity that begins with Babylon starts a period of Jewish exile and punishment that last until today and will not conclude until Jesus' return
 - Dan 2 explains this period for us
 - And Luke 21:24 calls it the times of the Gentiles
- During this time, God uses Isaiah to explain how He will rely on human leaders to guide them
 - Ultimately they must look to God as their leader out of exile
 - These two men become examples of good and bad leaders during the future exile under the Babylonians

[Is. 22:15](#) Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts,
 "Come, go to this steward,
 To Shebna, who is in charge of the royal household,

[Is. 22:16](#) "What right do you have here,
 And whom do you have here,
 That you have hewn a tomb for yourself here,
 You who hew a tomb on the height,
 You who carve a resting place for yourself in the rock?

[Is. 22:17](#) "Behold, the LORD is about to hurl you headlong, O man.
 And He is about to grasp you firmly

[Is. 22:18](#) And roll you tightly like a ball,
 To be cast into a vast country;
 There you will die
 And there your splendid chariots will be,
 You shame of your master's house.'

[Is. 22:19](#) "I will depose you from your office,
 And I will pull you down from your station.

- Remember, we're looking now at contemporaries of Isaiah, which means this is before the Babylonian captivity
 - Shebna is the one responsible for the royal household of Judah
 - This was the position of power immediately below King
 - It was the chief of staff and more
 - The same kind of position that Joseph held under Pharaoh

- Shebna believes himself important
 - In fact, he's prepared a fancy tomb for himself in Jerusalem as his burial place
- But God will bring him down from his office
 - His offenses are not listed in the text, but knowing what we know about the state of Judah in the day of her judgment
 - Idol worshipping, etc.
 - It's logical to conclude that as a chief leader, Shebna played a major role in instigating the evil in Judah
- So God promises to judge Shebna by preventing him from ever using his fancy tomb
 - Shebna will die outside the city in exile
 - God takes him to a far away country and strips him of his power
 - The Assyrians apparently captured Shebna at some point during their siege and deport him to Assyria, never to return
 - Since the Assyrians never fully conquered the city of Jerusalem, most of the city avoided capture, as God had promised
 - But God allows Shebna to be taken as punishment for his poor stewardship of Judah
 - In place of Shebna, God will raise up a new leader:

[Is. 22:20](#) "Then it will come about in that day,

That I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah,

[Is. 22:21](#) And I will clothe him with your tunic

And tie your sash securely about him.

I will entrust him with your authority,

And he will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.

[Is. 22:22](#) "Then I will set the key of the house of David on his shoulder,

When he opens no one will shut,

When he shuts no one will open.

[Is. 22:23](#) "I will drive him like a peg in a firm place,
And he will become a throne of glory to his father's house.

[Is. 22:24](#) "So they will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, offspring and issue, all the least of vessels, from bowls to all the jars.

[Is. 22:25](#) "In that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "the peg driven in a firm place will give way; it will even break off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken."

- This transition takes place even before Shebna leaves the city, as evidenced by 2Kings 18
 - A delegation is sent to meet the army of Assyria as it surrounds Jerusalem

[2Kings 18:18](#) When they called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, came out to them.

- Shebna has been reduced to a scribe and Eliakim is in charge
 - Some how later, Shebna was taken captive by the Assyrians
- The description of Eliakim as leader is interesting
 - He is a father to the people
 - The key to the house of David rests on his shoulders
 - And with this key, what he opens and shuts remains so
 - Sounds familiar doesn't it?
 - Describing Himself, Jesus says:

[Rev. 3:7](#) ¶ "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ¶ He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this:

- Eliakim is also described as a throne of glory to his father's house
 - And all the glory of his father's house hangs on him
- Then curiously, this firm peg on which the father's glory rests is one day broken off and the load on it, the house of David, is cut off

- From all the imagery here, the comparison to Christ seems obvious
 - In other words, Eliakim is only a temporary solution to Israel's leadership problems
 - The real solution is found in another leader, Christ
 - Who fits all these descriptions perfectly
 - Including being cut off in a day, and Israel is cut off with Christ for a time
 - Remember Daniel's prediction of the Messiah:

[Dan. 9:24](#) ¶ "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

[Dan. 9:25](#) "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

[Dan. 9:26](#) "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing...

- Finally, Zech makes a similar point concerning God's plan to replace Israel's faulty leadership with a true leader one day

[Zech. 10:3](#) "My anger is kindled against the shepherds,
And I will punish the male goats;
For the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah,
And will make them like His majestic horse in battle.

[Zech. 10:4](#) "From them will come the cornerstone,
From them the tent peg,
From them the bow of battle,
From them every ruler, all of them together.

[Zech. 10:5](#) "They will be as mighty men,
Treading down the enemy in the mire of the streets in battle;
And they will fight, for the LORD will be with them;
And the riders on horses will be put to shame.

[Zech. 10:6](#) "I will strengthen the house of Judah,
And I will save the house of Joseph,
And I will bring them back,
Because I have had compassion on them;
And they will be as though I had not rejected them,
For I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.

Isaiah 23-25

- The final oracle - Tyre
 - Tyre is an ancient Phoenician city on the coast of the Med
 - Today it's part of southern coast of Lebanon
 - It's a city that began on the mainland
 - Later it moved to an off shore island about a half mile away
 - It was a heavy protected and fortified city
 - Tyre was a seaport of worldwide importance in its day
 - It was the principle seaport for ships traveling between Palestine and the western world
 - Tyrians were a sea-going people with a large fleet and they colonized many other cities around the Med and beyond

[Is. 23:1](#) ¶ The oracle concerning Tyre.

Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
For Tyre is destroyed, without house or harbor;
It is reported to them from the land of Cyprus.

[Is. 23:2](#) Be silent, you inhabitants of the coastland,

You merchants of Sidon;
Your messengers crossed the sea

[Is. 23:3](#) And were on many waters.

The grain of the Nile, the harvest of the River was her revenue;
And she was the market of nations.

[Is. 23:4](#) Be ashamed, O Sidon;

For the sea speaks, the stronghold of the sea, saying,
"I have neither travailed nor given birth,
I have neither brought up young men nor reared virgins."

[Is. 23:5](#) When the report reaches Egypt,

They will be in anguish at the report of Tyre.

[Is. 23:6](#) Pass over to Tarshish;

Wail, O inhabitants of the coastland.

[Is. 23:7](#) Is this your jubilant city,

Whose origin is from antiquity,
Whose feet used to carry her to colonize distant places?

[Is. 23:8](#) ¶ Who has planned this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns,
Whose merchants were princes, whose traders were the honored of the earth?

[Is. 23:9](#) The LORD of hosts has planned it, to defile the pride of all beauty,
To despise all the honored of the earth.

[Is. 23:10](#) Overflow your land like the Nile, O daughter of Tarshish,
There is no more restraint.

[Is. 23:11](#) He has stretched His hand out over the sea,
He has made the kingdoms tremble;
The LORD has given a command concerning Canaan to demolish its
strongholds.

[Is. 23:12](#) ¶ He has said, " You shall exult no more, O crushed virgin daughter of
Sidon.

Arise, pass over to Cyprus; even there you will find no rest."

[Is. 23:13](#) ¶ Behold, the land of the Chaldeans — this is the people which was not;
Assyria appointed it for desert creatures — they erected their siege towers, they
stripped its palaces, they made it a ruin.

[Is. 23:14](#) Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
For your stronghold is destroyed.

- The oracle begins announcing Tyre's judgment in a curious way
 - The ships of Tyre are docked in Cyprus when they will hear that their home city and port are gone
 - They are called the ships of Tarshish because Tyre had used it's ships to found multiple colonies in different places around the world all called Tarshish
 - The inhabitants of the coastland are silenced
 - Isaiah calls them merchants of Sidon, another Phoenician city
 - Messengers that crossed the sea
 - Tyre was the market of nations, the place that grain of the Nile left for sale in other ports
 - Bringing revenue back to Egypt
 - Tyre is to be ashamed of their fate, such that the sea is even unwilling to admit they ever existed
 - In v.5 Egypt is anguished to hear of Tyre's passing
 - Making her demise all the more remarkable is her long history
 - The city had existed for about 2,300 years by Isaiah's day

- Isaiah asks in v.8 who planned this event?
 - The Lord planned it
 - To defile the pride of beauty and to despise the honored of the earth
 - Then in v.13 we're given the source of their destruction
 - The Chaldeans, the Babylonians
 - Isaiah adds a parenthetical explanation of how it could be the Babylonians
 - In Isaiah's day the Assyrians had conquered the kingdom of Babylon
 - This was an earlier Babylonian kingdom
 - In about 100 years, the Babylonians would rise again and defeat the Assyrians
 - Later they would destroy Tyre
 - But in Isaiah's day the idea that Babylon could be a threat to anyone seemed impossible, since they were vanquished by the Assyrians
- Then a curious turn

[Is. 23:15](#) Now in that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years like the days of one king. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the harlot:

[Is. 23:16](#) Take your harp, walk about the city,

O forgotten harlot;

Pluck the strings skillfully, sing many songs,

That you may be remembered.

[Is. 23:17](#) It will come about at the end of seventy years that the LORD will visit Tyre. Then she will go back to her harlot's wages and will play the harlot with all the kingdoms on the face of the earth.

[Is. 23:18](#) Her gain and her harlot's wages will be set apart to the LORD; it will not be stored up or hoarded, but her gain will become sufficient food and choice attire for those who dwell in the presence of the LORD.

- After the Babylonians capture Tyre and disperse the people, a period of seventy years will ensue
 - God states that the city must remain desolate for 70 years

- Why seventy years?
 - Interestingly, Judah suffers a similar fate, being exiled for 70 years while in captivity to the same Babylonians
 - The 70 year period makes clear that God's hand is upon the judgment
 - It's by His design, not chance
- Then after the 70 years, the Lord "visits" Tyre, in the sense that He takes up action again in the city
 - He permits it to return to its profitable business of trading with the world
 - Isaiah compares this trade to playing the harlot, selling itself out to be able to do business with the world
 - If we wonder why the Lord would permit the iniquity of the city to re-emerge, He has his reasons
 - His answer in v.18 is that Tyre's wages would become the financing vehicle for God's people and for the Temple
- We see this happen 70 years after the Babylonian destruction of Tyre and Jerusalem, just as Isaiah predicted

[Ezra 3:1](#) ¶ Now when the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem.

[Ezra 3:2](#) Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers arose and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.

[Ezra 3:3](#) So they set up the altar on its foundation, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening.

[Ezra 3:4](#) They celebrated the Feast of Booths, as it is written, and offered the fixed number of burnt offerings daily, according to the ordinance, as each day required;

[Ezra 3:5](#) and afterward there was a continual burnt offering, also for the new moons and for all the fixed festivals of the LORD that were consecrated, and from everyone who offered a freewill offering to the LORD.

[Ezra 3:6](#) From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, but the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid.

[Ezra 3:7](#) Then they gave money to the masons and carpenters, and food, drink and oil to the Sidonians and to the Tyrians, to bring cedar wood from Lebanon to the sea at Joppa, according to the permission they had from Cyrus king of Persia.

- The industry of Tyre became the means by which the Jews could find sufficient materials to reconstruct the Temple in Jerusalem
 - God ensured that Tyre's destruction lasted only until He needed their industry to support His people in their task of rebuilding

- Having ended the oracles, let's review the list
 - Babylon = enemy and his forces will be defeated, but Israel rises from the ashes
 - Philistines = throne of David will rise again, even if it appears to have faded, and it will crush all opposition
 - Moab = the Lord will offer refuge to a small remnant of gentiles, sheltered in Israel's promises and share in her kingdom
 - God will hold Israel accountable and will bring judgment against Ephraim
 - Cush = Israel's enemies will be transformed into nations that pay homage to Zion
 - Egypt = But the healing of these nations is not without consequences for their sins against Israel, even leading to consequences in the kingdom
 - Edom & Arabia = Upon Christ's return the Lord will prepare a place of rescue for the remnant of Israel from within this enemy's land
 - Every one of Israel's neighbors plays a part in Israel's triumph and restoration at the Lord's return
 - And each receive judgment
 - Like watching your favorite football team win the Super Bowl and having the team members of every rival carry your team off the field on their shoulders

- Having finished this section, we move into a new section affectionately called Isaiah's Little Apocalypse
 - It goes from here through 27

- It's essentially a mini version of what's found in chapters 5-20 of Revelation, which describes Tribulation and the coming Kingdom
 - And it even shares much of the same structure and order as Revelation
- This is also a good point to remind ourselves of Isaiah's recurring themes
 - God's sovereign authority and control over all
 - The sinfulness of mankind and the inevitability of judgment for sin
 - The coming judgment of Israel for transgressing the covenant
 - The remnant of Israel and the eventual restoration of Israel in the Kingdom
- All of these themes have been on display in the earlier chapters
 - And they remain front and center in these next four

[Is. 24:1](#) ¶ Behold, the LORD lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface and scatters its inhabitants.

[Is. 24:2](#) And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor.

[Is. 24:3](#) The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for the LORD has spoken this word.

[Is. 24:4](#) The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away.

[Is. 24:5](#) The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant.

[Is. 24:6](#) Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

- The world behold is in the future tense, indicating future vision
 - The Lord will lay the earth waste, devastate it, distort it's surface and scatter it's inhabitants
 - This happens to the entire world, so this is clearly an event unlike anything since the flood of Noah
 - And among the people, all class distinctions cease
 - Priests/people, servants/masters...social and economic

- The earth completely laid waste, exalted people fade away
 - And it is comes under this judgment because it has been polluted by an earth full of guilty people and fell under a curse
 - What curse does the world suffer under? The one God brought about in the Garden (Gen 3:17)
 - And more specifically, men transgressed laws, violated statutes, and broke the covenant
 - Causing the inhabitants of the earth to be burned, few are left
- As you would imagine, life on Earth is pretty grim

[Is. 24:7](#) ¶ The new wine mourns,
The vine decays,
All the merry-hearted sigh.

[Is. 24:8](#) The gaiety of tambourines ceases,
The noise of revelers stops,
The gaiety of the harp ceases.

[Is. 24:9](#) They do not drink wine with song;
Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

[Is. 24:10](#) The city of chaos is broken down;
Every house is shut up so that none may enter.

[Is. 24:11](#) There is an outcry in the streets concerning the wine;
All joy turns to gloom.
The gaiety of the earth is banished.

[Is. 24:12](#) Desolation is left in the city
And the gate is battered to ruins.

[Is. 24:13](#) For thus it will be in the midst of the earth among the peoples,
As the shaking of an olive tree,
As the gleanings when the grape harvest is over.

- The vine decays, ending the production of wine
 - And the merry-hearted groan
- All music ceases, and revelry ends
 - Imagine that during Tribulation life as we know it ends
 - People aren't enjoying life at all
 - No nice relaxing times with drink and music and celebration
- All life is like Haiti after the earthquake

- Only there is no one to bring relief
 - The entire world suffers together
- Unimaginable grief and mourning and suffering
- The full measure of God's wrath against sin is experienced
- The reference in verse 12 uses a definite article inflection to indicate a singular city, likely Babylon as it's described in Rev 18
 - The result of this destruction is that the world is reduced to a remnant
 - While we have long been familiar with the idea of Israel being a remnant, now we're seeing the world itself in that state
 - They are like an olive tree after a shaking or after a grape harvest
 - Only a few left on the vines and branches
- Now we see a break in Isaiah's message

[Is. 24:14](#) They raise their voices, they shout for joy;

They cry out from the west concerning the majesty of the LORD.

[Is. 24:15](#) Therefore glorify the LORD in the east,

The name of the LORD, the God of Israel,

In the coastlands of the sea.

[Is. 24:16](#) From the ends of the earth we hear songs, "Glory to the Righteous One,"

- Without naming them, Isaiah says "they" will shout for joy
 - They will cry from east and west concerning the Lord and glorify the God of Israel
 - From the ends of the earth, they praise the Righteous One
- How does this happen in the midst of such devastation?
 - Well, clearly some men are coming to faith in God during Tribulation
 - And though their physical world is falling apart, their spiritual world has become new again
- Here's where we see the structure of Isaiah and the structure of Revelation matching up

- In the book of Revelation, the events are broken up in a repeating pattern
 - After the prophecy of the Church in chapters 1-5, the books turns to the events of Tribulation on Earth
 - In chapter 6 the first violent events of Tribulation take place with the breaking of the seal judgments
 - The events are devastating
- Let's read some of those events from Revelation and compare them to Isaiah's description

[Rev. 6:4](#) And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.

[Rev. 6:5](#) ¶ When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come ." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.

[Rev. 6:6](#) And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."

[Rev. 6:7](#) ¶ When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come ."

[Rev. 6:8](#) I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

- Compare these details to Isaiah
 - Many men are dying
 - The availability of goods is constrained
 - Interestingly, the new wine is taken away, as Isaiah says
 - But the existing wine and oil are spared
 - This is why Isaiah can say in v.9 that those who drink the strong drink see it as bitter
 - It brings no joy in light of the circumstances and likely the cost
 - Then later in Rev 6

[Rev. 6:12](#) ¶ I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;

[Rev. 6:13](#) and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

[Rev. 6:14](#) The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

- Here we see the Earth itself reshaped as Isaiah predicted
 - Mountains and islands moved around
 - See v.1 of Isaiah 24
- Then finally in Rev 6:

[Rev. 6:15](#) Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains;

[Rev. 6:16](#) and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

[Rev. 6:17](#) for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

- Here we see the picture Isaiah provided of classless society experiencing the Tribulation
 - Like in v.2
- Then the pattern changes in both Isaiah and Revelation
 - In Isaiah, we see men coming to know and praise the Lord amidst the calamity
 - Likewise in Rev, we turn the page to chapter 7 and we see this

[Rev. 7:1](#) ¶ After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree.

[Rev. 7:2](#) And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

[Rev. 7:3](#) saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."

[Rev. 7:9](#) ¶ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;

[Rev. 7:10](#) and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ¶ " Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

- Even as the Lord is pouring our wrath on the Earth for sin, He is at work raising up a new generation of believers
 - Isaiah makes the same transition, alluding to this new wave of evangelism in vs. 14 - the first part of 16
 - Then Isaiah returns to the events of Tribulation

[Is. 24:16](#) From the ends of the earth we hear songs, " Glory to the Righteous One,"
But I say, " Woe to me! Woe to me! Alas for me!
The treacherous deal treacherously,
And the treacherous deal very treacherously."

[Is. 24:17](#) Terror and pit and snare
Confront you, O inhabitant of the earth.

[Is. 24:18](#) Then it will be that he who flees the report of disaster will fall into the pit,
And he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare;
For the windows above are opened, and the foundations of the earth shake.

[Is. 24:19](#) The earth is broken asunder,
The earth is split through,
The earth is shaken violently.

[Is. 24:20](#) The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard
And it totters like a shack,
For its transgression is heavy upon it,
And it will fall, never to rise again.

[Is. 24:21](#) So it will happen in that day,
That the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high,
And the kings of the earth on earth.

[Is. 24:22](#) They will be gathered together
Like prisoners in the dungeon,
And will be confined in prison;
And after many days they will be punished.

[Is. 24:23](#) Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed,
For the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
And His glory will be before His elders.

- The first person pronoun in v.16 is from the perspective of a witness of these events, one who is present on the Earth but is not one of the believers in the earlier verses
 - Isaiah repeats one of his favorite phrases

- The treacherous deal treacherously
 - It's a statement of nature not changing apart from God's power
- The contrast is between the believers transformed by God's Spirit
 - And the rest of humanity who doesn't turn from their ways even despite all that is happening to them

[Rev. 9:20](#) ¶ The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;

[Rev. 9:21](#) and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

- So Isaiah returns to describing the events of Tribulation
 - He paints very broad strokes here, summarizing many details with a few short verses
- In vs. 17-18 describe the inescapability of the events
 - Men are caught up regardless of how they try to escape
- The physical earth is torn apart in the course of these events
 - It appears like a drunken sailor, as if you could view the Earth wobbling from a distance in space
- Then Isaiah moves to the end effect of Tribulation
 - All sinners are gathered together as prisoners in the dungeon
 - Confined in prison
 - And after many days they are punished
 - This is a description of how men are held for 1,000 years in Hadfes awaiting the Great White Throne judgment

[Rev. 20:1](#) ¶ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

[Rev. 20:2](#) And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

[Rev. 20:3](#) and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

[Rev. 20:4](#) ¶ Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

[Rev. 20:5](#) The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

[Rev. 20:6](#) Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

[Rev. 20:7](#) ¶ When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison,

[Rev. 20:8](#) and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

[Rev. 20:9](#) And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

[Rev. 20:10](#) And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[Rev. 20:11](#) ¶ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

[Rev. 20:12](#) And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

[Rev. 20:13](#) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

[Rev. 20:14](#) Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

[Rev. 20:15](#) And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- Isaiah summarized these events in two verses
 - In v.22 he described the punishment of the wicked including the period of waiting
 - In v.23 he describes the reign of Christ on earth during the 1,000 years

- Then in chapter 25, Isaiah gives another glimpse at how the first moments of the new kingdom play out

[Is. 25:1](#) ¶ O LORD, You are my God;

I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name;
For You have worked wonders,
Plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness.

[Is. 25:2](#) For You have made a city into a heap,

A fortified city into a ruin;
A palace of strangers is a city no more,
It will never be rebuilt.

[Is. 25:3](#) Therefore a strong people will glorify You;

Cities of ruthless nations will revere You.

[Is. 25:4](#) For You have been a defense for the helpless,

A defense for the needy in his distress,
A refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat;
For the breath of the ruthless
Is like a rain storm against a wall.

[Is. 25:5](#) Like heat in drought, You subdue the uproar of aliens;

Like heat by the shadow of a cloud, the song of the ruthless is silenced.

[Is. 25:6](#) ¶ The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain;

A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow,
And refined, aged wine.

[Is. 25:7](#) And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples,

Even the veil which is stretched over all nations.

[Is. 25:8](#) He will swallow up death for all time,

And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces,
And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth;
For the LORD has spoken.

[Is. 25:9](#) And it will be said in that day,

“Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us.
This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”

[Is. 25:10](#) For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain,

And Moab will be trodden down in his place
As straw is trodden down in the water of a manure pile.

[Is. 25:11](#) And he will spread out his hands in the middle of it

As a swimmer spreads out his hands to swim,
But the Lord will lay low his pride together with the trickery of his hands.

[Is. 25:12](#) The unassailable fortifications of your walls He will bring down,

Lay low and cast to the ground, even to the dust.

Isaiah 26

- We stopped in the middle of the Isaiah's Little Apocalypse

[Is. 25:6](#) ¶ The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain;

A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow,
And refined, aged wine.

[Is. 25:7](#) And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples,

Even the veil which is stretched over all nations.

[Is. 25:8](#) He will swallow up death for all time,

And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces,
And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth;
For the LORD has spoken.

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"Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us.
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[Is. 25:12](#) The unassailable fortifications of your walls He will bring down,

Lay low and cast to the ground, even to the dust.

- The chapter describes the Millennial Kingdom, and it offers some intriguing details
 - First, it confirms that one of the first events of the new Kingdom is a banquet to celebrate the start of Christ's reign
 - This is the feast Jesus describes at points in first coming
 - In Matthew 22 Jesus tells a parable of a wedding feast as a picture of entry into God's kingdom
 - Again in Matthew 25 Jesus speaks of the Groom coming for His Bride so they may participate in a wedding feast
 - In verse 8 we find another fascinating detail
 - This new age results in the swallowing up of death for all time

- What's so interesting about this statement is that it isn't true, at least not for all people
 - It's only true for some of those who enter this kingdom
 - For example, we know that men and women will die at the end of the 1,000 year reign on Earth, if not throughout the time

[Rev. 20:7](#) ¶ When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison,

[Rev. 20:8](#) and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

[Rev. 20:9](#) And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

- This scene tells us at least three things about the days of the Millennial Kingdom
 - First, some men are still possessed of sin and susceptible to the schemes of the enemy
 - Some men are still subject to physical death
 - Remember that Scripture teaches that there are only two possible deaths
 - The first death is the death of the physical body
 - The second death is the death of the soul at the Great White Throne judgment
 - Believers are told that while we may experience the first death but we will never experience the second death
 - Obviously, these men are not dying at the Great White Throne judgment, so this must be their first natural death
 - So the final conclusion we must make is that throughout the 1,000 years, men are still being born into sin and are living on Earth and dying
 - Since it's unlikely that these men are 1,000 years old

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- So how can Isaiah say that death ends?
 - Take a closer look at the context?
 - In verse 8 Isaiah says the Lord removes reproach from His people, which means the Jewish people
 - Remember this is the context throughout 25
 - The Messiah arriving to rescue and lead His people
 - The one they have waited for, as it says in verse 9
 - So, the Jewish people enter into this Kingdom completely in new form, without sin and without the possibility of death
 - Just like the Church, which also arrives in the incorruptible form, as Paul describes it
 - So where do the new generations of sinful people come from?
 - We'll look more at that later in this study, but the short answer for now comes from the Matthew 25 and the story of the sheep and the goats
 - Some saints live through Tribulation and therefore enter into the Kingdom as natural men, believers but still capable of sin and reproduction
 - And they repopulate the Earth with new populations of men still in sinful bodies
 - Out of these populations come those who later follow Satan
- The third chapter of the Apocalypse is a song, praising our Lord in His role as judge and King
 - And we see even more detail about what the world is like in the day Christ rules the Earth
 - It begins with an introduction...

[Is. 26:1](#) ¶ In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

“We have a strong city;
He sets up walls and ramparts for security.

[Is. 26:2](#) “Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter,
The one that remains faithful.

[Is. 26:3](#) “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace,
Because he trusts in You.

[Is. 26:4](#) “ Trust in the LORD forever,
For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.

[Is. 26:5](#) “For He has brought low those who dwell on high, the unassailable city;
He lays it low, He lays it low to the ground, He casts it to the dust.

[Is. 26:6](#) “ The foot will trample it,
The feet of the afflicted, the steps of the helpless.”

- Verses 1-4 praise the city of Jerusalem, the center of this new existence on Earth
 - The walls and ramparts are symbols of the Rock Who rules within it in security
 - The overwhelming quality is one of peace and stability
 - If there are two qualities to life that most Jews never experienced almost since the beginning of their existence, it was peace and stability
 - And that will be the dominant feature of life in Jerusalem in the day of the King’s rule
- Contrasting that is another city in verses 5-6
 - This city was brought low into the dust and will not be rebuilt
 - From other places in Isaiah, we already know this city is Babylon

[Is. 26:7](#) ¶ The way of the righteous is smooth;
O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.

[Is. 26:8](#) Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O LORD,
We have waited for You eagerly;
Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls.

[Is. 26:9](#) At night my soul longs for You,
Indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently;
For when the earth experiences Your judgments
The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

[Is. 26:10](#) Though the wicked is shown favor,
He does not learn righteousness;
He deals unjustly in the land of uprightness,
And does not perceive the majesty of the LORD.

[Is. 26:11](#) ¶ O LORD, Your hand is lifted up yet they do not see it.

They see Your zeal for the people and are put to shame;
Indeed, fire will devour Your enemies.

[Is. 26:12](#) LORD, You will establish peace for us,

Since You have also performed for us all our works.

[Is. 26:13](#) O LORD our God, other masters besides You have ruled us;

But through You alone we confess Your name.

[Is. 26:14](#) The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise;

Therefore You have punished and destroyed them,
And You have wiped out all remembrance of them.

[Is. 26:15](#) You have increased the nation, O LORD,

You have increased the nation, You are glorified;
You have extended all the borders of the land.

- First thing to know as you study these verses is that this is a song sung during the Kingdom
 - So it's comments refers to life during that time
 - In verses 7-9, the righteous describes their relationship to this King
 - They know Him and follow His ways and the ways of His judgments
 - What He says, we do in this new world He rules
 - Notice in verse 8 that His name and even our memory of Jesus is the desire of our souls
 - Our memory of His sacrifice on the cross remains with us as we follow Him during this time
 - In verse 9, the people sing that the world learns what righteousness is by experiencing Christ's judgments as He rules the Earth
 - But in verse 10, we learn that though the wicked are shown favor, that alone is not enough for them to learn righteousness
 - The difference between v.9 & v.10 is explained by the difference between the corporate experience and the person experience
 - Corporately, the world learns what righteousness looks like as they observe Christ ruling

- Personally, however, watching Christ at work isn't enough by itself to produce righteousness in the lives and actions of unbelievers
 - The unbeliever deal unjustly in this land of uprightness and doesn't perceive the majesty of the Lord
 - Perceive is raah, which means to see with understanding or to give regard to something
 - And majesty is geuth, which is God's excellence
 - So the in verse 11, what they see won't persuade, at least some
 - So they are ultimately put to shame and devoured
 - This is fulfilled at the end of the 1,000 years
- The last section vs.12-15 complete the second section of the song praising the Lord's leadership
 - He establishes peace, made possible all their works, made possible the confession of His name, and banished the departed unbelievers
 - Interestingly, God has erased all memory of them
 - For those who worry that their time spent in eternity might be marred by the memory of those who didn't join us...
 - Scripture testifies that God graciously frees us from those memories
 - Finally, for the Jewish people the Lord has increased their nations borders
 - This is speaking of the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning their land
 - We see the borders roughly defined in Joshua

[Josh. 1:2](#) "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel.

[Josh. 1:3](#) " Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses.

[Josh. 1:4](#) " From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory.

- From the Euphrates (Iraq) to the Great Sea (the Med) and from Lebanon to southern Israel where the Hittites lived
 - Israel has never yet had these borders in her control
 - But these will be the borders in the Kingdom
- Now in v.16, the song begins to look backward, reflecting on how Israel reached this point of living in peace in the Kingdom

[Is. 26:16](#) O LORD, they sought You in distress;
They could only whisper a prayer,
Your chastening was upon them.

[Is. 26:17](#) As the pregnant woman approaches the time to give birth,
She writhes and cries out in her labor pains,
Thus were we before You, O LORD.

[Is. 26:18](#) We were pregnant, we writhed in labor,
We gave birth, as it seems, only to wind.
We could not accomplish deliverance for the earth,
Nor were inhabitants of the world born.

[Is. 26:19](#) Your dead will live;
Their corpses will rise.
You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy,
For your dew is as the dew of the dawn,
And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

- The Jewish people sought the Lord while under distress
 - They could only whisper the prayer, because God was chastening them at the time
 - The time of the Tribulation, of course
 - As we studied here before in Zech 12

[Zech. 12:3](#) "It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

[Zech. 12:8](#) "In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

[Zech. 12:9](#) "And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

[Zech. 12:10](#) ¶ "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

- So this moment brings the return of Christ, as we studied before
 - And it was the Jewish prayer during the time of distress that prompted Him
 - You can read elements of that prayer, the prayer that will be said by the Jews when they call out for their Lord's return
 - You can find it in Psalms 79 & 80
 - Part of the prayer is also revealed later in Isaiah
- Then in v.17-18, Isaiah uses the comparison to a pregnant woman giving birth to describe how God brought the Jewish people out of disobedience and into faith
 - Isaiah says in vs.17-18 that in a sense Israel was in labor pains for thousands of years
 - But for all that time, they never gave birth to anything meaningful
 - Until the Lord made them deliver, so to speak, in the last day
- In v.19, Isaiah presents one of the few passages of Scripture that affirms the reality of bodily resurrection
 - Isaiah says that the final result of the nation of Israel giving birth to faith is that the dead will live
 - Corpses will rise
 - Those who have gone before in the dust return to life
 - We're talking here about the OT saints who will be brought back to life and resurrected at the start of the Kingdom
 - Remember, the Church saints have already been resurrected at the Rapture

- So this is describing the resurrection of the OT saints at the Second Coming of Christ at the point when the Jews believe
- Now the song moves backward in time a little, looking at the circumstances of Israel during Tribulation, especially in the time right before Christ's return
 - Beginning with the Jews in Petra who escape the antichrist during the second half of Tribulation

[Is. 26:20](#) ¶ Come, my people, enter into your rooms
 And close your doors behind you;
 Hide for a little while
 Until indignation runs its course.

[Is. 26:21](#) For behold, the LORD is about to come out from His place
 To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity;
 And the earth will reveal her bloodshed
 And will no longer cover her slain.

- The Lord is speaking in these verses, designated by the use of the first person possessive pronoun before the word people
 - The Lord calls Israel "my people"
 - He invites them into their rooms
 - Closing the door behind
 - Hiding them for a little while until the indignation runs its course
 - Indignation refers to Tribulation
 - We can see that in a few comparable passages from Jer and Dan

[Jer. 10:10](#) But the LORD is the true God;
 He is the living God and the everlasting King.
 At His wrath the earth quakes,
 And the nations cannot endure His indignation.

[Dan. 8:19](#) He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end.

- Both these passages refers to the Lord acting against the world in wrath during Tribulation (the context of both makes that clear)

- So back in Isaiah, we're told that the Lord was about to come out of His hiding place
 - And He brings judgment
 - But in the time immediately prior to that moment, the Lord invites His people to hide safely
 - This is a reference to the hiding place the Lord makes available for the believing remnant of Jews who flee to Petra
- Now in Chapter 27, the song moves to talking to another event associated with the end of Tribulation
 - The binding of Satan for 1,000 years

Isaiah 27-28

- We stopped in the middle of the Isaiah's Little Apocalypse
- Now in Chapter 27, the song moves to talking to another event associated with the end of Tribulation
 - The binding of Satan for 1,000 years

[Is. 27:1](#) ¶ In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent,
With His fierce and great and mighty sword,
Even Leviathan the twisted serpent;
And He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.

- The Lord punishes Leviathan
 - The word Leviathan is the same word in Hebrew
 - It is a name for a serpent or sea dragon
 - This is the serpent of old
 - Leviathan is also mention in Job, always as a reference to Satan (3:8, 41:1-34)
 - Satan is connected to the sea and to dragons because Satan took the form of a serpent in the garden
 - And the sea is used throughout Scripture as a picture of the deep, black depths of eternal death in hell
 - Sometimes called the abyss or in Hebrew tehalm
 - It means the deep or the sea
 - But it's also a picture for death and Hell

[Psa. 86:13](#) For Your lovingkindness toward me is great,
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

- Speaking of Tyre, Ezekiel says...

[Ezek. 26:19](#) For thus says the Lord GOD, "When I make you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters cover you,

[Ezek. 26:20](#) then I will bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set glory in the land of the living.

- So a sea dragon is a melding of those two pictures
- In keeping with the order of events in Revelation, Isaiah continues with Satan out of the way
 - The Lord can now plant a fruitful vineyard
 - Do you remember in chapter 5 we saw that description of Israel as a vineyard that produced no fruit, so God judged the vineyard?
 - He broke down the walls and caused briars and thorn to grow in place of grapes
 - He stopped watering it so that it dried up
 - Now in the Kingdom, with Satan gone, here's what happens:

[Is. 27:2](#) ¶ In that day,
"A vineyard of wine, sing of it!

[Is. 27:3](#) "I, the LORD, am its keeper;
I water it every moment.
So that no one will damage it,
I guard it night and day.

[Is. 27:4](#) "I have no wrath.
Should someone give Me briars and thorns in battle,
Then I would step on them, I would burn them completely.

[Is. 27:5](#) "Or let him rely on My protection,
Let him make peace with Me,
Let him make peace with Me."

[Is. 27:6](#) In the days to come Jacob will take root,
Israel will blossom and sprout,
And they will fill the whole world with fruit.

- You can see the opposites throughout this passages, as Israel returns to being fruitful
 - It is now a kingdom of believers following their Messiah
 - And He protects and nurtures them as a nation
- And now the song of the Little Apocalypse ends with Isaiah summarizing the Lord's plan regarding Israel

- And in this summary, Isaiah returns to his own day to speak of things to come for Israel

[Is. 27:7](#) ¶ Like the striking of Him who has struck them, has He struck them?
Or like the slaughter of His slain, have they been slain?

[Is. 27:8](#) You contended with them by banishing them, by driving them away.
With His fierce wind He has expelled them on the day of the east wind.

[Is. 27:9](#) Therefore through this Jacob's iniquity will be forgiven;
And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin:
When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones;
When Asherim and incense altars will not stand.

[Is. 27:10](#) For the fortified city is isolated,
A homestead forlorn and forsaken like the desert;
There the calf will graze,
And there it will lie down and feed on its branches.

[Is. 27:11](#) When its limbs are dry, they are broken off;
Women come and make a fire with them,
For they are not a people of discernment,
Therefore their Maker will not have compassion on them.
And their Creator will not be gracious to them.

[Is. 27:12](#) ¶ In that day the LORD will start His threshing from the flowing stream of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered up one by one, O sons of Israel.

[Is. 27:13](#) It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

- Isaiah asks when God struck Israel in judgment, did He strike them so as to destroy them?
 - Has God dealt with Israel as He dealt with His true enemies over time?
 - No, God has taken a different approach, a measured approach
 - He banished them and drove them away (the exiles)
 - He expelled them from their land for a time
 - Then in verse 9, Isaiah explains the plan to pardon Jacob's sin and bring them back into this Kingdom
 - Only after God has destroyed all the idols and the nation's affections for such things
 - He will isolate Jerusalem and destroy it, speaking of the coming destruction at the hands of the Babylonians and later the Romans

- It will become desolate for a time
 - And the reason for the judgment to come was a lack of discernment in the people of Israel
 - The word discernment simply means understanding, in the sense of knowing the Lord and knowing the way of righteousness
 - Because they were blind and dead in the sin, they were under judgment
 - Notice, Isaiah says “in that day” the Lord is not kind or gracious
 - Meaning His wrath is temporary and in that day only
 - In a future day, the Lord returns to His people
- In verse 12 Isaiah shows that turn, as the Lord begins a threshing process, that starts at the waters of the Euphrates and extends to the brook of Egypt
 - Remember, those references define the borders of the Land of Israel in fullness
 - So here it’s a way of describing all Israel, the people
 - Isaiah is stressing that in a certain day of judgment, all Israel will be caught up in a period of judgment
 - And the beginning of that threshing process (the judgment process) will be a regathering
 - In v.13 he says that all the Jews perishing outside the land will return and ultimately worship the Lord there
 - This is the picture of Israel regathering in the years leading up to Tribulation (today)
 - And the subsequent transition into the 1,000 Kingdom
- So the Little Apocalypse of Isaiah showed snapshots of Tribulation, of the 144,000 evangelists, the return of Christ, the setting up of His kingdom, the binding of Satan and the Jews living in peace and stability in their land
- Now Chapter 28 begins a new section of the book...
 - It runs from Chapter 28-35, called the book of woes

- Explains the circumstances in Judah that led to the problems during Hezekiah's reign
 - In the Book of Immanuel, we studied about King Ahaz who didn't trust in God, but instead sought an alliance with Assyria
 - After destroying Syria and Israel, it turned on Judah and captured many cities and surrounded Jerusalem
 - The nation of Judah was subjected to Assyrian domination for the remainder of Ahaz's rule
 - And the first fourteen years of Hezekiah's reign following Ahaz, the Assyrians remained in the Land
 - After 14 years, the nation became focused on finding a way to expel the Assyrians from the land
 - One faction in the government of Hezekiah believed that the nation should seek an alliance with Egypt to repel Assyrian
 - Another faction, led by the prophet Isaiah, counseled that Assyrian shouldn't be resisted,
 - They taught that Assyria's domination of Judah was God's judgment against them because of Ahaz's faithlessness
 - Hezekiah sided with the Egyptian alliance, going against the prophet
 - This was an uncharacteristically poor judgment on Hezekiah's part
 - So under Hezekiah's leadership, the nation of Israel make a pact with the devil, so to speak
 - They enter into a covenant with Egypt for protection, getting into bed with one of their historic enemies
- So Isaiah speaks against this covenant and how it will lead to the downfall and destruction of Judah
 - And in typical fashion, Isaiah uses these contemporary events to draw a parallel to a future time
 - The parallel is between this covenant between Judah and Egypt

- And a future covenant between a regathered Israel and another powerful enemy who offers protection for the Jews
 - The future enemy is the Antichrist
 - And this future covenant is the covenant mentioned in Daniel 9 that begins Tribulation
- So the book of woes is a section of Isaiah describing the woes that befall Judah because they enter into these two ill-advised covenants
 - The beginning of chapter 28 is an indictment against the leaders who ignored Isaiah's counsel and made this covenant with Egypt
 - Then chapter 28 flows into a description of the woes that will come upon Israel for making that future covenant with the antichrist

[Is. 28:1](#) Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim,
 And to the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
 Which is at the head of the fertile valley
 Of those who are overcome with wine!

[Is. 28:2](#) Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty agent;
 As a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction,
 Like a storm of mighty overflowing waters,
 He has cast it down to the earth with His hand.

[Is. 28:3](#) The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim is trodden under foot.

[Is. 28:4](#) And the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
 Which is at the head of the fertile valley,
 Will be like the first-ripe fig prior to summer,
 Which one sees,
 And as soon as it is in his hand,
 He swallows it.

[Is. 28:5](#) In that day the LORD of hosts will become a beautiful crown
 And a glorious diadem to the remnant of His people;

[Is. 28:6](#) A spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment,
 A strength to those who repel the onslaught at the gate.

- The introduction of this woe uses the northern kingdom of Israel as a negative example for Judah
 - Notice the focus is on the leadership of Ephraim
 - The princes who are described as drunkards

- The fading flower is a reference to their capital city, Samaria
- They are to be destroyed by the mighty overflowing waters, a euphemism for an invading army, which we know is Assyria
 - The speed of the invasion is pictured in verse 4, as fast as you can eat a ripe fig the city will be gone
- But the believing remnant left in Northern Israel, God's justice is a delight to His people who desire His justice (vs.5-6)

[Is. 28:7](#) And these also reel with wine and stagger from strong drink:

The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink,
They are confused by wine, they stagger from strong drink;
They reel while having visions,
They totter when rendering judgment.

[Is. 28:8](#) For all the tables are full of filthy vomit, without a single clean place.

- Now Judah says to "these also" meaning to a new group that shares the same qualities of the earlier group in Northern Israel
 - We're talking about Judah now
 - Like Ephraim, Judah staggers drunk with wine
 - So much drinking and debauchery that they vomit leaving no clean place
 - Graphic way to picture how God views their sad state
 - These are the leaders who ignored Isaiah's counsel to avoid making a covenant with the enemy Egypt

[Is. 28:9](#) "To whom would He teach knowledge,
And to whom would He interpret the message?
Those just weaned from milk?
Those just taken from the breast?"

[Is. 28:10](#) "For He says,
' Order on order, order on order,
Line on line, line on line,
A little here, a little there.'"

[Is. 28:11](#) Indeed, He will speak to this people
Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue,

[Is. 28:12](#) He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary,"
And, "Here is repose," but they would not listen.

[Is. 28:13](#) So the word of the LORD to them will be,
 "Order on order, order on order,
 Line on line, line on line,
 A little here, a little there,"
 That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive.

- This is actually a bit humorous
 - My translation actually confuses the meaning a little here, because it proposes that the person speaking ("he") is the Lord Himself
 - To whom would "He" teach, as in God
 - But in reality, the context tells us this is actually Isaiah recording how he was mocked by the leaders of Judah when he told them not to oppose Assyrian
 - The sense is clearer in the Hebrew
 - Read verses 9 & 10 as if spoken by Isaiah's detractors
 - They ask Isaiah who does he (Isaiah) expect to teach knowledge and wisdom?
 - Who does he presume to interpret God's words?
 - Does he (Isaiah) think these leaders are just weaned from milk and taken from the breast?
 - In other words, does Isaiah think they were born yesterday?
 - Then they mock him by mimicking the sound of Isaiah stuttering out his prophecies
 - Order on order, order on order, line on line, etc.
 - In the Hebrew these are all single syllable words
 - And the words "on" don't appear in the Hebrew text
 - It's the same Hebrew word for order (tsav) repeated four times
 - Followed by line (qav) repeated four times
 - The effect if you read this aloud in Hebrew would be the sound of someone stuttering

- Making Isaiah sound like a fool or village idiot
- So Isaiah responds to their mocking of him in verse 11-13
 - Indeed, the prophet Isaiah will speak to these people through stuttering lips
 - But it won't be Isaiah's lips that will sound strange to them
 - It will be a foreign tongue that sounds strange to them that will produce the sounds they hear
 - In other words, Judah will know that Isaiah speaks God's truth when they hear the voices of the Assyrians speaking in their land and at their city walls
 - Though the Prophet spoke words of relief to them, they would not listen
 - So the Lord will speak to them Himself
 - And it will sound like stuttering
 - Tsav, tsav, etc.
 - And they will stumble backward and be snared and captive of the Assyrians
 - And the sounds of the captors will sound like the stuttering they mocked Isaiah with
- In 1Cor 14, Paul draws reference to this section of Isaiah to make a similar point concerning how God intended to use the gift of tongues in the early church
 - In Isaiah's day, the Jews failed to believe the message they heard and they mocked the messenger
 - So their unbelief is answered with a strange people speaking in tongues that sound odd to the ears of unbelieving Jews
 - But just as in Isaiah's day, the effect of this experience is not to set the Jews free and bring them to an understanding
 - Rather, it is judgment against them to their own destruction

- In Isaiah's day, the judgment came at the hands of the Assyrians because they rejected God's message through the prophet Isaiah's
 - In the early church, the destruction was the Roman invasion of Jerusalem because the Jewish people had rejected God's message through the Messiah
- This is another reason we can say that the gift of tongues was short-lived and intended for the early church only
 - Once the judgment signified by the tongues had arrived for the Jewish generation that rejected Christ, the gift had met its purpose and was no longer relevant
- Then Isaiah jumps forward prophetically to describe the effect of a future day when the nation will repeat this mistake in an even more serious way...

[Is. 28:14](#) Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers,
Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem,

[Is. 28:15](#) Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death,
And with Sheol we have made a pact.

The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by,
For we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves
with deception."

[Is. 28:16](#) Therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,
A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed.
He who believes in it will not be disturbed.

[Is. 28:17](#) "I will make justice the measuring line
And righteousness the level;
Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies
And the waters will overflow the secret place.

[Is. 28:18](#) "Your covenant with death will be canceled,
And your pact with Sheol will not stand;
When the overwhelming scourge passes through,
Then you become its trampling place.

[Is. 28:19](#) "As often as it passes through, it will seize you;
For morning after morning it will pass through, anytime during the day or
night,
And it will be sheer terror to understand what it means."

[Is. 28:20](#) The bed is too short on which to stretch out,
And the blanket is too small to wrap oneself in.

[Is. 28:21](#) For the LORD will rise up as at Mount Perazim,
He will be stirred up as in the valley of Gibeon,
To do His task, His unusual task,
And to work His work, His extraordinary work.

[Is. 28:22](#) And now do not carry on as scoffers,
Or your fetters will be made stronger;
For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts
Of decisive destruction on all the earth.

- Therefore, hear the word of the Lord all you scoffers who lead Israel
 - Remember, the leaders of Israel in Jerusalem in the last days are simply the last in the line of leaders who scoff at the truth of God's prophets
 - But in v.15, Isaiah says they enter into a covenant with death
 - And with Hell itself
 - This is the moment Daniel predicts in chapter 9

[Dan. 9:26](#) "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

[Dan. 9:27](#) "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

- After a period of time, Daniel says the Messiah will be cut off, which refers to Jesus' crucifixion and rejection by Israel
 - And a people will come to destroy Jerusalem, which was the Romans
 - Their advance is like a flood of water, a picture of a rapidly advancing army
 - But sometime following this event, "he" will make a covenant with the many for one seven year period
 - The he is the prince in verse 26, the Antichrist
 - And the many are apostate Israel who accept this agreement
 - It's many rather than all because the remnant of Israel rejects any alliance with the antichrist
 - This event of the signing of the covenant between Israel and the antichrist begins the seven years of Tribulation

- And in the “middle of the week” or at the 3.5 year point, the Antichrist betrays his agreement with Israel and begins to persecute them
 - Isaiah describes the leaders as scoffers who shake off any warnings in their day, just as before
 - They make the agreement intended to gain security for the nation
 - They say that the overwhelming scourge that they sense is coming at the hands of this world leader will pass them by
 - For they have saved themselves by aligning with deception and falsehood
- Now in contrast to that kind of false security, where does the remnant of Israel turn to seek security and refuge from the scourge of the Antichrist?
 - In verses 16-17 God describes the security He is providing to His faithful remnant in that coming day of Tribulation
 - He lays a cornerstone in Zion, firmly places
 - Anyone who believes in this stone will not be disturbed
 - Justice is the measuring line and righteousness the standard for measurement
 - And the waters of God’s judgment in Tribulation wash away those who trusted in the Antichrist rather than the true Christ
 - Isaiah then says that covenant that the many rested in will be cancelled
 - By the Anitchrist of course
 - In mid Tribulation, the Antichrist is murdered, according to Revelation 13:3 and comes back to life because Satan indwells him and brings his body back to life
 - At this point, Satan takes over and causes the Antichrist to break the covenant as Daniel predicts and begins to persecute the Jews
 - And they are trampled in place says Isaiah

- Followed by insecurity and fear everywhere they go during those final 3.5 years
- In describing this period of destruction, Isaiah draws comparison to their history of Israel
 - Isaiah describes Mt. Perazim and valley of Gibeon
 - These were places where David and Joshua won great victories against enemies of God and Israel
 - We know both these men are types of Christ, Joshua shares the Lord's earthly name
 - And Isaiah says that the effect of Israel's covenant with God's enemy is to see the Lord fight against them as when He fights against the enemies of God
 - And furthermore, the decree from God is a decisive destruction of the Earth as a whole

[Is. 28:23](#) ¶ Give ear and hear my voice,
Listen and hear my words.

[Is. 28:24](#) Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed?
Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?

[Is. 28:25](#) Does he not level its surface
And sow dill and scatter cummin
And plant wheat in rows,
Barley in its place and rye within its area?

[Is. 28:26](#) For his God instructs and teaches him properly.

[Is. 28:27](#) For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin;
But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club.

[Is. 28:28](#) Grain for bread is crushed,
Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever.
Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it,
He does not thresh it longer.

[Is. 28:29](#) This also comes from the LORD of hosts,
Who has made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.

- Isaiah ends this chapter with two parables to explain God's actions and purposes during this judgment in the end times
 - First, when the farmer stirs up the soil and plows, it's a destructive process
 - But does the farmer plow forever?

- No. Though it's destructive, it's meant for good in that it prepares for a planting and harvest
 - So the first point is that the judgment of God against Israel is not a never ending judgment
 - It has a good purpose and it eventually comes to an end so that a planting and harvest might result
 - For God teaches and instructs properly
- Secondly, Isaiah uses a parable of threshing
 - When threshing grain, the farmer beats at the seeds in the grain in varying degrees of harshness
 - Some seeds need greater force than others
 - Some grain is intentionally crushed while others are just shaken loose
 - You don't thresh too long on every grain otherwise it will be destroyed
 - So the second principle is that God's judgment is for different outcomes in different groups within Israel
 - Some in Israel will be subjected to God's wrath so that they might be destroyed or crushed
 - Others are experienced a more limited threshing so that they might be brought through it intact
- In Tribulation, God brings His wrath to destroy some Jews and to chasten others
 - Ultimately, the nation survives and is brought through to their glory in the kingdom

Isaiah 29-30A

- At the end of chapter 28, Isaiah told two parables
 - These parables explained the consequences of Judah's error of entering into a covenant with Egypt to defend themselves against the advancing army of Assyria
 - Assyria has been in the land of Judah doing what they please for 14 years
 - The Assyrians were brought into the land by God to punish Judah after Ahaz their king wouldn't trust in God to protect them
 - In Isaiah's day, the people of Jerusalem were looking for a solution to expelling the invaders
 - But Isaiah tells them not to resist God's judgment
 - But as in Ahaz's day, the people rebel against the prophet and king Hezekiah enters into a covenant with Egypt
 - Isaiah says that God would respond by bringing the nation through a new round of judgment and discipline
 - But it would be with good purpose
 - The there would be plowing and threshing - pictures of judgment
 - But it would give way to sowing for a new harvest
- Now Isaiah follows his parables to tell how God would accomplish the actual judgment through a series of woes (hence the name Book of Woes)
 - In chapter 29 we see the threshing and plowing for their mistake in siding with Egypt
 - Later chapters show the sowing as God uses this judgment for good
 - And along the way, we see Isaiah weave in discussions of another future time when Israel enters into a covenant with an enemy - Tribulation

Is. 29:1 Woe, O Ariel, Ariel the city where David once camped!
Add year to year, observe your feasts on schedule.

Is. 29:2 I will bring distress to Ariel,
And she will be a city of lamenting and mourning;
And she will be like an Ariel to me.

Is. 29:3 I will camp against you encircling you,
And I will set siegeworks against you,
And I will raise up battle towers against you.

Is. 29:4 Then you will be brought low;
From the earth you will speak,
And from the dust where you are prostrate
Your words will come.
Your voice will also be like that of a spirit from the ground,
And your speech will whisper from the dust.

- *Ariel* is a Hebrew word meaning two things
 - It can mean the lion of God or it can mean the hearth of God and it is used in this passage both ways
 - In the first verse we know from the context that Isaiah is speaking of Jerusalem
 - The city where David camped or pitched his tent so to speak
 - Isaiah says this city is going to be a place of mourning as a result of their mistake in entering into the covenant with Egypt
 - God will bring a siegeworks against them
 - He's referring to the army of Assyria that comes against Jerusalem and sieges it in Hezekiah's day
 - The city will become an ariel to me
 - Meaning, it will become like the hearth of God, a place of burning fire
 - And as verse 4 indicates, it will bring misery upon them
 - The full details of this event await us in a few chapters later in the book of woes
 - But notice what comes next at this point

Is. 29:5 But the multitude of your enemies will become like fine dust,
And the multitude of the ruthless ones like the chaff which blows away;
And it will happen instantly, suddenly.

Is. 29:6 From the LORD of hosts you will be punished with thunder and earthquake and loud noise,
With whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire.

Is. 29:7 And the multitude of all the nations who wage war against Ariel,
Even all who wage war against her and her stronghold, and who distress her,
Will be like a dream, a vision of the night.

Is. 29:8 It will be as when a hungry man dreams –
And behold, he is eating;
But when he awakens, his hunger is not satisfied,
Or as when a thirsty man dreams –
And behold, he is drinking,
But when he awakens, behold, he is faint
And his thirst is not quenched.
Thus the multitude of all the nations will be
Who wage war against Mount Zion.

- Now the promise of something better
 - These enemies that camp against you will amount to nothing in the end
 - It an instant, they'll be gone like chaff
 - Speaking to these enemies, Isaiah says in verse 6 "you" will suffer these outcomes from the Lord
 - It will be so sudden that it will be like they dreamed the whole thing
- In the case of the Assyrians, we have already looked in this course at how that happens
 - In chapter 37 we read how the angel of the Lord will go out and destroy the entire Assyrian army in a single moment
 - Defending the city of Jerusalem in a single moment
 - At that earlier time, we also learned this moment with Assyria when they attack the city and sieged it
 - But never penetrated is a foreshadowing of the same event later in Israel's history

- In a later time, we know another army converges on Israel and fails to breach its walls...and God comes to its rescue

[Zech. 14:1](#) Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

[Zech. 14:2](#) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

[Zech. 14:3](#) Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

[Zech. 14:4](#) In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

[Zech. 14:5](#) You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

[Zech. 14:6](#) In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

[Zech. 14:8](#) And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

[Zech. 14:9](#) And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

- This scene mirrors the one Isaiah will describe later in chapter 37
 - This moment in Zechariah is a part of the judgment that comes upon Israel for their willingness to enter into a covenant with the Antichrist
 - We're now seeing Isaiah beginning to introduce those parallels between the two events
 - Here's another parallel...

[Is. 29:9](#) Be delayed and wait,
Blind yourselves and be blind;
They become drunk, but not with wine,
They stagger, but not with strong drink.

[Is. 29:10](#) For the LORD has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep,
He has shut your eyes, the prophets;
And He has covered your heads, the seers.

[Is. 29:11](#) The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, "Please read this," he will say, "I cannot, for it is sealed."

[Is. 29:12](#) Then the book will be given to the one who is illiterate, saying, "Please read this." And he will say, "I cannot read."

- Isaiah is talking to the Jews who will experience this coming judgment at the hands of the Assyrians
 - They are going to be blinded spiritually
 - They are like their leaders, the drunkards who stagger with strong drink
 - And the Lord is the One Who put them in this state of blindness
 - He covered their eyes and silenced their seers
 - They will have the words of Isaiah, but they will be like someone who can't read
 - They won't be able to understand the words of Isaiah's prophecy and so they will not be able to avoid this coming judgment
- This part of the experience with Assyria also has a parallel for a future Israel
 - In the future time when the nation of Israel is left ignorant of God's word
 - And therefore they walk ignorantly into His planned judgement during Tribulation
 - And God is once again the one who causes the blindness so that the Jews would be assured of experiencing the judgment God has planned
 - But as with the Assyrian judgment, this blindness doesn't arrive at their destruction
 - Because in the end the Lord will rescue the nation and restore them
 - But not until they have endured the judgment He has determined they MUST experience
 - Paul describes this parallel in the future experience of Israel in the time leading to Tribulation

[Rom. 11:7](#) What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

[Rom. 11:8](#) just as it is written,

“GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR,
EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT,
DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY.”

[Rom. 11:9](#) And David says,

“ LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP,
AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.

[Rom. 11:10](#) “ LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT,
AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.”

[Rom. 11:11](#) I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

[Rom. 11:12](#) Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!

- Today, the Jewish people are under a period of blindness instituted by God to ensure the nation remains under judgment
 - They will remain in this state until they endure the coming Tribulation which awaits them and the world
 - As with the first experience in preparation for the attack of Assyria, this stupor in by the hand of God
 - And it last until God releases them from that blindness...

[Is. 29:13](#) Then the Lord said,

“Because this people draw near with their words
And honor Me with their lip service,
But they remove their hearts far from Me,
And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote,

[Is. 29:14](#) Therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous;

And the wisdom of their wise men will perish,
And the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed.”

[Is. 29:15](#) Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from the LORD,

And whose deeds are done in a dark place,
And they say, “ Who sees us?” or “Who knows us?”

[Is. 29:16](#) You turn things around!

Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay,
That what is made would say to its maker, “He did not make me”;
Or what is formed say to him who formed it, “He has no understanding”?

- Because of their hypocrisy and sin against God and their unwillingness to follow him from the beginning, God prepares a final moment of judgment
 - This sin began with the leaders who led Israel astray in Isaiah's day
 - And it continued all the way until Jesus saw this same pattern among the leaders in His day

[Matt. 15:1](#) Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, [Matt. 15:2](#) "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

[Matt. 15:3](#) And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"

[Matt. 15:4](#) "For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.'

[Matt. 15:5](#) "But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God,"

[Matt. 15:6](#) he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

[Matt. 15:7](#) "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you:

[Matt. 15:8](#) 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS,
BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

[Matt. 15:9](#) 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME,
TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

- Jesus says, that Isaiah's words were speaking of Israel's leaders even beyond the day in which he spoke them
 - He was prophesying of the leadership of Israel throughout the time of judgment that began in Isaiah's day
- In response, first God made them blind to prevent them from understanding Isaiah's explanation of how the judgment would come
 - In the future day, the Jews are hardened as Paul says to prevent them from knowing the Gospel
 - In the time of Assyria, God brings the judgment to a climax with the Assyrian siege of the city of Jerusalem
 - This was the "tribulation" for the Jews of Isaiah's day
 - In the last days, the final climatic judgment against the Jews will be the seven years of the Tribulation

- And here Isaiah refers directly to that future judgment with the description of the “wondrously marvelous” dealing that God brings
 - The word for marvelously is para, which literally means “in a surpassingly extraordinary way”
- Obviously, we’re talking about God doing something out of the ordinary even for God
 - We’re talking about the Great Tribulation, something unlike any kind of judgment God has ever brought upon the world
- This coming judgment reveals the secrets and weaknesses of men
 - It brings them down from the haughtiness in which they have come to imagine themselves to be their own gods
 - It shows them how truly pitiful they are in comparison with their Creator
 - God’s wrath poured out against His own creation
 - But just as Isaiah’s parables suggested, this judgment is but for a little while...

[Is. 29:17](#) Is it not yet just a little while

Before Lebanon will be turned into a fertile field,
And the fertile field will be considered as a forest?

[Is. 29:18](#) On that day the deaf will hear words of a book,

And out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see.

[Is. 29:19](#) The afflicted also will increase their gladness in the LORD,

And the needy of mankind will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 29:20](#) For the ruthless will come to an end and the scorner will be finished,

Indeed all who are intent on doing evil will be cut off;

[Is. 29:21](#) Who cause a person to be indicted by a word,

And ensnare him who adjudicates at the gate,

And defraud the one in the right with meaningless arguments.

- In v.17, we’re told God will return to favor Israel
 - And at the conclusion of His judgment, sowing begins
 - God begins planting “seeds” to ensure that His judgment arrives at good things happening for Israel

- On that day, the deaf will hear again
 - The blind will see again and come to know the Holy Ones of Israel
 - Jewish rabbinical leaders were well known for their ability to memorize the entire Old Testament word for word in Hebrew
 - Yet they missed their Messiah because they're understanding of the text was never revealed by the Holy Spirit
 - Instead they relied on the interpretation of Scripture they received from the commentaries written by former rabbis...
 - The leaders who Jesus described who stumbled in drunkenness from spiritual blindness
- Of course, in Isaiah's day this new vision was accomplished through an appeal to God for His protection and counsel
 - As we'll study in detail in chapter 37, Hezekiah famously receives the threatening letter from the Assyrian commander stationed outside the city walls
 - And Hezekiah spreads it out before the Lord and prays to God

Is. 37:20 "Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, LORD, are God."

- And in answer to this appeal, God promises to fight this battle and deliver Jerusalem
- In the End Times, we know the Lord returns in response to the cry of the Jews in Jerusalem, according to the words of Psalm 80:

**Psa. 80:2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up Your power
And come to save us!**

Psa. 80:3 O God, restore us

And cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved.

- Then the Lord comes to defend and secure Israel as Zechariah describes
 - And in Isaiah's day, the rescue came as the Lord fought the battle for them, destroying the Assyrian army

[Is. 29:22](#) ¶ Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

“Jacob shall not now be ashamed, nor shall his face now turn pale;

[Is. 29:23](#) But when he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst,

They will sanctify My name;

Indeed, they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob

And will stand in awe of the God of Israel.

[Is. 29:24](#) “Those who err in mind will know the truth,
And those who criticize will accept instruction.

- Clearly, we see Isaiah reflecting the way God brings these two respective periods of judgment to a positive end for the nation of Israel
 - Remember, as we’ve said before, these statements are true with respect to Israel as a nation
 - They are not meant to apply to every individual Jew
 - Just like the analogy of the lake of water
 - On any given day the specific molecules of water change
 - But the lake as a whole remains
- Now in the beginning of the next chapter, we see Isaiah address specifically the woes for Israel in Hezekiah’s day for their willingness to seek a covenant with Egypt

[Is. 30:1](#) ¶ “Woe to the rebellious children,” declares the LORD,
“Who execute a plan, but not Mine,
And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit,
In order to add sin to sin;

[Is. 30:2](#) Who proceed down to Egypt
Without consulting Me,
To take refuge in the safety of Pharaoh
And to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!

[Is. 30:3](#) “Therefore the safety of Pharaoh will be your shame
And the shelter in the shadow of Egypt, your humiliation.

[Is. 30:4](#) “For their princes are at Zoan
And their ambassadors arrive at Hanes.

[Is. 30:5](#) “Everyone will be ashamed because of a people who cannot profit them,
Who are not for help or profit, but for shame and also for reproach.”

[Is. 30:6](#) ¶ The oracle concerning the beasts of the Negev.
Through a land of distress and anguish,
From where come lioness and lion, viper and flying serpent,

They carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys
 And their treasures on camels' humps,
 To a people who cannot profit them;
[Is. 30:7](#) Even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty.
 Therefore, I have called her
 " Rahab who has been exterminated."

- Isaiah pronounces another woe to Israel
 - Note the details of this circumstances
 - They are rebellious children
 - They execute a plan of their own making, not of God
 - And through this plan they multiply their sin
 - They take refuge with Egypt and the Pharaoh
 - But it will be to the shame of Israel
 - Because this alliance will not profit Israel
 - In the end Egypt did nothing for them
 - They never came to Israel's aid
- Isaiah continues in verse 6 to describe a prophecy concerning this would be partner of Israel: Egypt
 - Israel sends its treasures through a land of distress (their land) and to the Negev, which just mean south to Egypt
 - But this wealth cannot profit them
 - The reference to the name Rahab is interesting and classic Isaiah creative use of language
 - The word is used as a name for Egypt throughout the OT
 - But it also means a big mouth, someone who is all talk
 - And it can also mean hippo
 - And animal that epitomizes sitting around lazily with a big mouth

- Chapter 30 continues with a description on how God will bring the Assyrians against them followed by how He will judge the Assyrians themselves

[Is. 30:8](#) Now go, write it on a tablet before them
And inscribe it on a scroll,
That it may serve in the time to come
As a witness forever.

[Is. 30:9](#) For this is a rebellious people, false sons,
Sons who refuse to listen
To the instruction of the LORD;

[Is. 30:10](#) Who say to the seers, "You must not see visions";
And to the prophets, "You must not prophesy to us what is right,
Speak to us pleasant words,
Prophesy illusions.

[Is. 30:11](#) "Get out of the way, turn aside from the path,
Let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."

[Is. 30:12](#) Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel,
" Since you have rejected this word
And have put your trust in oppression and guile, and have relied on them,

[Is. 30:13](#) Therefore this iniquity will be to you
Like a breach about to fall,
A bulge in a high wall,
Whose collapse comes suddenly in an instant,

[Is. 30:14](#) Whose collapse is like the smashing of a potter's jar,
So ruthlessly shattered
That a sherd will not be found among its pieces
To take fire from a hearth
Or to scoop water from a cistern."

[Is. 30:15](#) For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said,
"In repentance and rest you will be saved,
In quietness and trust is your strength."
But you were not willing,

[Is. 30:16](#) And you said, "No, for we will flee on horses,"
Therefore you shall flee!
"And we will ride on swift horses,"
Therefore those who pursue you shall be swift.

[Is. 30:17](#) One thousand will flee at the threat of one man;
You will flee at the threat of five,
Until you are left as a flag on a mountain top
And as a signal on a hill.

[Is. 30:18](#) ¶ Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you,
And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
For the LORD is a God of justice;

How blessed are all those who long for Him.

- Isaiah records this words against Israel as a record of their disobedience
 - And he uses vivid language to describe some of the destruction the city walls suffered at the hands of the Assyrians
 - Though God gave them a sensible word through Isaiah
 - To rest and be at peace over the Assyrian invasion
 - Instead they sought an unholy alliance
 - They tried to flee on horses to Egypt to make an alliance
 - Instead, they will flee their attackers
 - But God wait on high to be gracious to them in a future time

Isaiah 30B-33

- So Judah is on the brink of God “plowing their field”
 - They entered into a covenant with Egypt instead of relying on God
 - So God pronounces their coming judgment, when Assyria will siege Jerusalem
 - But every sowing comes to an end and is followed by sowing and harvesting
 - And Isaiah tempers his message of judgment with a moment of redemption...

[Is. 30:18](#) ¶ Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you,
And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
For the LORD is a God of justice;
How blessed are all those who long for Him.

[Is. 30:19](#) ¶ O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.

[Is. 30:20](#) Although the Lord has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher.

[Is. 30:21](#) Your ears will hear a word behind you, “ This is the way, walk in it,” whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

[Is. 30:22](#) And you will defile your graven images overlaid with silver, and your molten images plated with gold. You will scatter them as an impure thing, and say to them, “ Be gone!”

[Is. 30:23](#) ¶ Then He will give you rain for the seed which you will sow in the ground, and bread from the yield of the ground, and it will be rich and plenteous; on that day your livestock will graze in a roomy pasture.

[Is. 30:24](#) Also the oxen and the donkeys which work the ground will eat salted fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.

[Is. 30:25](#) On every lofty mountain and on every high hill there will be streams running with water on the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

[Is. 30:26](#) The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, on the day the LORD binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.

- By now, we should be very familiar with this recurring theme of Isaiah
 - The theme of the coming Kingdom and Israel’s restoration in that kingdom

- Let's run through the familiar details
 - No more weeping
 - The Lord answering the cry of Israel
 - No longer hiding Himself, your eyes will see Him (v.20)
 - You will walk in His ways perfectly (sinlessly)
 - No more idols (v.22)
 - Harvest of plenty (seed motif again)
 - No darkness and the light of the world far brighter
 - Israel healed
- All signs of the Lord's return and Israel's healing and restoration
 - But not yet
 - This period waits for God's judgment first (v.18)
- In conjunction with this future restoration, we also know that God's judgment falls on the nations that have assembled to destroy Israel in that time
 - And Isaiah has something to say for their future as well

[Is. 30:27](#) ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD comes from a remote place;
 Burning is His anger and dense is His smoke;
 His lips are filled with indignation
 And His tongue is like a consuming fire;

[Is. 30:28](#) His breath is like an overflowing torrent,
 Which reaches to the neck,
 To shake the nations back and forth in a sieve,
 And to put in the jaws of the peoples the bridle which leads to ruin.

[Is. 30:29](#) You will have songs as in the night when you keep the festival,
 And gladness of heart as when one marches to the sound of the flute,
 To go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

- For the most part, this passage is easy to understand so long as we leave it in the immediate context of Isaiah's earlier statements
 - This is the judgment that occurs when Christ returns to Earth
 - But there are a couple of noteworthy details to consider

- Isaiah says they will have songs they sing
 - As in the night of the festival
 - That phrase is generally understood to reference Passover
 - Which is a festival that memorializes a single night's event
 - Hymns are commonly song on that night, as you can see in Matthew 26:30
 - Where Jesus and the disciples sing a hymn at the end of the Passover meal
- Then Isaiah once again weaves references of the future with references of the present day judgment
 - In vs. 27-29 the focus was the judgment against the nations of the Tribulation
 - Now in vs. 30-33 Isaiah moves his focus back to Assyria

[Is. 30:30](#) And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard,
And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger,
And in the flame of a consuming fire
In cloudburst, downpour and hailstones.

[Is. 30:31](#) For at the voice of the LORD Assyria will be terrified,
When He strikes with the rod.

[Is. 30:32](#) And every blow of the rod of punishment,
Which the LORD will lay on him,
Will be with the music of tambourines and lyres;
And in battles, brandishing weapons, He will fight them.

[Is. 30:33](#) For Topheth has long been ready,
Indeed, it has been prepared for the king.
He has made it deep and large,
A pyre of fire with plenty of wood;
The breath of the LORD, like a torrent of brimstone, sets it afire.

- How do we know that Isaiah wasn't talking about Assyria the whole time?
 - Look at v.28 where he references nations and peoples
 - And again in v.29, the result of the Lord's deliverance is the nation going to the mountain of the Lord and to the Rock of Israel
 - This never happened after the Lord delivered Israel from Assyria

- There was no national coming to faith in the Messiah
 - But after Christ's Second Coming, this is to be the result as we have already studied
 - So now we know that this references the future event
- But in vs.30-33 we see specific references to Assyria coming to defeat in battle
 - In v.33, Topeth (which means a burning place) is the same name for the Valley of Hinnom on the south side of Jerusalem
 - This valley is the place evil kings of Judah offered human sacrifices to pagan gods
 - It was also a place where garbage was burned continually
 - The combination of burning garbage and human remains led Jews to associate the valley with hell
 - Ge-hinnon is the Hebrew name which we have come to pronounce hell
 - This place has long been prepared for the king of Assyria
 - The word for "long" is actually yesterday in Hebrew
 - Literally, it says this place was prepared yesterday for the king
 - Meaning it has been his destiny from the beginning
 - Rabbinical traditional has taken this verse to mean that Hell was created on the second day of creation
 - Since the second day of creation was the first day to have a "yesterday," then it was the second day of creation when Hell was created
 - They go on to conclude that this is why that Day 2 is the only day that has no record of God saying anything is good in Genesis 1
- In a final warning to Israel against seeking protection from Egypt, Isaiah writes chapter 31:

[Is. 31:1](#) ¶ Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help
 And rely on horses,
 And trust in chariots because they are many
 And in horsemen because they are very strong,
 But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!

[Is. 31:2](#) Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster
 And does not retract His words,
 But will arise against the house of evildoers
 And against the help of the workers of iniquity.

[Is. 31:3](#) Now the Egyptians are men and not God,
 And their horses are flesh and not spirit;
 So the LORD will stretch out His hand,
 And he who helps will stumble
 And he who is helped will fall,
 And all of them will come to an end together.

[Is. 31:4](#) ¶ For thus says the LORD to me,
 "As the lion or the young lion growls over his prey,
 Against which a band of shepherds is called out,
 And he will not be terrified at their voice nor disturbed at their noise,
 So will the LORD of hosts come down to wage war on Mount Zion and on its
 hill."

[Is. 31:5](#) Like flying birds so the LORD of hosts will protect Jerusalem.
 He will protect and deliver it;
 He will pass over and rescue it.

[Is. 31:6](#) ¶ Return to Him from whom you have deeply defected, O sons of Israel.

[Is. 31:7](#) For in that day every man will cast away his silver idols and his gold idols,
 which your sinful hands have made for you as a sin.

[Is. 31:8](#) And the Assyrian will fall by a sword not of man,
 And a sword not of man will devour him.
 So he will not escape the sword,
 And his young men will become forced laborers.

[Is. 31:9](#) "His rock will pass away because of panic,
 And his princes will be terrified at the standard,"
 Declares the LORD, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

- The book of woes continues...
 - They relied on horses and chariots and think themselves strong
 - But they don't look to the truly strong and Holy One
 - But in v.2 God assures Israel that He is wise enough to bring disaster both against their adversaries (after all, God brought them in them in the first place)
 - And against those in Israel who turn their back on Him

- Isaiah mocks the Egyptians as men not gods and therefore insufficient to solve a God-created problem
 - The Assyrians were God's appointed instruments of destruction
 - Their kings went beyond his instructions and pursued into Judah against God's instructions
 - Yet God was able to turn that disobedience to suit His own purposes in using Assyria to discipline Judah
 - And God promises to prevent the Egyptians from offering any help
 - Because God is determined to fight the battle alone, to His own glory
- In the end He protects Jerusalem because He has need for it to remain until His Son is born and dies there
 - So in v.6 he calls upon Judah to return to Him so they may be included in the rescue
- Now Isaiah draws a contrast between the present day unfaithful leadership within Judah to a future time when it will be ruled by perfection...
 - Another familiar theme...but with some new details

[Is. 32:1](#) ¶ Behold, a king will reign righteously
And princes will rule justly.

[Is. 32:2](#) Each will be like a refuge from the wind
And a shelter from the storm,
Like streams of water in a dry country,
Like the shade of a huge rock in a parched land.

- We know Isaiah is back to describing the Lord's return to rule on Earth
 - But here we see a curious new detail
 - A king is mention, Christ
 - And a prince
 - And we know these are then same person because in v.2 we see "each" referenced, indicating that there is more than one person in view

- And there is in fact both a King and a Prince present in the Messianic Kingdom
- As we said already, Christ is the King
- But who is the prince?
- Look at Ezekiel 34 describing the times of the Messianic Kingdom

[Ezek. 34:21](#) "Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

[Ezek. 34:22](#) therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

[Ezek. 34:23](#) ¶ "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

[Ezek. 34:24](#) "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

[Ezek. 34:25](#) ¶ "I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

[Ezek. 34:26](#) "I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

- The Lord is King among the shepherds but David is prince
 - We should expect this since David will undoubtedly be resurrected to join the kingdom
 - And in that new life he will have a role just as we all will
 - And it will be as Christ's right hand man in His government
- Another interesting detail is that this time will include both the noble and the fools
 - First, v.5 says that perfect transparency or distinction will be maintained throughout the kingdom time
 - And yet the fools still exist and do what fools do
 - While the noble are perfect in their nobility
 - The contrast here is consistent with what we've seen elsewhere in Isaiah
 - The kingdom is populated by the incorruptible resurrected believers

- But these must rule over the imperfect that still have sin
- This is the very reason for government
 - Without sin, the kingdom would have no government
- Isaiah concludes chapter 32 with a wry call to the women of Israel
 - In light of Judah's coming period of judgment -
 - A period that won't end fully until the Messiah's Second Coming
 - Isaiah says they should begin their mourning now

[Is. 32:3](#) Then the eyes of those who see will not be blinded,
And the ears of those who hear will listen.

[Is. 32:4](#) The mind of the hasty will discern the truth,
And the tongue of the stammerers will hasten to speak clearly.

[Is. 32:5](#) No longer will the fool be called noble,
Or the rogue be spoken of as generous.

[Is. 32:6](#) For a fool speaks nonsense,
And his heart inclines toward wickedness:
To practice ungodliness and to speak error against the LORD,
To keep the hungry person unsatisfied
And to withhold drink from the thirsty.

[Is. 32:7](#) As for a rogue, his weapons are evil;
He devises wicked schemes
To destroy the afflicted with slander,
Even though the needy one speaks what is right.

[Is. 32:8](#) But the noble man devises noble plans;
And by noble plans he stands.

[Is. 32:9](#) ¶ Rise up, you women who are at ease,
And hear my voice;
Give ear to my word,
You complacent daughters.

[Is. 32:10](#) Within a year and a few days
You will be troubled, O complacent daughters;
For the vintage is ended,
And the fruit gathering will not come.

[Is. 32:11](#) Tremble, you women who are at ease;
Be troubled, you complacent daughters;
Strip, undress and put sackcloth on your waist,

[Is. 32:12](#) Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine,

[Is. 32:13](#) For the land of my people in which thorns and briars shall come up;
Yea, for all the joyful houses and for the jubilant city.

[Is. 32:14](#) Because the palace has been abandoned, the populated city forsaken.

Hill and watch-tower have become caves forever,
A delight for wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks;

[Is. 32:15](#) Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high,

And the wilderness becomes a fertile field,
And the fertile field is considered as a forest.

[Is. 32:16](#) Then justice will dwell in the wilderness

And righteousness will abide in the fertile field.

[Is. 32:17](#) And the work of righteousness will be peace,

And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.

[Is. 32:18](#) Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation,

And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;

[Is. 32:19](#) And it will hail when the forest comes down,

And the city will be utterly laid low.

[Is. 32:20](#) How blessed will you be, you who sow beside all waters,

Who let out freely the ox and the donkey.

- If only you knew what was coming, you wouldn't be living like life was normal
 - You would be mourning now
 - The palace will be abandoned and the crops ruined and the land devastated
 - But in v.15 Isaiah reminds them that once God is ready to pour out His Spirit on them, they will experience justice
 - And peace and confidence forever
 - This reference to the Holy Spirit reaffirms our reading in Zech 12 where we see the Lord bringing the nation of Israel to a moment of national repentance
- And then on to 33, and a new phase in the book of Woes
 - Beginning with a woe pronounced on a mysterious character

[Is. 33:1](#) ¶ Woe to you, O destroyer,

While you were not destroyed;

And he who is treacherous, while others did not deal treacherously with him.

As soon as you finish destroying, you will be destroyed;

As soon as you cease to deal treacherously, others will deal treacherously with

you.

- Who do you think Isaiah is talking about here?

- The destroyer is a reference that points us to Satan
 - But taking it one step further, remember that Assyria's siege of Jerusalem is a picture of the Antichrist's siege of Jerusalem in the End Times
 - Then it's reasonable to assume we're looking at the antichrist here more specifically
- Here Isaiah promises that he will come to his fitting end at the Lord's coming
- Then in v.2 Isaiah moves forward to revisit his descriptions of that moment when the Lord frees Israel from the antichrist's armies

[Is. 33:2](#) O LORD, be gracious to us; we have waited for You.

Be their strength every morning,
Our salvation also in the time of distress.

[Is. 33:3](#) At the sound of the tumult peoples flee;

At the lifting up of Yourself nations disperse.

[Is. 33:4](#) Your spoil is gathered as the caterpillar gathers;

As locusts rushing about men rush about on it.

[Is. 33:5](#) The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high;

He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.

[Is. 33:6](#) And He will be the stability of your times,

A wealth of salvation, wisdom and knowledge;

The fear of the LORD is his treasure.

[Is. 33:7](#) Behold, their brave men cry in the streets,

The ambassadors of peace weep bitterly.

[Is. 33:8](#) The highways are desolate, the traveler has ceased,

He has broken the covenant, he has despised the cities,

He has no regard for man.

[Is. 33:9](#) The land mourns and pines away,

Lebanon is shamed and withers;

Sharon is like a desert plain,

And Bashan and Carmel lose their foliage.

[Is. 33:10](#) "Now I will arise," says the LORD,

"Now I will be exalted, now I will be lifted up.

[Is. 33:11](#) "You have conceived chaff, you will give birth to stubble;

My breath will consume you like a fire.

[Is. 33:12](#) "The peoples will be burned to lime,

Like cut thorns which are burned in the fire.

- The nation of Israel opens with a prayer in v.2
 - And they ask for the Lord to save them in their time of distress

- This is a short summary of what we've already seen described in Zech 12
- And in response to that prayer, the Lord answers in the following verses
 - At the sound of a tumult or roar, the enemy scatters
 - As God Himself is lifted up
- They gathered for the spoil and yet they themselves will become the spoil
 - And then we see the familiar references in vs.5-6 to Christ's power to rule
 - And the following verses repeat the kind of devastation that will come upon the enemy forces as they are crushed
- But the Lord will be raised up and their plans to destroy will come to nothing
 - Like giving birth to chaff
- Now to end the chapter briefly, consider some of the details Isaiah offers of that time

[Is. 33:13](#) ¶ "You who are far away, hear what I have done;
And you who are near, acknowledge My might."

[Is. 33:14](#) Sinners in Zion are terrified;
Trembling has seized the godless.
"Who among us can live with the consuming fire?
Who among us can live with continual burning?"

[Is. 33:15](#) He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity,
He who rejects unjust gain
And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe;
He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed
And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil;

[Is. 33:16](#) He will dwell on the heights,
His refuge will be the impregnable rock;
His bread will be given him,
His water will be sure.

[Is. 33:17](#) ¶ Your eyes will see the King in His beauty;
They will behold a far-distant land.

[Is. 33:18](#) Your heart will meditate on terror:
"Where is he who counts?
Where is he who weighs?
Where is he who counts the towers?"

[Is. 33:19](#) You will no longer see a fierce people,
A people of unintelligible speech which no one comprehends,
Of a stammering tongue which no one understands.

[Is. 33:20](#) Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts;
Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an undisturbed habitation,
A tent which will not be folded;
Its stakes will never be pulled up,
Nor any of its cords be torn apart.

[Is. 33:21](#) But there the majestic One, the LORD, will be for us
A place of rivers and wide canals
On which no boat with oars will go,
And on which no mighty ship will pass —

[Is. 33:22](#) For the LORD is our judge,
The LORD is our lawgiver,
The LORD is our king;
He will save us —

[Is. 33:23](#) Your tackle hangs slack;
It cannot hold the base of its mast firmly,
Nor spread out the sail.
Then the prey of an abundant spoil will be divided;
The lame will take the plunder.

[Is. 33:24](#) And no resident will say, "I am sick";
The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.

- First, to those who are still apostate and without saving faith in the Messiah are called to hear what God has done
 - While those who are near should acknowledge His might
 - This distinction is the outline for the rest of the chapter
 - The believing remnant and unbelieving remnant and their different perspectives based on what the return of Christ means
 - In v.14 the sinners are terrified
 - Asking who can live within consuming fire? No one
 - In contrast, those who walk in righteousness, he will dwell on the heights
 - Isaiah lists some of the characteristics that mark these people
 - These aren't the means to righteousness but the product of righteousness obtained by faith
 - To that one, his eyes see the King

- And yet in v.18 the righteous will ask where is terror?
- Where is the one who counts towers in preparation for battle?
- No where because there is no war and no terror
- Specifically, in Isaiah's day the people of Jerusalem were promised to one day not see a people with a strange tongue
 - Because they would be gone, as God promised
- And then weaving in a picture of the future, Isaiah begins to describe what they will see in a future Jerusalem
 - A city which will never be "folded"
 - A place with considerably different geography than today
 - Based on the descriptions of Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 47, the city is many times large than today
 - A mountain with a fifty-square mile plateau
 - Large rivers running out of the Temple both east and west
 - But no ships will use these waters
 - And therefore no war ships as Isaiah implies
 - And from that place the Lord rules as the law giver
- Most notably, the people of Israel dwelling there are forgiven their iniquity

Isaiah 34-36

- Tonight we conclude the first part the of Book of Woes and into the story of Hezekiah
 - But before we go into Isaiah, let's take a moment to revisit a scene in Revelation 19

[Rev. 19:11](#) ¶ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

[Rev. 19:12](#) His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

[Rev. 19:13](#) He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

[Rev. 19:14](#) And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

[Rev. 19:15](#) From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

[Rev. 19:16](#) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

[Rev. 19:17](#) ¶ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,

[Rev. 19:18](#) so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

[Rev. 19:19](#) ¶ And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

[Rev. 19:20](#) And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

[Rev. 19:21](#) And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- As we know, this is the moment of Christ's Second Coming to set up His kingdom
 - His return occurs in the midst of the Antichrist's attack on Jerusalem
 - With his armies made up from the Gentile nations assembled against Israel
 - And the Lord destroys those armies in a moment

- This scene will mirror the earlier one we've been studying from Isaiah's day, when Assyria attacks Jerusalem but is defeated by the angel of the Lord
 - With that scene from Revelation 19 fresh in our minds, let's return to Isaiah 34

[Is. 34:1](#) ¶ Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples!

Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it.

[Is. 34:2](#) For the LORD'S indignation is against all the nations,
And His wrath against all their armies;
He has utterly destroyed them,
He has given them over to slaughter.

[Is. 34:3](#) So their slain will be thrown out,
And their corpses will give off their stench,
And the mountains will be drenched with their blood.

[Is. 34:4](#) And all the host of heaven will wear away,
And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll;
All their hosts will also wither away
As a leaf withers from the vine,
Or as one withers from the fig tree.

- Isaiah describes a destruction coming for "all nations"
 - We've been watching Isaiah draw parallels between the coming destruction of Assyria and the future destruction of the Antichrist's armies
 - And by the context here we know we're looking at the Antichrist
 - The references reflect a massing of nations, not simply the one nation of Assyria
 - There is a slaughter unlike anything else
 - It's reminiscent of Rev 14, where we hear of the Antichrist's defeat in passing terms

[Rev. 14:19](#) So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

[Rev. 14:20](#) And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

- Tremendous blood letting takes place at the Lord's return

- Further evidence that this is a unique time is found in verse 4
 - In conjunction with this mass death, there are remarkable signs in the heavens
 - Signs consistent with the events of Tribulation
 - So we know Isaiah is looking forward to the events of that day
- Now we have even more specifics concerning the Lord's battle in that day

[Is. 34:5](#) For My sword is satiated in heaven,
Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom
And upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction.

[Is. 34:6](#) The sword of the LORD is filled with blood,
It is sated with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats,
With the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah
And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

[Is. 34:7](#) Wild oxen will also fall with them
And young bulls with strong ones;
Thus their land will be soaked with blood,
And their dust become greasy with fat.

- The Lord's sword is satiated in heaven means the Lord's desire for judgment will descend from heaven
 - And it descends upon the land of Edom
 - And upon a people God has devoted to the end of destruction
 - And it is used to institute a sacrifice in Botzrah, or Petra
 - This is same place that the Jewish remnant is hiding under protection
 - It's apparent that the slaughter taking place in this location is associated with the descriptions we've just seen of Tribulation
 - Apparently, the Lord's return involves a two-part battle
 - He battles forces at Botzrah and armies around Jerusalem
 - Remember when we looked ahead to Isaiah 63, we heard this:

[Is. 63:1](#) ¶ Who is this who comes from Edom,
 With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah,
 This One who is majestic in His apparel,
 Marching in the greatness of His strength?
 "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

[Is. 63:2](#) Why is Your apparel red,
 And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

[Is. 63:3](#) "I have trodden the wine trough alone,
 And from the peoples there was no man with Me.
 I also trod them in My anger
 And trampled them in My wrath;
 And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments,
 And I stained all My raiment.

[Is. 63:4](#) "For the day of vengeance was in My heart,
 And My year of redemption has come.

[Is. 63:5](#) "I looked, and there was no one to help,
 And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold;
 So My own arm brought salvation to Me,
 And My wrath upheld Me.

[Is. 63:6](#) "I trod down the peoples in My anger
 And made them drunk in My wrath,
 And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

- As we mentioned the last time we took a peek at these verses, the Lord is seen from Isaiah's perspective as he stands in Jerusalem
 - Jesus is walking northwest toward the city of Jerusalem
 - And He's already bloody from battle
 - And He fought this battle entirely by Himself
 - And as we studied earlier, Christ leads His people out of the gate from Botzrah and brings them to Jerusalem
 - And then in Jerusalem another battle takes place to save that city

[Zech. 14:1](#) ¶ Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

[Zech. 14:2](#) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

[Zech. 14:3](#) Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

[Zech. 14:4](#) In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

[Zech. 14:5](#) You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

[Zech. 14:6](#) ¶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

[Zech. 14:8](#) ¶ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

[Zech. 14:9](#) ¶ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

[Zech. 14:10](#) ¶ All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses.

[Zech. 14:11](#) People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

- Clearly, there is war waged in more than one spot during the Lord's return, and it concludes at Jerusalem
 - And this judgment is specifically as a day of vengeance for injustices against Israel
 - And it will fall particularly heavy on Edom itself

[Is. 34:8](#) For the LORD has a day of vengeance,
A year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

[Is. 34:9](#) Its streams will be turned into pitch,
And its loose earth into brimstone,
And its land will become burning pitch.

[Is. 34:10](#) It will not be quenched night or day;
Its smoke will go up forever.
From generation to generation it will be desolate;
None will pass through it forever and ever.

[Is. 34:11](#) But pelican and hedgehog will possess it,
And owl and raven will dwell in it;
And He will stretch over it the line of desolation
And the plumb line of emptiness.

[Is. 34:12](#) Its nobles — there is no one there
Whom they may proclaim king —
And all its princes will be nothing.

[Is. 34:13](#) Thorns will come up in its fortified towers,
Nettles and thistles in its fortified cities;
It will also be a haunt of jackals
And an abode of ostriches.

[Is. 34:14](#) The desert creatures will meet with the wolves,
The hairy goat also will cry to its kind;
Yes, the night monster will settle there
And will find herself a resting place.

[Is. 34:15](#) The tree snake will make its nest and lay eggs there,
And it will hatch and gather them under its protection.
Yes, the hawks will be gathered there,
Every one with its kind.

- Remember the oracle against Edom we studied in chapter 21?
 - This was one oracles of judgment for the neighbors that surround Israel
 - And the oracle against Edom was particularly harsh
 - It said that Edom would enter a deathly silence, the silence of eternal death
 - And even when the rest of the world is brought into the Light of Christ's return, this place is kept in perpetual darkness
 - Here we see Isaiah confirming again this bleak future for the land of Edom
 - There is a special judgment reserved for this land
 - Though the name Edom isn't mentioned in these verses, the earlier mention makes clear this is the region in view
 - Rivers run dry, the land turns to burning sulfur
 - A perpetual burning
 - No one ever passes through it again
 - Only wild desert creatures dwell there

- Notably in verse 11 the phrase used is the same phrase to describe the creation in it's earliest moment in Gen 1:2
- There is some reason to believe that the strange creatures described in in verse 14 are actually euphemisms for demons
 - The goat head is the symbol used by the satanic church even today
 - And the night monster is the world lilith in Hebrew
 - It means one who wanders in night places, like Jesus' comments in Matt 12:

[Matt. 12:43](#) ¶ " Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.

- And in Jewish talmudic teaching it meant female demon
- Finally, the reference to snakes in verse 15 seem to add more evidence that we're talking about the demonic realm
- That if so, it would mean the demonic realm is held in Edom during the time of the kingdom

[Is. 34:16](#) ¶ Seek from the book of the LORD, and read:

Not one of these will be missing;
None will lack its mate.
For His mouth has commanded,
And His Spirit has gathered them.

[Is. 34:17](#) He has cast the lot for them,
And His hand has divided it to them by line.
They shall possess it forever;
From generation to generation they will dwell in it.

- The chapter ends with a confirmation that these demons will be separated out and gathered into this place and remain there forever
 - The forever reference would seem to suggest that this abode becomes the Lake of Fire eventually
- Following this judgment, the next chapter explains the joy that follows for those saved at Christ's return

[Is. 35:1](#) ¶ The wilderness and the desert will be glad,
And the Arabah will rejoice and blossom;
Like the crocus

[Is. 35:2](#) It will blossom profusely
And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
The majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the glory of the LORD,
The majesty of our God.

[Is. 35:3](#) Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble.

[Is. 35:4](#) Say to those with anxious heart,
"Take courage, fear not.
Behold, your God will come with vengeance;
The recompense of God will come,
But He will save you."

[Is. 35:5](#) Then the eyes of the blind will be opened
And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

[Is. 35:6](#) Then the lame will leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.
For waters will break forth in the wilderness
And streams in the Arabah.

[Is. 35:7](#) The scorched land will become a pool
And the thirsty ground springs of water;
In the haunt of jackals, its resting place,
Grass becomes reeds and rushes.

[Is. 35:8](#) A highway will be there, a roadway,
And it will be called the Highway of Holiness.
The unclean will not travel on it,
But it will be for him who walks that way,
And fools will not wander on it.

[Is. 35:9](#) No lion will be there,
Nor will any vicious beast go up on it;
These will not be found there.
But the redeemed will walk there,

[Is. 35:10](#) And the ransomed of the LORD will return
And come with joyful shouting to Zion,
With everlasting joy upon their heads.
They will find gladness and joy,
And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

- The land itself is seen coming to life as a result of the Lord's return
 - And all the geographical references relate to Israel
 - They will see the glory of the Lord

- The feeble and exhausted will be strengthened to see the Lord coming to defend and rescue them
- Notice that important phrase in v.5
 - The ears and eyes are opened
 - A reference to the Spirit's opening of the Israel's spiritual senses so that they might know and receive the Lord
- In v.6 the Lord's arrival results in a complete physical regeneration of Israel as well
 - Which makes sense since we know that all Jews receive their new immortal bodies
 - In v.7 we see the land become prosperous again
- In v.8 there is a roadway on which the righteous of Israel walk into the holy city
 - The ransomed of Israel, those purchased by Christ's blood
 - They are walking this highway into Jerusalem
- And with that, Isaiah transitions to an account of the history of Hezekiah and the events surrounding the attack of Assyria

[Is. 36:1](#) ¶ Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.

- This chapter begins an important transition for Isaiah
 - Prior to this chapter, the book is written in Hebrew poetry
 - But here it becomes prose at least until the story of Hezekiah is concluded in chapter 39
 - Chapter 39 also marks the end of Isaiah's interest in Assyria
 - In chapter 40, the focus moves to the Babylonian judgments
 - Remember we said that the book has a two part division much like the Bible itself
 - The first 39 books of the bible are found in the OT
 - The remaining 27 books make up the NT

- A similar spit is occurring here in Isaiah
 - The first 39 books are speaking to the judgments under the hands of the Assyrians
 - Concluding with the story of Assyria coming against Jerusalem in 36-39
 - The final 27 chapters will focus on the Babylonian period
 - We'll look at how these two sections reflect the Bible later in this course
- In Ahaz's day, the Assyrians had invaded Judah in response to Ahaz's refusal to trust in the Lord, as we studied at the beginning of Isaiah
 - Now Ahaz's son Hezekiah is ruling and the Assyrians are still in the land of Judah
 - In 703 BC Hezekiah leads a revolt against Assyria expecting the Egyptians to join him having entered into a covenant
 - Hezekiah built a half mile tunnel underground to connect the city to its primary water supply
 - This protected the city's water supply from the Assyrian blockade
 - In 701 BC, King Sennacherib invaded to put down Hezekiah's rebellion
 - Egypt made a half-hearted effort to help defend Israel, but they were roundly defeated, leading Israel to fight Assyria alone
- As Assyria advanced toward Jerusalem and it was obvious that Hezekiah wasn't powerful enough to defeat Assyria, Hezekiah sues for peace
 - The Assyrian King makes demands, including expensive war reparations and a tribute, which Hezekiah pays
 - But the Sennacherib demands that the city of Jerusalem surrender and the citizens be deported
 - Hezekiah refused, and so the siege of the city began

[Is. 36:2](#) And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field.

[Is. 36:3](#) Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him.

[Is. 36:4](#) ¶ Then Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, "What is this confidence that you have?"

[Is. 36:5](#) "I say, 'Your counsel and strength for the war are only empty words.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me?"

[Is. 36:6](#) "Behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.

[Is. 36:7](#) "But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'?"

[Is. 36:8](#) "Now therefore, come make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.

[Is. 36:9](#) "How then can you repulse one official of the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?"

[Is. 36:10](#) "Have I now come up without the LORD'S approval against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'""

- The man sent out was a chief of the army
 - And they send a large army with him to ensure he intimidated Hezekiah
 - And standing at the same place that Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, made the error that resulted in the Assyrians coming into the land, they meet Hezekiah's representatives
 - Twenty years earlier Ahaz had disregarded Isaiah's word from God and now his son was suffering the consequences of that mistake
 - The Assyrian representative begins by stating the obvious
 - Hezekiah had relied on a weak ally in his rebellion
 - And now where did that leave Israel in the face of a superior enemy?
 - All this was true and in accordance with God's own promises concerning Egypt
 - But then he goes further and declares that Israel can't depend on the Lord their God either
 - In v.7 the representative says that God won't help them because Hezekiah removed the high places and altars around Israel

- They assumed that these high places were worshipping the same God
 - We know that Hezekiah removed the high places that praised false gods, which pleased the Lord
 - So the Assyrians were making a wrong assumption about the Lord
- Then to mock Israel's weakness, the official offers to give Israel 2,000 war horses if Israel even has the men to mount them
 - The is the equivalent to someone challenging another runner to a race by offering to give them a head start
 - The Assyrians are so confident of their strength, they are suggesting that they could spot Israel 2,000 horses and not lose the advantage
 - Finally in v.10, the official even acknowledges that God brought them in the first place
 - But as we've already studied, God brought Assyria to the northern kingdom of Israel, not to Judah
 - Assyrian's venturing into Judah was against God's decree

[Is. 36:11](#) ¶ Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak with us in Judean in the hearing of the people who are on the wall."

[Is. 36:12](#) But Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

[Is. 36:13](#) ¶ Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

[Is. 36:14](#) "Thus says the king, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you;

[Is. 36:15](#) nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, 'The LORD will surely deliver us, this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'"

[Is. 36:16](#) 'Do not listen to Hezekiah,' for thus says the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern,

[Is. 36:17](#) until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

[Is. 36:18](#) 'Beware that Hezekiah does not mislead you, saying, 'The LORD will deliver us.' Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?

[Is. 36:19](#) `Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they delivered Samaria from my hand?

[Is. 36:20](#) `Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD would deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

[Is. 36:21](#) ¶ But they were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him."

[Is. 36:22](#) Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

- This is an intriguing exchange
 - The Jewish delegation asks the Assyrian to speak in Aramaic, the language of diplomacy in that day
 - But obviously their real concern is to avoid panic among the people of Israel
 - In response the Assyrian continue to speak in Hebrew and even louder to ensure the citizens on the wall hear every threat
 - And they make a demand for surrender
 - He offers a blessing for surrender, the opportunity to return to the field
 - Followed by deportation to a "good land"
 - Finally, he argues that other peoples couldn't trust in their gods to deliver them, so why should Israel trust their god to do any better
 - But the people follow King Hezekiah's orders and give no response to the demand
 - Instead, the delegation returns to the palace in mourning for what they assume will be their fate

Isaiah 37-39

- Tonight we finish First Isaiah and the story of Hezekiah
 - At the end of 36, the Assyrian commander has made his threats against Hezekiah's representatives
 - He declares that the city will be emptied of its people
 - And he induces a panicked silence among the city
 - Now the scene moves to Hezekiah himself

[Is. 37:1](#) ¶ And when King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and entered the house of the LORD.

[Is. 37:2](#) Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.

[Is. 37:3](#) They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke and rejection; for children have come to birth, and there is no strength to deliver.

[Is. 37:4](#) 'Perhaps the LORD your God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.'"

[Is. 37:5](#) ¶ So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

[Is. 37:6](#) Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.

[Is. 37:7](#) 'Behold, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own land. And I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.'"

- As Hezekiah hears the news from the wall, he realizes the hopelessness of the situation
 - His plans to rely on Egypt to repel the Assyrians have obviously failed
 - And now the Assyrians are knocking on Jerusalem's walls in anger for Israel's rebellion
 - As a show of mourning and distress, he tears his clothes and puts on sackcloth, a rough material intended to reflect mourning
 - Then he sends his diplomatic representatives to Isaiah

- Remember, Isaiah was the one who warned the nation not to seek an alliance with Egypt or else it would come back against them
- So Hezekiah now seems to be ready to admit his mistake and seek Isaiah's counsel and the Lord's mercy
- Hezekiah describes the day as a day of distress, rebuke and rejection
 - The rebuke and rejection refers to God's apparent rebuke of Hezekiah and rejection of the people in their disobedience
 - So we could call his words a statement of repentance
- Hezekiah asks Isaiah to seek the Lord's mercy
 - But not on the basis of the nation's merit
 - But on God's willingness to defend His own honor before the Assyrians
- Isaiah replies that God has a plan, so don't be afraid
 - God will send a spirit to the king of Assyria, causing him to think that there is a rebellion back home
 - Here we see clear evidence of God molding the thoughts and desires of men to suit His purposes
 - When the king hears this report, he will return to his land and die by the sword

[Is. 37:8](#) ¶ Then Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish.

[Is. 37:9](#) When he heard them say concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, "He has come out to fight against you," and when he heard it he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

[Is. 37:10](#) "Thus you shall say to Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'"

[Is. 37:11](#) 'Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, destroying them completely. So will you be spared?

[Is. 37:12](#) 'Did the gods of those nations which my fathers have destroyed deliver them, even Gozan and Haran and Rezeph and the sons of Eden who were in Telassar?

[Is. 37:13](#) 'Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, and of Hena and Ivvah?'"

- Rabshekah, the commander of the army, has to return to the King of Assyria empty handed
 - He wasn't able to persuade the city of Jerusalem to surrender
 - Jerusalem was a major city with some of the best defenses in the world
 - So the Assyrians didn't look forward to a siege of the city
 - Rabshekah finds the king of Assyria fighting in the Shephelah
 - Libnah was about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem
 - Lachish was about 7.5 miles further southwest
 - So the King has already defeated Lachish and was in the process of defeating Libnah when he receives Rabshekah
 - Then in verse 9 we see the moment when the king hears a rumor that draws him away from the battle at Jerusalem
 - Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia is preparing to attack Nineveh necessitating Sennacherib's return to defend the city
 - There is no such attack coming, and 20 years later the king is assassinated in his temple as he prayed to his pagan god
- Meanwhile, as he prepares to leave for Nineveh, Sennacherib writes his own letter to Hezekiah attempting to gain his surrender
 - This letter carried by Rabshekah conveys much the same story as before
 - The other nations stood no chance of stopping the Assyrian armies
 - Their gods did them no good
 - So why should the Jewish God be any different?
 - He says that their God is deceiving them into believing they will survive

[Is. 37:14](#) ¶ Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD.

[Is. 37:15](#) Hezekiah prayed to the LORD saying,

[Is. 37:16](#) "O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

[Is. 37:17](#) "Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to all the words of Sennacherib, who sent them to reproach the living God.

[Is. 37:18](#) "Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated all the countries and their lands,

[Is. 37:19](#) and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them.

[Is. 37:20](#) "Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, LORD, are God."

- Now to one of the most iconic scenes in all of Scripture
 - Many people who have never read Isaiah and no little else about Hezekiah has heard the account of how he takes this letter and spreads it out before the Lord
 - I dare say many Christians have probably repeated this scene in some form as they spread out an over due bill, or a medical report or some other bad news
 - Praying to the Lord for His protection or provision
 - But before we turn Hezekiah's actions into a ritual, let's examine the specifics of what he does and why
 - First, he goes to the house of the Lord, which would be the temple
 - His point is to seek the Lord, and in that day the Lord was found in the temple
 - He spreads the letter out and seeks the Lord's intervention
 - It's worth noting that this is what both His father and he himself should have done in the first place
 - Instead, they both sought their own counsel without ever seeking the Lord's
 - Now finally Hezekiah turns to the Lord
 - So the first thing to note about Hezekiah's approach is that he goes before the Lord seeking His counsel and intervention

- The second thing is Hezekiah's prayer is a prayer of repentance, not merely petition
- In Isaiah's day, the Jewish people were under judgment first because an earlier leader, Ahaz, had rejected Isaiah's word from God concerning the Assyrians
 - And now they were under an even greater judgment because the present leader, Hezekiah, had entered into the covenant with Egypt
 - Rather than relying on the Lord
 - He compounded the errors of his father
 - But remember this entire story fortells the story of the Jews in the time of Tribulation
 - The Jewish people are already in a state of judgment because their leaders rejected God's prophet, the Christ, in an earlier day
 - In place of God's prophet, they listened to their corrupt leaders who called Jesus demon-possessed
 - Later in Tribulation, the Jews will compound this error by entering into the covenant with the enemy
 - And this will bring upon them the Tribulation judgments
- But there is another parallel building here as well
 - And we see the beginning of it here in this scene with Hezekiah
 - When the pressure of this greater judgment has it's full effect, the leader returns to the Lord
 - And in his repentant confession he retreats from the mistakes of his day and of his father's day
 - In v.16, Hezekiah says that God is God alone, above everything created
 - Then Hezekiah asks God to incline His ear to listen to the blasphemous words of the king of Assyria
 - The king was able to destroy so many other nations and the gods because those gods were not real
 - But this only made the opportunity all the better for the God of Israel

- The world would see that all the false gods had failed but the one true God could then be seen to succeed
- So Hezekiah calls for the Lord to hear his cry
 - This moment mirrors a similar moment in the future instance
 - The Jews call upon the name of Christ in the last day of Tribulation
 - Leading to His return
- God promised this outcome to Israel even back in His Law

[Lev. 26:40](#) ¶ If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me —

[Lev. 26:41](#) I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies — or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity,

[Lev. 26:42](#) then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

- The call of the Jewish nation isn't merely one of their own mistakes, but it also acknowledges the mistakes of the "forefathers"
 - Much like the scene recorded in Zech 12 at the moment that the Jews in Jerusalem call upon the name of the Lord in their distress

[Zech. 12:10](#) ¶ "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

- Remember, these Jews are living many millennia after the death of Jesus
 - Yet their national confessions includes looking back at a past error committed by their forefathers and confessing that sin
 - Even though they themselves played no direct role in the error

- The parallel is easy to see...the final moment of confession includes a confession of their sins and the sins of their forefathers when they committed a similar offense against God
- For the final proof, consider the words of the confession spoken by the Tribulation Jews under siege in Jerusalem, captured in Psalm 79 & 80

[Psa. 79:5](#) How long, O LORD? Will You be angry forever?

Will Your jealousy burn like fire?

[Psa. 79:6](#) Pour out Your wrath upon the nations which do not know You,
And upon the kingdoms which do not call upon Your name.

[Psa. 79:7](#) For they have devoured Jacob
And laid waste his habitation.

[Psa. 79:8](#) ¶ Do not remember the iniquities of our forefathers against us;
Let Your compassion come quickly to meet us,
For we are brought very low.

[Psa. 79:9](#) Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name;
And deliver us and forgive our sins for Your name's sake.

- Notice that these Jews are under God's jealous anger
 - And they ask the Lord to pour His anger out against the nations that seek to destroy them
 - And they ask Him not to remember the sins of their forefathers
 - And to bring compassion instead
- And ultimately they ask for salvation and for Him to forgive their sins and deliver them
 - These are the words spoken by the Tribulation Jews which bring Christ back to rescue them
 - This is the national confession God described in Leviticus when He said that the nation could be saved in a future day
- In this moment in Isaiah, the same kind of comprehensive confession is happening
 - This is another link between the events of Hezekiah and the events of the future Israel in Tribulation
 - So Hezekiah's model in this famous scene is one of approaching God and declaring repentance
 - Followed by a call for God to defend His name and honor

- Now we get the response from God

[Is. 37:21](#) ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent word to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria,

[Is. 37:22](#) this is the word that the LORD has spoken against him:

"She has despised you and mocked you,
The virgin daughter of Zion;
She has shaken her head behind you,
The daughter of Jerusalem!

[Is. 37:23](#) "Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
And against whom have you raised your voice
And haughtily lifted up your eyes?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

[Is. 37:24](#) "Through your servants you have reproached the Lord,
And you have said, 'With my many chariots I came up to the heights of the mountains,
To the remotest parts of Lebanon;
And I cut down its tall cedars and its choice cypresses.
And I will go to its highest peak, its thickest forest.

[Is. 37:25](#) 'I dug wells and drank waters,
And with the sole of my feet I dried up
All the rivers of Egypt.'

[Is. 37:26](#) " Have you not heard?
Long ago I did it,
From ancient times I planned it.
Now I have brought it to pass,
That you should turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps.

[Is. 37:27](#) "Therefore their inhabitants were short of strength,
They were dismayed and put to shame;
They were as the vegetation of the field and as the green herb,
As grass on the housetops is scorched before it is grown up.

[Is. 37:28](#) "But I know your sitting down
And your going out and your coming in
And your raging against Me.

[Is. 37:29](#) "Because of your raging against Me
And because your arrogance has come up to My ears,
Therefore I will put My hook in your nose
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will turn you back by the way which you came.

[Is. 37:30](#) ¶ "Then this shall be the sign for you: you will eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

[Is. 37:31](#) "The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward.

[Is. 37:32](#) "For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

[Is. 37:33](#) ¶ "Therefore, thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, 'He will not come to this city or shoot an arrow there; and he will not come before it with a shield, or throw up a siege ramp against it.

[Is. 37:34](#) 'By the way that he came, by the same he will return, and he will not come to this city,' declares the LORD.

[Is. 37:35](#) 'For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake.'"

- God answered Hezekiah through Isaiah, the same way God tried to instruct Hezekiah the first time
 - The king's plans to take Israel will fail
 - Jerusalem will laugh at him ultimately
 - And he will fail because of his pride in assuming he was the one accomplishing all his military victories
 - Isaiah lists the many things that the king had taken credit for, when in reality, God was accomplishing the work through Assyria
 - In fact, God says in v.26 that He had purposed it from ancient times
 - From the beginning, even
 - So God says in v.29 that He will bring punishment upon Assyria
 - And they will return defeated
- In verse 30, Isaiah gives Judah a sign of confidence in God's word
 - The Jews are eating what grew on it's own this year and will do the same next year
 - Because the Assyrian invasion disrupted planting in the fields
 - And they will still need to eat what grew on it's own next year because this year's opportunity to plant was already gone
 - But in the third year, they could expect to plant and reap a harvest
 - Meaning life would return to normal

- In v.32, He promises that Israel will go forth from Zion under the Lord's protection
 - God promises that the king will not even begin his attack on the city
 - He will return the way he came and God will defend the city Himself for the sake of His servant David's sake
 - The reference to David means that God's promise that the throne of David would always have someone seated on it wouldn't fail
 - Until God's Son could arrive and assume the role of King, the throne of David would remain in Jerusalem

[Is. 37:36](#) ¶ Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, all of these were dead.

[Is. 37:37](#) So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home and lived at Nineveh.

[Is. 37:38](#) It came about as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.

- Now we see the events we've touched upon several times in the chapters leading up to this point
 - The Lord Himself destroys the army of Assyria
 - This happens after Sennacherib has departed to defend the rumored attack by Ethiopia
 - While he's gone, his army is wiped out
 - Based on the writings of the ancient Greek historian, Herodotus, the army was wiped out by bubonic plague spread by an invading horde of mice that descended upon the army in its camp
- With chapter 37 concluded, Isaiah now moves backward in time by a few months or years to present a prologue to these events
 - And in these two chapters, Isaiah creates a transition to Second Isaiah

- The restoration of Israel under Hezekiah is only temporary, as 38 & 39 will show
 - Leaving the reader wondering what can God do to finally bring Israel into the promises of restoration and glory

[Is. 38:1](#) ¶ In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.'"

[Is. 38:2](#) Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, [Is. 38:3](#) and said, "Remember now, O LORD, I beseech You, how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

- The opening phrase "in those days" moves the narrative out of the immediate moment of Assyria's siege of Jerusalem but leaves it in about the same time
 - Hezekiah dies in 686 BC, and in this chapter we'll see that Hezekiah is told he will live 15 more years
 - So this would have happened in 701 BC
 - The Assyrian siege of Jerusalem also occurred in 701 BC
 - Bible scholars believe that chapters 38-39 occurred a few months prior to the events of chapters 36-37
 - Hezekiah is dying and God declares through Isaiah that this illness will kill Hezekiah
 - Set your house in order meant to create a will and assign a successor because at this point he has not children
 - After Isaiah leaves, Hezekiah prays to God for mercy
 - And the basis for his appeal is his own godly walk with God
 - 2Chron as it relates this same story affirms Hezekiah's self-assessment, that he was a man who walked closely with God even more so than his father David.

[Is. 38:4](#) ¶ Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying,

[Is. 38:5](#) "Go and say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David, 'I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will add fifteen years to your life.

[Is. 38:6](#) "I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city.'"

[Is. 38:7](#) ¶ “This shall be the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that He has spoken:

[Is. 38:8](#) “Behold, I will cause the shadow on the stairway, which has gone down with the sun on the stairway of Ahaz, to go back ten steps.” So the sun’s shadow went back ten steps on the stairway on which it had gone down.

- The Lord’s response is couched in terms of David
 - He is the God of your father David
 - This designation tells us that the Lord is answering Hezekiah’s prayer on the basis of His promises to David never to leave the throne of David empty
 - For in those 15 years, Hezekiah will have sons and the line of David will be continued
 - Hezekiah’s son was 12 when he began ruling and Hezekiah died the year after
 - So the son was born after this moment
 - God also includes the promise to spare the city from Assyria
 - This gives further evidence that God’s purpose in acting is for the sake of David, the city and ultimately His Son’s future as King
 - But what does it say that God said one thing and then changed after Hezekiah prayed?
 - It seems similar to the way God prompted Abraham to pray after disclosing the fate of Sodom in Gen 18
 - Why did God let Hezekiah know that he would die? The only logical answer is so that Hezekiah would pray and seek God’s mercy
 - Mercy that He already intended to grant for the sake of David
 - Much like He granted Abraham the opportunity to pray for the Lot to be spared, which was always to be God’s plan
- Then God offers Hezekiah the opportunity to seek a sign of God’s faithfulness

- Remember that Hezekiah's father Ahaz was given a similar opportunity to ask for a sign, but he hypocritically refused to ask for one
 - God then gave him a sign against him
- We see the offer of a sign in 2Kings:

[2Kings 20:8](#) ¶ Now Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What will be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD the third day?"

[2Kings 20:9](#) Isaiah said, " This shall be the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that He has spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten steps or go back ten steps?"

[2Kings 20:10](#) So Hezekiah answered, "It is easy for the shadow to decline ten steps; no, but let the shadow turn backward ten steps."

[2Kings 20:11](#) Isaiah the prophet cried to the LORD, and He brought the shadow on the stairway back ten steps by which it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

- So in response to his request, God moves the shadow backward
 - Which prompts Hezekiah himself to speak in the text
 - The remaining verses are a psalm recounting the experience

[Is. 38:9](#) ¶ A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah after his illness and recovery:

[Is. 38:10](#) I said, " In the middle of my life
I am to enter the gates of Sheol;
I am to be deprived of the rest of my years."

[Is. 38:11](#) I said, "I will not see the LORD,
The LORD in the land of the living;
I will look on man no more among the inhabitants of the world.

[Is. 38:12](#) "Like a shepherd's tent my dwelling is pulled up and removed from me;
As a weaver I rolled up my life.
He cuts me off from the loom;
From day until night You make an end of me.

[Is. 38:13](#) "I composed my soul until morning.
Like a lion — so He breaks all my bones,
From day until night You make an end of me.

[Is. 38:14](#) " Like a swallow, like a crane, so I twitter;
I moan like a dove;
My eyes look wistfully to the heights;
O Lord, I am oppressed, be my security.

[Is. 38:15](#) ¶ " What shall I say?
For He has spoken to me, and He Himself has done it;
I will wander about all my years because of the bitterness of my soul.

[Is. 38:16](#) "O Lord, by these things men live,
And in all these is the life of my spirit;
O restore me to health and let me live!

[Is. 38:17](#) "Lo, for my own welfare I had great bitterness;
It is You who has kept my soul from the pit of nothingness,
For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.

[Is. 38:18](#) "For Sheol cannot thank You,
Death cannot praise You;
Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your faithfulness.

[Is. 38:19](#) "It is the living who give thanks to You, as I do today;
A father tells his sons about Your faithfulness.

[Is. 38:20](#) "The LORD will surely save me;
So we will play my songs on stringed instruments
All the days of our life at the house of the LORD."

[Is. 38:21](#) ¶ Now Isaiah had said, "Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the boil, that he may recover."

[Is. 38:22](#) Then Hezekiah had said, "What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?"

- Chiasitic structure
 - It begins with reference to the gates of Sheol and sorrow at the prospect of shortened days (v. 10),
 - And it ends with reference to the house of the Lord and joy at the prospect of lengthened days (v. 20).
 - The king began by referring to the land of the living being exchanged for the departed (v. 11)
 - And he ended with reference to the land of the departed exchanged for the land of the living (vv. 18-19).
 - In the middle, he contrasted God's hostility (vv. 12-14) with His restoration (vv. 15-17).
 - Hezekiah described his condition first (vv. 9-14), and then he praised God for His mercy (vv. 15- 20).

[Is. 39:1](#) ¶ At that time Merodach-baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered.

[Is. 39:2](#) Hezekiah was pleased, and showed them all his treasure house, the silver and the gold and the spices and the precious oil and his whole armory and all that was found in his treasuries. There was nothing in his house nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

[Is. 39:3](#) Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and said to him, "What did these men say, and from where have they come to you?" And Hezekiah said, "They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon."

[Is. 39:4](#) He said, "What have they seen in your house?" So Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them."

[Is. 39:5](#) ¶ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of hosts,

[Is. 39:6](#) 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house and all that your fathers have laid up in store to this day will be carried to Babylon; nothing will be left,' says the LORD.

[Is. 39:7](#) 'And some of your sons who will issue from you, whom you will beget, will be taken away, and they will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

[Is. 39:8](#) Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD which you have spoken is good." For he thought, "For there will be peace and truth in my days."

- Commentary available on MP3 recording...

Isaiah 40A

- Today we begin “Second Isaiah”
 - Chapters 40-66 present a very different pattern when compared to the first 39 books of the Bible
 - Second Isaiah is written about events in the future from Isaiah’s day
 - But he will often speak as if they are present day or even history
 - It will be as if Isaiah has been transported into the future and writes from that perspective
 - We said that this division is reminiscent of the way the Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments
 - There are several ways we can describe the differences
 - I will list them tonight and then reflect upon them as we move through the chapters

First Isaiah 1-39	Second Isaiah 40-66
God’s instrument is Assyria	God’s instrument is Babylon
Focuses on judgment	Focus is deliverance
Includes history	No history; always forward looking
Messiah is ruling to conquer sin	Messiah is a healing servant
Isaiah’s own life is interwoven	Isaiah’s own life is absent

- Another way to divide Second Isaiah is into thirds
 - The first third runs from Chapters 40-48
 - It focuses on the greatness of God the Father
 - The second third in Chapters 49-57
 - Focuses on the Son, as the suffering servant to redeem Israel from Her sins

- The third section is Chapters 58-66 looks at the Spirit
 - Looking at the remnant of Israel and how the Spirit produces the glory of Israel when the Spirit is poured out on Israel
- We could also contrast First Isaiah and Second Isaiah in simple terms
 - First Isaiah focuses on the judgment sin requires under terms of the Law
 - While Second Isaiah emphasizes the grace of God made possible through a Messiah's sacrifice
 - Law vs. Grace
- Looking at Isaiah 40, we are given yet another way to outline the second half of Isaiah
 - And this outline comes in the opening verses of chapter 40

[Is. 40:1](#) " Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God.

[Is. 40:2](#) " Speak kindly to Jerusalem;

And call out to her, that her warfare has ended,
That her iniquity has been removed,
That she has received of the LORD'S hand
Double for all her sins."

- The Lord's opening words in verse 1 are spoken to the prophets themselves
 - Certainly Isaiah, but probably his contemporary Micah as well
 - After 39 chapters of woes and judgments and prophecies of calamity, now they are told to present comforting words
- The sense of this statement in Hebrew (and the one that follows in verse2) suggest a winning over of the people
 - "Speak to their hearts" is the sense of the phrase
 - Give them encouraging words to win them back to God
- This is similar to what God tells Israel in other prophets, including Hosea

[Hos. 2:13](#) "I will punish her for the days of the Baals

When she used to offer sacrifices to them
And adorn herself with her earrings and jewelry,
And follow her lovers, so that she forgot Me," declares the LORD.

[Hos. 2:14](#) ¶ “Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
Bring her into the wilderness
And speak kindly to her.

[Hos. 2:15](#) “Then I will give her her vineyards from there,
And the valley of Achor as a door of hope.
And she will sing there as in the days of her youth,
As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

[Hos. 2:16](#) “It will come about in that day,” declares the LORD,
“That you will call Me Ishi
And will no longer call Me Baali.

- Hosea says that at first God punishes Israel for following Baal
 - Acting as a harlot with false gods
- But then in v.14 God will allure her back and speak kindly to her
 - The Hebrew for “speak kindly” is the same sense as Isaiah 40:1-2
 - Win her back
- And the result of that winning back will be a new day for Israel
 - In that day they will call God “Ish” or husband
 - And they will no longer look to Baal as god
- At this point, I need to introduce another of Isaiah’s trademark weaving of two themes together
 - In Second Isaiah, we will see Babylon at the center of many prophecies
 - And we know from history there was a Babylon that existed about 120 years after Isaiah
 - This was Nebuchannezar’s Babylon
 - But there is also to be a future Babylon during Tribulation
 - The Antichrist’s Babylon
 - Both Babylon’s are important to Israel, and Isaiah weaves together references to both throughout Second Isaiah
 - Just like with Assyria, the Babylon of Isaiah’s near future becomes a picture of the Babylon of the Tribulation

- The time of captivity due to arrive from Babylon gives way to a new exodus into the promised land at the hands of a deliverer
- And a new better nation emerges
- In 40:2 we are given an outline for Second Isaiah
 - Isaiah must speak kindly to Israel concerning three things
 - Her warfare as ended
 - Her iniquity has been removed
 - She has received double for all her sins from the Lord
 - Let's look at each of these in detail so we can begin to follow Isaiah's pattern
- First, Isaiah says Israel's warfare has ended
 - The war Isaiah is referring to is the war between Israel and God Himself
 - This was the war that began as a result of Israel's sin and disobedience of the covenant
 - God fought His battles through the hands of Israel's adversaries, principally Assyria
 - Remember His words to Jerusalem (Ariel) earlier:

[Is. 29:2](#) I will bring distress to Ariel,
And she will be a city of lamenting and mourning;
And she will be like an Ariel to me.

[Is. 29:3](#) I will camp against you encircling you,
And I will set siegeworks against you,
And I will raise up battle towers against you.

- This warfare is ended (speaking about a future time)
 - In chapters 40-48, Isaiah describes why the war has ended
 - The section focuses on God's superiority over the idols that provoked the war in the first place
 - Contrasting Israel with Gentiles who follow idols
 - And God promises the end of the gods of Babylon

- Isaiah gives a promise of two deliverances from these gods:
 - One from the idols worship that send Israel into the first Babylonian captivity
 - And the second one from the gods of the Spiritual Babylon
 - But both Babylons represent the end of warfare in slightly different ways
 - In 40-48 Isaiah will describe how God puts an end to His warfare when the nation is restored under Zerubbabel and Ezra and Nehemiah
 - And
 - After this return to the Land, Israel never again pursued idolatry
 - The first Babylon experience then becomes a picture of how Israel's faithfulness is restored (in the fullest sense) after the second Babylon
- Part 2 will describe how Israel's iniquity has been removed (or literally made amends)
 - In a sense, part 2 explains part 1
 - The war ended because Israel has ceased to follow idols
 - And God has removed ungodliness from Jacob
 - This section runs from chapters 49-57 and focuses on the suffering Messiah
 - The suffering is an atonement made by the Messiah to pay the debt of Israel's sins
 - Also in this section, the suffering Messiah is contrasted with the Messiah's glory in His kingdom
 - This contrast has long caused trouble for rabbis, who decided Isaiah must be teaching that there would be two Messiahs
 - A suffering Messiah and a conquering Messiah
 - You see this confusion in the questioning directed at John the Baptist

[John 1:19](#) ¶ This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

[John 1:20](#) And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

[John 1:21](#) They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

- They ask him if he is the Christ, Elijah or the Prophet
 - The Christ is the conquering Messiah
 - Elijah is to return before the establishment of the kingdom
 - The Prophet is the suffering Messiah
- Finally, the third section to Second Isaiah is found in chapters 49-57
 - This section addresses Israel receiving double for her sins
 - Like before, this third section is explained in a sense by the second section
 - Israel received a pardoning through the suffering Messiah only after she had been made to "pay" double for her sins
 - To explain this, let's remember why Israel found herself under judgment in the beginning of Isaiah
 - She had broken the covenant of Moses
 - Israel agreed to keep it's terms and when she didn't she fell under it's curses
 - The requirements of the Law includes the principle that the first born must receive a double portion of the inheritance
 - From this principle of a double portion, God declares that Israel would have to suffer double for breaking the covenant
 - But then when Israel is restored, it would receive double in her glory, as the chief nation on the Earth
- God calls Israel His first born among the nations in Exodus 4:22
 - You can see God echoing Isaiah in other places

[Jer. 16:18](#) "I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable idols and with their abominations."

- Likewise, they receive a double restoration

[Zech. 9:11](#) ¶ As for you also, because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

[Zech. 9:12](#) Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope; This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you.

- Finally, Paul repeats this principle in Romans

[Rom. 2:9](#) There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,

[Rom. 2:10](#) but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

- The Jews are always first, both in judgment and in restoration
 - And they receive a double portion for their sins
 - Ultimately, the double portion that Israel receives for her sins is paid out in Tribulation
 - While the double portion of glory is realized in Israel's position in the Kingdom as chief nation
- One last observation
 - Each of these sections is divided from the next with an interesting statement
 - A statement about the wicked
 - 48:22, 57:21, and 66:24
 - Do you remember how in the gospel of Matthew Jesus would often teach parables about Israel or the church
 - Which He then ended with a single quote about the wicked?
 - This is a classic Biblical pattern

- Before we get into the first section concerning the end of warfare begin, Isaiah shows a series of calls that take place in response to God's direction from vs. 1-2
 - The first call is found in verses 3-5

[Is. 40:3](#) ¶ A voice is calling,
 "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;
 Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

[Is. 40:4](#) "Let every valley be lifted up,
 And every mountain and hill be made low;
 And let the rough ground become a plain,
 And the rugged terrain a broad valley;

[Is. 40:5](#) Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
 And all flesh will see it together;
 For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

- A voice calls to prepare a way for a special arrival
 - The description of preparations here is based on the culture of Isaiah's day
 - As a king might enter into a new region as a visitor or to take up residence in a new part of his land, the people would prepare by cutting a new road or cleaning up the old one
 - They made a smooth road for the visiting king
 - They made his entry easier
 - That's the sense of how one voice says to prepare for the arrival of Christ, the King
 - Only this King will see valleys and mountains changed
 - As we've seen over and over again, there are two events mixing together here
- We know from all four gospel writers that John the Baptist was related to this verse,
 - But it's clear from the text in Isaiah that John wasn't the complete fulfillment of this prophecy
 - The glory of the King wasn't revealed
 - And not all flesh saw that glory
 - And mountains and valleys weren't reconstructed at that time

- But consider this passage from Matt

[Matt. 17:9](#) ¶ As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead."

[Matt. 17:10](#) And His disciples asked Him, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

[Matt. 17:11](#) And He answered and said, "Elijah is coming and will restore all things; [Matt. 17:12](#) but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands."

[Matt. 17:13](#) Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

- When the disciples see Jesus' glory, they begin to remember that Elijah was supposed to return before Christ's return
 - It comes from Malachi 4, the last chapter of the OT

[Mal. 4:5](#) ¶ "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

- The great and terrible day of the Lord is a reference to Tribulation
 - So this is a prophecy regarding Christ's second coming
- Furthermore, John the Baptist himself said he wasn't Elijah
 - We read those verses earlier
- So the disciples ask Jesus about that teaching...where was Elijah?
 - In v.11 Jesus says that Elijah is in fact going to come
 - When Jesus spoke those words, John the Baptist was already dead
 - So obviously He meant the true Elijah would come in a future day
 - Prior to Jesus' second coming
 - But Jesus also said that Isaiah's words were spoken about John
 - We must understand then that John was a type of Elijah
 - A lesser example in a sense

- Just as Jesus' first coming is a lesser arrival than His eventual second coming which is a greater glory
 - That's what Isaiah 40:5 is describing
 - The glory of the Lord seen by everyone is the glory of His second coming

[Matt. 24:29](#) ¶ "But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

[Matt. 24:30](#) "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

- So the first part of chapter 40 shows how one aspect of the call God requires in verse 2 takes place
 - God says in v.2 to "call out to Israel"
 - So in vs.3-5 the first call is explained
 - A call of encouragement will be made to Israel by John the Baptist prior to Jesus' first coming
 - But this call is merely a picture, because it doesn't result in Israel hearing
 - A second, effectual call will be made by Elijah to Israel before Jesus' second coming
 - Elijah's call will be made before the judgments of Tribulation
 - And will lead to Israel's restoration in the end
- Then a second call goes out with a pessimistic perspective

[Is. 40:6](#) A voice says, "Call out."

Then he answered, "What shall I call out?"

All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.

[Is. 40:7](#) The grass withers, the flower fades,

When the breath of the LORD blows upon it;

Surely the people are grass.

[Is. 40:8](#) The grass withers, the flower fades,

But the word of our God stands forever.

- God's command to call out is repeated in verse 6, but then another voice answers
 - What should I call out?
 - The call is to declare that the flesh is temporary and passing
 - When God's Spirit (or breath) blows, the grass withers
 - To fully understand how this fits, we need to look at 1Peter where this verse is quoted

[1Pet. 1:22](#) ¶ Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,
[1Pet. 1:23](#) for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.

1Pet. 1:24 For,

“ ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS,
 AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS.
 THE GRASS WITHERS,
 AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF,

[1Pet. 1:25](#) BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER.”

And this is the word which was preached to you.

- Peter says that our obedience to the truth came from being born again from a new seed
 - This new seed is not like the perishable seed we were born from the first time
 - The fleshly seed which is like grass and withers and dies eventually
 - We were born of an immortal seed
 - God's word, which is Christ living in us
 - Who was the word preached to us as the Gospel
- So the first call to Israel was from the voices of John the Baptist and Elijah calling upon Israel to repent and receive the Messiah
 - The second call is from the Word of God, Christ Himself who proclaimed Himself to the nation upon His first coming
 - Now the third call is described...

[Is. 40:9](#) ¶ Get yourself up on a high mountain,
 O Zion, bearer of good news,
 Lift up your voice mightily,
 O Jerusalem, bearer of good news;
 Lift it up, do not fear.
 Say to the cities of Judah,
 "Here is your God!"

[Is. 40:10](#) Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might,
 With His arm ruling for Him.
 Behold, His reward is with Him
 And His recompense before Him.

[Is. 40:11](#) Like a shepherd He will tend His flock,
 In His arm He will gather the lambs
 And carry them in His bosom;
 He will gently lead the nursing ewes.

- The final call is to be one of good news
 - The word for good news is the Hebrew word for gospel
 - This voice comes from Zion, from Jerusalem
 - And it declares to the cities of Judah, Here is your God!
 - This call describes the Lord as one coming with might to rule
 - And His reward is with Him and His recompense before Him
 - The reward with Him is His Bride
 - The recompense is His work or wages are before Him
 - The Kingdom is before Him, His payment from the Father
 - V.10 describes Jesus' relationship to the Gentiles
 - Ruling over these nations, with His Gentile Bride
 - Then in verse 11 Jesus is described as the Shepherd for Israel, His flock
 - He gathers His lambs and gently leads them
 - All Jews are regenerated, so He doesn't rule over them
- The final call then is the call into faith that comes to the Jews in Jerusalem as the Spirit is poured out
 - This three part call also mirrors the three part division of Second Isaiah

- The first call is focused on God the Father
 - Announcing His Son by preparing men for His arrival
 - Announcing that Israel was going to see an end to warfare
 - They were going to leave the wilderness
 - And see the path made smooth for an arriving King
- The second call is focused on the Son Himself
 - The good news of the Gospel will go out from Israel
 - The Word will be declared, Jesus the word of God
 - It will be a declaration that sins are forgiven by the work of the Messiah
- Finally, the last call is one that announces to Israel that Jesus is their God
 - This is the call of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of the Jews in Jerusalem
 - It is the call that leads them to their Messiah and ushers in the Kingdom

Isaiah 40B-41

- Let's begin the first third of Second Isaiah
 - Remembering the breakout of each third, the first third focuses on
 - The greatness of God the Father
 - His work in preparing a way for His Son
 - We begin with Isaiah reflecting on the Father's incomparable greatness
 - This will sound familiar probably
 - It reflects Job, Psalms and other works of Scripture in its descriptions of God

[Is. 40:12](#) ¶ Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,
And marked off the heavens by the span,
And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure,
And weighed the mountains in a balance
And the hills in a pair of scales?

- Isaiah begins with a series of contrasts between our experience and God's experience
 - Isaiah uses human terms to describe God's limitless, and the absurdity of using one to measure the other quickly becomes evident
 - Isaiah asks a series of questions beginning with "who"
 - Each questions examines God's power
 - And in each case, we're supposed to place God in our place and make the contrast
 - And Isaiah uses opposites (water verses dirt) to illustrate the completeness of his comparison
 - For example, "who" measured the seas in his palm?
 - We can barely measure an ounce or two
 - But God is capable of holding all the waters of Earth in His hand
 - Though it's not literal in the sense that God does not have a physical hand in the same way that we do

- It is literal in the sense that God's power to control creation includes the ability to move and control all the water of the earth as He wishes
- God marked off the universe with the span of His hand
 - A span is the distance from the tip of your thumb to the tip of your pinkie
 - God's "hand" was able to measure out the distance of the entire universe
 - The vastness of the universe seems as no greater than God's own hand
 - Impossible to imagine much less understand how powerful and vast God Himself is
- God can measure the dust of the earth precisely
 - Another unimaginable wisdom
- Finally, God could weigh mountains precisely as if on a set of scales
 - To the question of God's power, it is without limit and without comprehension
- Secondly, in verse 13 Isaiah asks questions regarding God's wisdom

[Is. 40:13](#) Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,
Or as His counselor has informed Him?

[Is. 40:14](#) With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding?
And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge
And informed Him of the way of understanding?

- Who has directed God's work by His Spirit?
 - Caused God to do something apart from God's own will and purposes
 - Who has ever counseling God and taught God something He didn't know
 - Or explained what justice should require or shown Him the way of truth on some matter?
 - Obviously, there is nothing apart from God except His own create, so there is no source for knowledge apart from God

[Is. 40:15](#) Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales;
Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.

[Is. 40:16](#) Even Lebanon is not enough to burn,
Nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering.

[Is. 40:17](#) All the nations are as nothing before Him,
They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.

- The third part of God's great power is found in a comparison to the insignificance of men and nations
 - All the nations of people, as numerous as we see them to be, are like a drop in a bucket
 - That's a favorite metaphor, but consider what it really means
 - If you add or remove a single drop from a bucket, you would never notice
 - From God's point of view, He would barely notice if all the nations of Earth ceased to exist
 - Likewise, men are like specks of dust on scales - we don't even register
 - Lebanon was renown for its forests, but it wasn't even enough wood to light a suitable sacrifice for God
 - Nor were there enough animals in the land to create a worthy sacrifice
- Altogether, the nations of men are nothing
 - In Hebrew the phrase is nothing, nothingness and utter confusion
 - God's greatness is magnified by His creation
 - Not in the sense that the Creation's grandeur speaks to God's power
 - But rather that it's insignificance contrasts with God's limitless power and wisdom and significance

[Is. 40:18](#) ¶ To whom then will you liken God?

Or what likeness will you compare with Him?

[Is. 40:19](#) As for the idol, a craftsman casts it,

A goldsmith plates it with gold,

And a silversmith fashions chains of silver.

[Is. 40:20](#) He who is too impoverished for such an offering

Selects a tree that does not rot;

He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman

To prepare an idol that will not totter.

[Is. 40:21](#) ¶ Do you not know? Have you not heard?

Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

[Is. 40:22](#) It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,

And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,

Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain

And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

[Is. 40:23](#) He it is who reduces rulers to nothing,

Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless.

[Is. 40:24](#) Scarcely have they been planted,

Scarcely have they been sown,

Scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth,

But He merely blows on them, and they wither,

And the storm carries them away like stubble.

[Is. 40:25](#) “To whom then will you liken Me

That I would be his equal?” says the Holy One.

[Is. 40:26](#) Lift up your eyes on high

And see who has created these stars,

The One who leads forth their host by number,

He calls them all by name;

Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power,

Not one of them is missing.

- The third set of questions demonstrate God’s uniqueness
 - Theme: nothing can compare to Him
 - He begins with a comparison to idols filled with irony
 - Would you compare God compare to the idols made by men?
 - The better craftsman at least takes gold and silver to make an idol
 - But the poor idol worshipper must go out to the forest to find wood for his idol

- So the value and worth of the person's god depended on their financial condition
- To the poor person, Isaiah mocks them by reminding them not to pick wood that might rot
 - We wouldn't want our god to rot!
- And in the world of idols, the best idol was one that was so stable that it never moved, wouldn't topple over
 - In contrast to the Living God Who is active in Creation
- Then Isaiah rebukes the reader who might have considered something to equal God's glory
 - Didn't you listen to what was declared from the beginning?
 - What declaration?
 - The "beginning" refers to Creation, and the declaration is found in Gen 1 and in Rom 1

[Rom. 1:19](#) because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

[Rom. 1:20](#) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

- The creation came out of God, so how can men every believe that anything in the creation could compare with it's creator
 - That we should worship the creation instead of the Creator
- Next, Earthly rulers are absolutely nothing in comparison to God the Father's authority and majesty
 - Notice in verse 22 we're told God sits above the circle or round of the earth
 - Does that strike you as interesting? Remember, these words are written nearly 2,200 years before a man named Christopher Columbus proves the earth is round
 - Isaiah goes on to repeat God's power over the universe
 - We're as insignificant as grasshoppers, and the rulers and judges are meaningless as well

- So if men are so insignificant, how important are the idols they create with their own hands?
- So who can compare to God?
 - If you still need the answer, Isaiah recommends you start counting the stars
 - And when you tire, realize the God not only created them, and can count them, but has named them

[Is. 40:27](#) ¶ Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel,
 “My way is hidden from the LORD,
 And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God”?

[Is. 40:28](#) Do you not know? Have you not heard?
 The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth
 Does not become weary or tired.
 His understanding is inscrutable.

[Is. 40:29](#) He gives strength to the weary,
 And to him who lacks might He increases power.

[Is. 40:30](#) Though youths grow weary and tired,
 And vigorous young men stumble badly,

[Is. 40:31](#) Yet those who wait for the LORD
 Will gain new strength;
 They will mount up with wings like eagles,
 They will run and not get tired,
 They will walk and not become weary.

- So, in light of God’s greatness, omnisciences and power Isaiah turns to Israel to make His application
 - Do you think a God this great will be fooled concerning your sin?
 - Do you think you’ll escape His discipline?
 - He doesn’t tire or give up watching
 - He is prepared to support those who rely on Him and stumble those who try to walk proudly on their own
 - This is the reality for Israel
- Continuing in our theme of God the Father and His might preparing a way for His Son
 - Now we turn to a new scene in which the setting is a trial

- God is placing the idols of the Gentile nations on trial in a sense
- And one nation becomes a representative for all Gentiles at this trial
 - It is a nation that didn't even exist in Isaiah's day
 - Yet he describes it so perfectly, it's easy to know who Isaiah' is describing
- The nation is Persia, and its leader is Cyrus
 - Cyrus isn't names until Chapter 44, but the details in this chapter match him and his nation perfectly
- As we enter this chapter, remember the patterns we should expect to see
 - First, Isaiah writes as if He is living in the future, about 150 years in the future
 - Secondly, he weaves together prophecies of that near future with prophecies of the far future in Tribulation
 - So we need to look for where those breaks occurs

[Is. 41:1](#) ¶ " Coastlands, listen to Me in silence,
 And let the peoples gain new strength;
 Let them come forward, then let them speak;
 Let us come together for judgment.

- God commands the "peoples" come forward for judgment
 - The word for peoples is another way of saying Gentiles and refers to the world of Gentile nations
 - The coming together for judgment refers to the a court of law
 - The word in Hebrew literally means judgment but can also be used in the sense of court or charge
 - Remember, the point of the trial is to prove God the Father's superiority over any idol or other so-called God
 - So God opens the trial by setting forth His case as supremely powerful
 - And He does it in two ways, a story within the story

- First, God is going to relate how He controlled world events concerning Persia and Cyrus
 - Secondly, the very fact that Isaiah could reveal this 150 years in advance of it happening proves God's power to accomplish exactly what He wishes in the course of human history

[Is. 41:2](#) "Who has aroused one from the east
Whom He calls in righteousness to His feet?
He delivers up nations before him
And subdues kings.
He makes them like dust with his sword,
As the wind-driven chaff with his bow.

[Is. 41:3](#) "He pursues them, passing on in safety,
By a way he had not been traversing with his feet.

[Is. 41:4](#) "Who has performed and accomplished it,
Calling forth the generations from the beginning?
'I, the LORD, am the first, and with the last. I am He.'"

- God's case begins with a description of "one" whom God calls from the East
 - This one is called to his feet
 - The second use of "his" probably shouldn't be capitalized
 - The best view in my opinion is that God calls one in righteousness to his feet
 - Whoever this is, God has placed him on his feet, in the sense that God has placed this one in power and set him on his way
 - The purpose of this one is to subdue nations by God's authority
 - He passing through them in safety, even attacking places he had never seen and prevailing
 - But Who made (will make) this happen? God of course

[Is. 41:5](#) ¶ The coastlands have seen and are afraid;
The ends of the earth tremble;
They have drawn near and have come.

[Is. 41:6](#) Each one helps his neighbor
And says to his brother, "Be strong!"

[Is. 41:7](#) So the craftsman encourages the smelter,
And he who smooths metal with the hammer encourages him who beats the
anvil,
Saying of the soldering, "It is good";
And he fastens it with nails,
So that it will not totter.

- Remembering that Isaiah is writing as if this were present tense, but in reality he is writing about the future
 - He says that in the future, this nation that God is raising up will come from the east and the coastlands (western Palestine) will tremble in fear over them
 - They encourage one another in the face of this threat
 - And their chief response is to encourage their idol craftsmen to work all the harder to produce new and better gods
 - Ones that won't topple over
- God's is making His case against the Gentile idols by two contrasts
 - First, the contrast between the true God who brought this country into the land
 - Verses the manmade idols who merely strive to stay on the feet when the invader arrives
 - Secondly, the fact that Isaiah could foretell these events 150 years in advance proves God's sovereignty
 - While the people and their idols are taken by surprise when it happens, showing their weakness
- Moving forward, God strengthens His case against the futility of idols by demonstrating His power in a far future day when idols will be completely eliminated

[Is. 41:8](#) "But you, Israel, My servant,
Jacob whom I have chosen,

Descendant of Abraham My friend,
[Is. 41:9](#) You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth,
And called from its remotest parts
And said to you, 'You are My servant,
I have chosen you and not rejected you.

[Is. 41:10](#) 'Do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, surely I will help you,
Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

[Is. 41:11](#) "Behold, all those who are angered at you will be shamed and dishonored;
Those who contend with you will be as nothing and will perish.

[Is. 41:12](#) " You will seek those who quarrel with you, but will not find them,
Those who war with you will be as nothing and non-existent.

[Is. 41:13](#) "For I am the LORD your God, who upholds your right hand,
Who says to you, ' Do not fear, I will help you.'

[Is. 41:14](#) "Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel;
I will help you," declares the LORD, " and your Redeemer is the Holy One of
Israel.

[Is. 41:15](#) "Behold, I have made you a new, sharp threshing sledge with double edges;
You will thresh the mountains and pulverize them,
And will make the hills like chaff.

[Is. 41:16](#) "You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them away,
And the storm will scatter them;
But you will rejoice in the LORD,
You will glory in the Holy One of Israel.

- Israel was chosen by God to follow and serve Him
 - Because Israel follows the true God, in contrast to the idols of the nations
 - Therefore, Israel won't have anything to fear
 - In part because God gave them this forewarning through Isaiah
 - God will strengthen and uphold that nation, clearly illustrating the difference between Himself and the false gods of the nations
 - And in a far future day, the nation will search for an enemy and not find one (v.12)
 - And this rescue for Israel will come for Jacob, for Israel when the nation is like a worm

- The term may sound disrespectful, but it isn't in Hebrew
- It means prostrate or helpless
- The Messiah is described this way in Psalm 22:7
- Israel's rescue by the hand of God comes when it is at its weakest and seemingly prostrate
 - We know this is the moment described in Zech 12 when Israel is rescued by the return of Christ
 - This is the meaning of "I will help you...your Redeemer"
- This section ends with a promise that in that far future day, Israel will suddenly become the powerful nation that fights back and threshes the nations
 - Zech 12 also describes this moment

[Zech. 12:1](#) ¶ The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. ¶ Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him,

[Zech. 12:2](#) "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah.

[Zech. 12:3](#) "It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

[Zech. 12:4](#) "In that day," declares the LORD, "I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

[Zech. 12:5](#) "Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, 'A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.'

[Zech. 12:6](#) ¶ "In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.

[Zech. 12:7](#) "The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah.

[Zech. 12:8](#) "In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

[Zech. 12:9](#) "And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

- Israel is made too strong for the Gentile nations to handle, by God's power
 - And God will be seen as the one who comes to their rescue, even as they struggle in their weakness

[Is. 41:17](#) ¶ "The afflicted and needy are seeking water, but there is none,
And their tongue is parched with thirst;
I, the LORD, will answer them Myself,
As the God of Israel I will not forsake them.

[Is. 41:18](#) "I will open rivers on the bare heights
And springs in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water
And the dry land fountains of water.

[Is. 41:19](#) "I will put the cedar in the wilderness,
The acacia and the myrtle and the olive tree;
I will place the juniper in the desert
Together with the box tree and the cypress,

[Is. 41:20](#) That they may see and recognize,
And consider and gain insight as well,
That the hand of the LORD has done this,
And the Holy One of Israel has created it.

- The afflicted here are the remnant of Israel awaiting their rescue
 - And it will be God Himself who will rescue them
- Then He will provide for them an oasis in the desert
 - Ultimately, this is a reference to the way God restores Israel in their land
 - But it also a reference to way God will protect Israel in the time of Tribulation
 - Making miraculous provision for them as He protects the remnant from the antichrist
 - Isaiah discusses this more later in the book
- And the effect of all this provision and protection is that the people of Israel will see and recognize that the Lord has done all this
- This is God's court case in defense of His name and power
 - Now He turns to the nations and their false gods and says present your case

[Is. 41:21](#) ¶ “ Present your case,” the LORD says.

“Bring forward your strong arguments,”

The King of Jacob says.

[Is. 41:22](#) Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place;

As for the former events, declare what they were,

That we may consider them and know their outcome.

Or announce to us what is coming;

[Is. 41:23](#) Declare the things that are going to come afterward,

That we may know that you are gods;

Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together.

[Is. 41:24](#) Behold, you are of no account,

And your work amounts to nothing;

He who chooses you is an abomination.

- God’s challenge to the false gods is to have them declare what will take place in the way God is prepared to do through Isaiah
 - Explain the future to prove their deity
 - The ability to predict the future is inherently a power of GOD
 - Because predicting the future requires the ability to make it so
 - Only the one who can control all things can say with confidence how anything will turn out in the future
 - Or on the other hand, explain the past
 - Particularly, the creation
 - Explain how everything came to be
 - God can explain the creation and do so in perfect harmony with what we observe today because He was there and He did it
- Finally God challenges the man made idols to do “anything”
 - Do something good or evil, but just do something to cause the people to look around anxiously and fear
 - Again, this is something the true God is about doing all the time
 - The events of the world unfold according to His plan
 - At times bringing fear and anxiety
 - But the idols sit idly (no pun intended)

- So God declares the verdict of this trial
 - The idols are of no account, their work amounts to nothing
 - Therefore, those who might chose an idol above God are an abomination
 - Remember that today, roughly 4 billion people around the world worship idols in one form or another
 - Idol worship is hardly something old fashioned
 - God sees them as an abomination (or detestable)
- So now God pronounces sentence

[Is. 41:25](#) ¶ "I have aroused one from the north, and he has come;
From the rising of the sun he will call on My name;
And he will come upon rulers as upon mortar,
Even as the potter treads clay."

[Is. 41:26](#) Who has declared this from the beginning, that we might know?
Or from former times, that we may say, "He is right!"?
Surely there was no one who declared,
Surely there was no one who proclaimed,
Surely there was no one who heard your words.

[Is. 41:27](#) "Formerly I said to Zion, 'Behold, here they are.'
And to Jerusalem, 'I will give a messenger of good news.'

[Is. 41:28](#) "But when I look, there is no one,
And there is no counselor among them
Who, if I ask, can give an answer.

[Is. 41:29](#) "Behold, all of them are false;
Their works are worthless,
Their molten images are wind and emptiness.

- This same "one" will come, this time from the North
 - This nation is coming as a sentence against those with idols, including those in Israel who follow idols
 - This nation who is coming will come because of God
 - He call the name of God
 - We know Cyrus wasn't a true believer, but he did recognize that the God of Israel brought him to power

[2Chr. 36:23](#) "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!'"

- And God boasts who else could have known this so specifically
 - His boast is based in the details of east and north
 - The nation that is coming to bring punishment is the Persian empire under Cyrus
 - They invade in 150 years to defeat the Babylonians and bring Israel back into Her land
 - And the king of Persia at that future time is Cyrus the Great
 - He comes from both the North and the East because one parent is a Persian (the east) and the other parent is a Mede (the north)
 - He unites the Medes and Persians to form the Medo-Persian empire
- Such detail is clear evidence of God's omniscience and power
- Isaiah finishes by speaking as if in the future looking back to Isaiah day
 - Behold, I told you this would happen
 - You have to imagine someone in Israel reading the prophet Isaiah during the time of Cyrus' rise to power
 - And they come upon these words written as if in their own day
 - Saying, "See, Isaiah told you about this long before."
 - Therefore, you can know that the Lord is the true God
 - "Formerly I delivered good news..." in the sense that Isaiah wrote this in former time, as seen from the point of view of someone living in the day of Persian conquest

Isaiah 42-43

- Tonight we begin in Isaiah 42 with God the Father, still the center of the narrative, making an introduction - until chapter 48
 - And He begins chapter 42 by introducing to Israel and the world His Son
 - The Father calls His Son "His Servant"
 - This sets up the next section of Isaiah, which focuses on the Suffering Servant
 - The Father's introduction begins with a six-part description of this coming Servant

[Is. 42:1](#) ¶ "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;
My chosen one in whom My soul delights.
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the nations.

[Is. 42:2](#) "He will not cry out or raise His voice,
Nor make His voice heard in the street.

[Is. 42:3](#) "A bruised reed He will not break
And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish;
He will faithfully bring forth justice.

[Is. 42:4](#) "He will not be disheartened or crushed
Until He has established justice in the earth;
And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law."

- First, the Father describes His Son as a Servant
 - This view of Christ is confirmed in NT scripture:

[John 4:34](#) Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

[Phil. 2:5](#) Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
[Phil. 2:6](#) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

[Phil. 2:7](#) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

[Phil. 2:8](#) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- Secondly, Christ is the One Father upholds

- We can see this fulfilled in at least two ways
 - First, the Father upheld Christ in the desert

[Mark 1:12](#) ¶ Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness.
[Mark 1:13](#) And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

- Secondly, the Father upheld Christ in the ultimate sense at His resurrection
- Third, Jesus is the Father's Chosen One
 - We can see this in 1Pet 2 among other places

[1Pet. 2:4](#) ¶ And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,
[1Pet. 2:5](#) you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

[1Pet. 2:6](#) For this is contained in Scripture:

“ BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone,
 AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”

- Peter actually quotes from Isa 28 in describing Jesus as the choice stone of God
- Fourth, Jesus is the One WHom God's soul delights
 - This is evidenced in the moment the Spirit descended on Christ

[Luke 3:21](#) ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened,
[Luke 3:22](#) and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “ You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

- Fifth, the Father will place His Spirit upon Christ
 - We see this happen in the Gospels, particularly in Matthew :

[Matt. 3:16](#) After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him,

- Finally, this Servant will bring forth justice to the nations

- Jesus is credited specifically with maintaining perfect justice, perfect peace among nations on Earth still wrestling with sin
- We have already read many places in both the OT and the NT of how Jesus establishes this time of perfect justice in the Messianic kingdom
- Verse 2 tells us how He accomplishes these things
 - Jesus won't accomplish these things through forceful argument, nor force and effort
 - He comes meekly and relies on the Spirit and the Church to carry His message to the world
 - Because in His first appearing, He is appointed to be a suffering servant, not a victorious us
 - In Matt, Jesus quotes this prophecy concerning Himself:

[Matt. 12:15](#) ¶ But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all,

[Matt. 12:16](#) and warned them not to tell who He was.

[Matt. 12:17](#) This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet:

[Matt. 12:18](#) " BEHOLD, MY SERVANT WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN;
MY BELOVED IN WHOM MY SOUL is WELL-PLEASED;
I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM,
AND HE SHALL PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES.

[Matt. 12:19](#) " HE WILL NOT QUARREL, NOR CRY OUT;
NOR WILL ANYONE HEAR HIS VOICE IN THE STREETS.

[Matt. 12:20](#) " A BATTERED REED HE WILL NOT BREAK OFF,
AND A SMOLDERING WICK HE WILL NOT PUT OUT,
UNTIL HE LEADS JUSTICE TO VICTORY.

[Matt. 12:21](#) " AND IN HIS NAME THE GENTILES WILL HOPE."

- Jesus reminded the disciples often that He was not to be stopped in His plan to conquer through suffering
- In Isa 42:3 the prophet describes the manner of Jesus suffering
 - The Hebrew uses idioms to describe His ministry
 - A bruised reed He will not break, a dim wick He will not extinguish
 - Meaning Jesus will not crush the oppressed, but instead He will rescue them and strengthen them in justice

- Said another way, He brings hope to the hopeless
- Verse 4 says that despite the suffering, the Messiah won't be disappointed or discouraged
 - Even though His message was rejected and He was beaten and scourged and put to death
 - This was all according to plan
 - And He won't be finished until He has established justice on Earth, and the coastlands (or the ends of the earth) wait for His law as He rules
- Now the Father declares He is commissioning His Son for this purpose

[Is. 42:5](#) ¶ Thus says God the LORD,
 Who created the heavens and stretched them out,
 Who spread out the earth and its offspring,
 Who gives breath to the people on it
 And spirit to those who walk in it,

[Is. 42:6](#) "I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness,
 I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You,
 And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people,
 As a light to the nations,

[Is. 42:7](#) To open blind eyes,
 To bring out prisoners from the dungeon
 And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.

[Is. 42:8](#) "I am the LORD, that is My name;
 I will not give My glory to another,
 Nor My praise to graven images.

[Is. 42:9](#) "Behold, the former things have come to pass,
 Now I declare new things;
 Before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."

- God the Father declares His authority and sovereignty to set His Son on this mission
 - He speaks tenderly to His Son as One called in righteousness
 - Holding Him and watching over Him
 - You get the sense that the Father is speaking in reassuring terms to His Son knowing the severity of what He would ask Him to accomplish

- Then the Father says His Son will be appointed as a covenant to the people
 - The word for people in singular in Hebrew, meaning a single group of people
 - This Messiah will be a covenant to the people, Israel
 - In other words, Jesus singlehandedly fulfills all the Jewish covenants
 - He fulfills the covenant given to Abraham (i.e., He is the “seed”)
 - Jesus completes the covenant given through Moses (i.e., He meets all the terms of the Law)
 - He establishes the New Covenant through His own blood
- Furthermore, Jesus is a light to the nations, or Gentiles
 - Beyond fulfilling all the covenants of Israel, Jesus is a light
 - Something good that draws attention and guides into truth
 - For the Gentiles, Jesus is light for they have not had God’s revelation prior to Him
- Jesus earthly ministry is revealed in v.7 to be one that heals blindness and release from bondage
 - In their ultimate sense, Isaiah is speaking of spiritual blindness and bondage
 - From the slavery to sin
- Then in v.8 the Father says My name is Yahweh
 - And He won’t extend His glory to another, only to Himself
 - Not to idols
 - In this statement we see further evidence that Jesus, Who received the glory of the Father, must have been God Himself
 - If the Father declares He won’t share His glory with another, then Jesus can’t be “another” but rather God Himself

- In v.9, we see another of those strange moments when Isaiah is recording God's words as if he were living in the future looking backward
 - From that perspective, God says the former things have already come to pass
 - The prophecies of Assyria and other events that Isaiah prophesied have happened by this future date
 - Now God says new prophecies are about to be given
 - The far-future visions of Tribulation and beyond
- Before we see this new prophecy, Isaiah himself interjects with a song of praise for the Father

[Is. 42:10](#) ¶ Sing to the LORD a new song,
Sing His praise from the end of the earth!
You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it.
You islands, and those who dwell on them.

[Is. 42:11](#) Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voices,
The settlements where Kedar inhabits.
Let the inhabitants of Sela sing aloud,
Let them shout for joy from the tops of the mountains.

[Is. 42:12](#) Let them give glory to the LORD
And declare His praise in the coastlands.

[Is. 42:13](#) The LORD will go forth like a warrior,
He will arouse His zeal like a man of war.
He will utter a shout, yes, He will raise a war cry.
He will prevail against His enemies.

- Isaiah calls all men to praise the Lord as He goes forth to conquer His enemies
 - This song sets our focus on the future day of Jesus' return in glory
 - And the New Prophecy begins with a reference to that far future time

[Is. 42:14](#) ¶ " I have kept silent for a long time,
I have kept still and restrained Myself.
Now like a woman in labor I will groan,
I will both gasp and pant.

[Is. 42:15](#) "I will lay waste the mountains and hills
And wither all their vegetation;
I will make the rivers into coastlands
And dry up the ponds.

[Is. 42:16](#) "I will lead the blind by a way they do not know,
 In paths they do not know I will guide them.
 I will make darkness into light before them
 And rugged places into plains.
 These are the things I will do,
 And I will not leave them undone."

[Is. 42:17](#) They will be turned back and be utterly put to shame,
 Who trust in idols,
 Who say to molten images,
 "You are our gods."

- With respect to Israel, God will have been silent for over 2,000 years by the time He begins to act again against them
 - The start of Tribulation is that time again when He speaks to them
 - Isaiah summarizes the devastation on the earth that God brings
 - And in v.16 He promises to lead the blind of Isaiah into the light
 - Probably a reference to the remnant of Tribulation lead into safety and into spiritual awareness (faith)
 - In contrast to the remnant, God will bring judgment against those who continue to follow idols
 - Remember, idols are the key focus for the Father in this first section
 - He wants to remove the obstacles to Israel's acceptance of their Messiah
 - The far future fulfillment is the complete destruction of idols everywhere on earth
 - The near future fulfillment is the ending of idol worship within Israel itself

[Is. 42:18](#) ¶ Hear, you deaf!
 And look, you blind, that you may see.

[Is. 42:19](#) Who is blind but My servant,
 Or so deaf as My messenger whom I send?
 Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me,
 Or so blind as the servant of the LORD?

[Is. 42:20](#) You have seen many things, but you do not observe them;
 Your ears are open, but none hears.

[Is. 42:21](#) The LORD was pleased for His righteousness' sake
To make the law great and glorious.

[Is. 42:22](#) But this is a people plundered and despoiled;
All of them are trapped in caves,
Or are hidden away in prisons;
They have become a prey with none to deliver them,
And a spoil, with none to say, "Give them back!"

- Now God turns to Israel in the near future time at the point of the Babylonian captivity
 - He calls to Israel as the ones who are now the ones who are blind and deaf
 - In v.19 God refers to Israel, the nation, as His servant
 - The nation was raised up to be God's people, His covenant people
 - The light to the nations
 - Instead, He says in irony that His messenger was deaf
 - His servant was blind
 - In v.20 God says His servant has seen many things, but didn't observe
 - The word for observe, shamar, means to be a gatekeeper
 - One who is supposed to keep watch and and be ready to understand what he sees
 - Israel stopped watching and was ignorant
 - And their ears were open but didn't hear
 - The sake of God's own righteousness, He made His law great and glorious
 - And as a result of their disobedience, God declares they will experience its judgment against them
 - They will be hiding in caves or in prison
 - They will become prey with no one to deliver them
 - None to defend them

[Is. 42:23](#) ¶ Who among you will give ear to this?

Who will give heed and listen hereafter?

[Is. 42:24](#) Who gave Jacob up for spoil, and Israel to plunderers?

Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned,
And in whose ways they were not willing to walk,
And whose law they did not obey?

[Is. 42:25](#) So He poured out on him the heat of His anger

And the fierceness of battle;
And it set him aflame all around,
Yet he did not recognize it;
And it burned him, but he paid no attention.

- So, because Israel has forsaken God's Law, God warns Judah that their judgment is coming
 - And He assures them of the judgment by comparing their fate to the fate of Israel
 - This is not a comparison that Judah would have wanted to hear
 - Remember, Isaiah is writing these words in the past tense, but speaking about events that weren't going to happen for another 150 years
 - Without giving the specifics of the judgment, God says that His anger will burn against them and they will be caught up in it
 - He's speaking of the Babylonian captivity
- Now chapter 43 begins to turn the sentiment in reverse
 - God will begin to speak of the way He delivers Israel from Babylon
 - Like Isaiah has done before, we first hear the far future prophecy of God's work in Israel during the last days and Tribulation
 - Followed by the prophecy of how God will deliver Israel from Babylonian captivity in the near future

[Is. 43:1](#) ¶ But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob,

And He who formed you, O Israel,
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name; you are Mine!

[Is. 43:2](#) "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

And through the rivers, they will not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched,
Nor will the flame burn you.

[Is. 43:3](#) "For I am the LORD your God,
The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;
I have given Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in your place.

[Is. 43:4](#) "Since you are precious in My sight,
Since you are honored and I love you,
I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life.

[Is. 43:5](#) "Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
And gather you from the west.

[Is. 43:6](#) "I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'
And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'
Bring My sons from afar
And My daughters from the ends of the earth,

[Is. 43:7](#) Everyone who is called by My name,
And whom I have created for My glory,
Whom I have formed, even whom I have made."

- The entire passage is one of encouragement to Israel even in the face of God's judgment
 - But the picture here is of a kinsman redeemer
 - Israel will find herself in bondage to Babylon for their sins under the Law
 - And God provides the redemption
 - If someone in Israel found himself in debt and unable to pay that debt, he would have no choice but to sell himself into slavery to pay off the debt
 - He could be freed from that slavery by a kinsman redeemer, but a redeemer had to meet three requirements in the Law
 - He had to be a close relative
 - He had to pay the full price
 - He had to be willing to pay the price, since it was a voluntary act
 - God establishes all these conditions in the verses we have already read
- First, God is a close relative to Jacob, as the One Who formed Him

- God formed Israel in the sense that He gave birth to the nation through Abraham
- In v.1 God says He would also be the one to redeem Israel from her bondage under the law
 - He will rescue her from her trials (v.2), which shows He is willing to redeem her
- Then in v.3 God announces the price He will pay for Israel
 - First, God is willing to sacrifice entire nations of people, bringing them to destruction in the course of His plan to rescue Israel
 - How does God do this?
 - He uses these nations to carry out various stages of His plan for Israel
 - For example, He used Egypt to hold Israel in bondage for a time to protect them from the Canaanite influence
 - And then sacrificed that nation when the time came to free Israel
 - Secondly, God says He is the Holy One of Israel, your Savior
 - This is a reference to the price God paid through our Savior, Christ Jesus
 - God paid the price for Israel's sin in the person of Jesus on the cross
- So God will redeem Israel as One Who is related and willing and able to pay the price
 - And that rescue will happen first with a regathering to their land
 - In vs.6-7 God promises that He will announce to the four corners of the world that the nations are to give up His people
 - So that they may return to their land
 - We know this is the prophecy of Israel's restart in 1948 and the Jews' return to their land
 - Another clue to tell us that we are nearing the end of age

[Is. 43:8](#) ¶ Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes,
And the deaf, even though they have ears.

[Is. 43:9](#) All the nations have gathered together
So that the peoples may be assembled.
Who among them can declare this
And proclaim to us the former things?
Let them present their witnesses that they may be justified,
Or let them hear and say, "It is true."

[Is. 43:10](#) "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD,
"And My servant whom I have chosen,
So that you may know and believe Me
And understand that I am He.
Before Me there was no God formed,
And there will be none after Me.

[Is. 43:11](#) "I, even I, am the LORD,
And there is no savior besides Me.

[Is. 43:12](#) "It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed,
And there was no strange god among you;
So you are My witnesses," declares the LORD,
"And I am God.

[Is. 43:13](#) "Even from eternity I am He,
And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;
I act and who can reverse it?"

- And why does God initiate the regathering of Israel?
 - In v.9 and onward God describes the purpose
 - So that they might witness to God's glory, declaring that what He spoke before is "true"
 - And they will declare this in Tribulation and after
 - Isn't it interesting that Israel wasn't willing to be this light and witness when everything was in their favor
 - So instead, they will be called from out of the nations to become that beacon during a time of great persecution and trial
 - And their gathering arrives at their knowledge that Christ is their savior and so that can declare there is no god besides God
 - Remember, the principle purpose the Father has in this section of Isaiah is set the stage for His Son's arrival
- Making crooked paths straight

- And idols are one of the crooked paths He wants to remove
- In Tribulation, the point will be to put an end to all idols, especially Babylon's world religion, the Mother of all Harlots
- And in the near future prophecy, God also works to remove idols from Israel through a period of captivity in Babylon

[Is. 43:14](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel,
 "For your sake I have sent to Babylon,
 And will bring them all down as fugitives,
 Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice.

[Is. 43:15](#) "I am the LORD, your Holy One,
 The Creator of Israel, your King."

[Is. 43:16](#) Thus says the LORD,
 Who makes a way through the sea
 And a path through the mighty waters,

[Is. 43:17](#) Who brings forth the chariot and the horse,
 The army and the mighty man
 (They will lie down together and not rise again;
 They have been quenched and extinguished like a wick):

[Is. 43:18](#) "Do not call to mind the former things,
 Or ponder things of the past.

[Is. 43:19](#) "Behold, I will do something new,
 Now it will spring forth;
 Will you not be aware of it?
 I will even make a roadway in the wilderness,
 Rivers in the desert.

[Is. 43:20](#) "The beasts of the field will glorify Me,
 The jackals and the ostriches,
 Because I have given waters in the wilderness
 And rivers in the desert,
 To give drink to My chosen people.

[Is. 43:21](#) "The people whom I formed for Myself
 Will declare My praise.

- So turning to the near future prophecy, Isaiah speaks in the past tense about a future event - their captivity in Babylon
 - God promises to bring the them back from Babylon for their good
 - Just as He promised to rescue them in the far future day of Tribulation

- Now He promises that the Babylonians will themselves become fugitives
 - In 536 BC the Medo Persian empire attacked Babylon and they fled in ships down the Eurphrates
 - In v.16 God compares this coming rescue from Babylon to the rescue He performed earlier during the exodus
 - He made a path through water
 - He brought forth chariot and mighty men who were made to lie down together under the water
 - Never to get up again
 - Extinguished like a wick
- But don't ponder or rest on those things (v.18)
 - Don't think about those miracles, focus on the new ones God is about to do
 - As the Jews returned from Babylon to Jerusalem, GOD did more miracles for them
 - He provided a highway to help direct them back home
 - He provided water for them in the desert
 - The water will even be a benefit to animals in the desert, that it brings glory to God
 - And His people will declare praise to His name
 - The story of how this is fulfilled is told in Ezra

[Is. 43:22](#) ¶ "Yet you have not called on Me, O Jacob;
But you have become weary of Me, O Israel.

[Is. 43:23](#) "You have not brought to Me the sheep of your burnt offerings,
Nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with offerings,
Nor wearied you with incense.

[Is. 43:24](#) "You have bought Me not sweet cane with money,
Nor have you filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices;
Rather you have burdened Me with your sins,
You have wearied Me with your iniquities.

[Is. 43:25](#) ¶ "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake,

And I will not remember your sins.

[Is. 43:26](#) ¶ Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together;
State your cause, that you may be proved right.

[Is. 43:27](#) ¶ Your first forefather sinned,
And your spokesmen have transgressed against Me.

[Is. 43:28](#) ¶ So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary,
And I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.

- God reminds Israel of their sins under the covenant, but He promises rescue on the basis of grace, not their merit
 - They have done nothing to merit His rescue
 - So He will provide it entirely on the basis of grace
 - In v.25 He says He will do it entirely for His own sake
 - In v.26 He challenges them to bring some example of the past to His mind to justify His favor
 - State a cause that they might be shown to right or proven to be righteous
 - Even your first father, Jacob the man himself, sinned
 - And your spokesman have also sinned
 - Your prophets, kings, priests, judges, etc.
- Therefore, Jacob and Israel have been judged as a result in exile
 - But grace will prevail (coming chapters)

Isaiah 44-45A

- We ended last week as God revealed that Israel would be restored on the basis of grace
 - Because the nation could not receive God's mercy on the basis of merit
 - Their fathers had sinned and their spokesmen had transgressed
 - So though grace was coming in a future day, judgment would come first
 - At the hands of the Babylonians
 - The final verse of chapter 43 alluded to that coming judgment

[Is. 43:28](#) "So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary,
And I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.

- The meaning of v.28 is two-fold
 - The princes of the sanctuary are the priests who serve in the temple
 - They are polluted as the Babylonians destroyed the temple in 586 BC
 - And Jacob is consigned to the ban and revilement
 - They are reviled in the sense that they become captives of Babylon and are placed into slavery
- God continues to link mercy and redemption with judgment
 - Though he brings judgment upon Israel for its sins, God doesn't destroy the nation and will redeem it one day

[Is. 44:1](#) ¶ "But now listen, O Jacob, My servant,
And Israel, whom I have chosen:

[Is. 44:2](#) Thus says the LORD who made you
And formed you from the womb, who will help you,
' Do not fear, O Jacob My servant;
And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen.

[Is. 44:3](#) 'For I will pour out water on the thirsty land
And streams on the dry ground;
I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring
And My blessing on your descendants;

Is. 44:4 And they will spring up among the grass
Like poplars by streams of water.'

Is. 44:5 "This one will say, 'I am the LORD'S';
And that one will call on the name of Jacob;
And another will write on his hand, 'Belonging to the LORD,'
And will name Israel's name with honor.

- This passage follows unbroken from the discussion at the end of chapter 43
 - Having described the coming judgment, God now says "But..."
 - I've chosen you, formed you
 - So don't fear this judgment
 - And like water on the ground, I will pour my Spirit on your offspring
 - And my blessing on your descendants
 - And they will respond with faith and dedication to the Lord
 - A generation that returns to the Lord will come up after this generation
 - Remember, the Babylonian judgment came as a result of Judah's sins under the Old Covenant and was intended to put an end to idol worship in Israel
 - Removing idols from Israel was God the Father's way of making a straight path for His Son
 - Israel never worshipped idols again after the captivity in Babylon
 - Even the use of the term Jeshurun was intended to remind the nation of their covenant
 - This is an endearing term for Jacob, and it's used in only one other book of the Bible: Deuteronomy, the book that established the covenant
- This promise of restoration was fulfilled in 536 BC as the next generation of the nation was released from captivity by Cyrus
 - The descendants of this generation responded to the opportunity according to the leading of the Spirit, just as Isaiah spoke would happen

[Ezra 1:1](#) ¶ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying:

[Ezra 1:2](#) ¶ "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

[Ezra 1:3](#) 'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.

[Ezra 1:4](#) 'Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'"

[Ezra 1:5](#) ¶ Then the heads of fathers' households of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.

- The Spirit drove some number of Israel to return to their land and to rebuild the temple
- But some of Isaiah's descriptions are not consistent with that restoration from Babylon
 - Verse 4-5 describes a nation repopulating easily
 - And the entire nation calling on the Lord
 - And the name of Israel will become a name of honor
- These aren't descriptions consistent with the return from Babylon
 - So these details leave us to conclude that the true fulfillment of this passage awaits Israel's restoration from spiritual Babylon following Tribulation
 - When Babylon is defeated, the Spirit is poured out on Israel and the Millennium begins
 - In which case, we would see Israel's return from Babylon as prefiguring the future restoration of Tribulation
- God the Father now returns to emphasizing He is unrivaled in all creation

[Is. 44:6](#) ¶ "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last,
And there is no God besides Me.

[Is. 44:7](#) "Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it;
Yes, let him recount it to Me in order,
From the time that I established the ancient nation.
And let them declare to them the things that are coming
And the events that are going to take place.

[Is. 44:8](#) "Do not tremble and do not be afraid;
Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it?
And you are My witnesses.
Is there any God besides Me,
Or is there any other Rock?
I know of none."

- God the Father contrasts Himself to idols in three ways
 - First He is the "first and last"
 - In other words, He is an eternal God
 - God the Father uses this term to describe Himself three times in Isaiah
 - And God the Son uses the same term three times to describe Himself in Revelation
 - The intersection of the Father and the Son as eternal together come together at the end of this section in chapter 48 - a clear OT teaching of the trinity
 - Secondly, in v.7 the Father is the God of all history
 - All the nations of the earth were established by God
 - And their history was written and dictated by God
 - Third, in vs.7-8 God is a God of the future, declaring prophecy
 - He says He declare what would happen
 - And He announced it long ago
 - All of these facets of God's sovereignty stand apart from idols, who can demonstrate none of these abilities

- Now the Father offers a longer passage explaining the futility and stupidity of idol worship

[Is. 44:9](#) ¶ Those who fashion a graven image are all of them futile, and their precious things are of no profit; even their own witnesses fail to see or know, so that they will be put to shame.

[Is. 44:10](#) Who has fashioned a god or cast an idol to no profit?

[Is. 44:11](#) Behold, all his companions will be put to shame, for the craftsmen themselves are mere men. Let them all assemble themselves, let them stand up, let them tremble, let them together be put to shame.

[Is. 44:12](#) ¶ The man shapes iron into a cutting tool and does his work over the coals, fashioning it with hammers and working it with his strong arm. He also gets hungry and his strength fails; he drinks no water and becomes weary.

[Is. 44:13](#) Another shapes wood, he extends a measuring line; he outlines it with red chalk. He works it with planes and outlines it with a compass, and makes it like the form of a man, like the beauty of man, so that it may sit in a house.

[Is. 44:14](#) Surely he cuts cedars for himself, and takes a cypress or an oak and raises it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a fir, and the rain makes it grow.

[Is. 44:15](#) Then it becomes something for a man to burn, so he takes one of them and warms himself; he also makes a fire to bake bread. He also makes a god and worships it; he makes it a graven image and falls down before it.

[Is. 44:16](#) Half of it he burns in the fire; over this half he eats meat as he roasts a roast and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, "Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire."

[Is. 44:17](#) But the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god."

[Is. 44:18](#) ¶ They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so that they cannot comprehend.

[Is. 44:19](#) No one recalls, nor is there knowledge or understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire and also have baked bread over its coals. I roast meat and eat it. Then I make the rest of it into an abomination, I fall down before a block of wood!"

[Is. 44:20](#) He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

- Hardly much of an explanation required here
 - God reveals the weaknesses of those who create idols
 - Suggesting that the creation must be even weaker than it's creator
 - And then the humor of how the idol creator ignores the contradictions of his behavior

- This is the reality of idol worship
 - From the same log, we burn wood for preparing a meal and save the rest to call our god
 - Be careful of calling any distraction from following God “an idol”
 - There are many unprofitable patterns but that doesn’t make them idols
 - And idol is any graven image we view to be god
 - Truly a substitute or replacement for God
 - Something we pray to and seek assistance from
- Again God offers mercy and grace...

[Is. 44:21](#) ¶ “ Remember these things, O Jacob,
And Israel, for you are My servant;
I have formed you, you are My servant,
O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me.

[Is. 44:22](#) “I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud
And your sins like a heavy mist.
Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”

- This continues the repetition of the theme of this section
 - Idol worship is foolish, it will be judged
 - But in it’s place, God will supply mercy and grace
- And the mere mention of that grace gives occasion for another cry of praise by Isaiah

[Is. 44:23](#) Shout for joy, O heavens, for the LORD has done it!
Shout joyfully, you lower parts of the earth;
Break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains,
O forest, and every tree in it;
For the LORD has redeemed Jacob
And in Israel He shows forth His glory.

- Now the Lord declares how He intends to provide that redemption in the near term for those held in bondage in Babylon

[Is. 44:24](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb,

“I, the LORD, am the maker of all things,
Stretching out the heavens by Myself
And spreading out the earth all alone,

[Is. 44:25](#) Causing the omens of boasters to fail,
Making fools out of diviners,
Causing wise men to draw back
And turning their knowledge into foolishness,

[Is. 44:26](#) Confirming the word of His servant
And performing the purpose of His messengers.
It is I who says of Jerusalem, ‘She shall be inhabited!’
And of the cities of Judah, ‘They shall be built.’
And I will raise up her ruins again.

[Is. 44:27](#) “It is I who says to the depth of the sea, ‘Be dried up!’
And I will make your rivers dry.

[Is. 44:28](#) “It is I who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd!
And he will perform all My desire.’
And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’
And of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’”

- God the Father calls Himself Israel’s redeemer
 - God also declares He is the one making fools of diviners, turning the knowledge of wise men into foolishness
 - God is always working to show the fruitlessness of relying on men and the occult for power and wisdom
 - And to the main point, He declares 150 years in advance how He will redeem Israel
 - Remember, this is being written nearly 100 years before they even go into captivity
 - Long before the Medo-Persians rise to power
 - Long before Cyrus is even born
 - God names the man and declares what he will do for God
 - Give this passage careful thought and ask yourself what sovereignty means
 - Did God ask Cyrus what Cyrus wanted to do?

- No, God decided long before that Cyrus would be His instrument to accomplish a very specific purpose
- And if God declares it, it will happen
- Daniel, the prophet, was one of those in Israel taken into captivity by Babylon
 - And when Medo Persians conquered Babylon, Daniel eventually found his way into the court of Cyrus the King of Persia
 - The Jewish historian Josephus wrote in AD 75 that Daniel showed Cyrus this passage from Isaiah 44 where Cyrus' name was recorded
 - Imagine Cyrus' surprise when he saw his own name recorded in a text that was 150 years old
 - One that predicted perfectly His arrival and destruction
 - Josephus goes on to say that this event directly led to Cyrus allowing the Jews to return to Israel
 - Tribulation
- Do you think God might have expected Daniel to show this text to Cyrus?
 - And when Cyrus saw his own name in chapter 44, we would naturally expect Cyrus might ask Daniel what else does the text say
 - And then Daniel would lead Cyrus to the next chapter, where God speaks directly to Cyrus through Isaiah's words
- God gives Cyrus some specific instructions...

[Is. 45:1](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed,
Whom I have taken by the right hand,
To subdue nations before him
And to loose the loins of kings;
To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

[Is. 45:2](#) "I will go before you and make the rough places smooth;
I will shatter the doors of bronze and cut through their iron bars.

[Is. 45:3](#) "I will give you the treasures of darkness
And hidden wealth of secret places,
So that you may know that it is I,
The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.

[Is. 45:4](#) "For the sake of Jacob My servant,
 And Israel My chosen one,
 I have also called you by your name;
 I have given you a title of honor
 Though you have not known Me.

[Is. 45:5](#) "I am the LORD, and there is no other;
 Besides Me there is no God.
 I will gird you, though you have not known Me;

[Is. 45:6](#) That men know from the rising to the setting of the sun
 That there is no one besides Me.
 I am the LORD, and there is no other,

[Is. 45:7](#) The One forming light and creating darkness,
 Causing well-being and creating calamity;
 I am the LORD who does all these.

- God addresses Cyrus as His anointed, taken by the hand by God to subdue the nations
 - The word for anointed is actually the Hebrew word for "messiah"
 - Cyrus isn't the actual messiah, of course, but he becomes a type for Christ in the way he leads Israel out of bondage
 - And Cyrus prefigures the redemption of Israel from Tribulation
 - God says He will make Cyrus powerful a invincible world power
 - And God goes before him to ensure he will be successful
 - Many of these details align perfectly with history
 - Cyrus was famous for the ease with which he conquered previously impregnable cities like Sargus and Babylon
 - Babylon itself was said to have over 100 gates in the city walls, each made of brass with iron bars
 - God says Cyrus will cut through those doors easily
 - God promises Cyrus great wealth in secret and dark places
 - When Cyrus invaded Lydian empire, he came upon the well-defended city Sargus
 - King Croesus was so famous for his riches, that he came to be known as the king with the golden touch

- Another name for King Croesus was King Midas
- He hid most of his gold in underground vaults and tunnels in the city
- When Cyrus invaded, God ensured that CYrus' men would learn the location of the gold, making Cyrus easily the richest man in the world in his day
- Why does God allow Cyrus this success?
 - Cyrus was raised up for two purposes
 - In v.4 Isaiah says it will happen for the sake of Jacob
 - God intends to use Cyrus to free Israel from Babylon
 - And as we know, Cyrus was so impressed to learn all this through Daniel, that he follows through and frees Israel as we saw in Ezra
 - Notice in that same verse God says I have called Cyrus for these things though he has not known me
 - Again in v.5, God has girded or equipped Cyrus even though he wasn't aware of God
 - Cyrus was an evil, destructive force in the world
 - And that destructive force was made stronger by God's hand but ultimately for good purposes according to God's plan
 - That leads to the second reason God did this for Cyrus – that the world might know that the God of Israel is the true God
 - The way God carried through on these prophecies proves He is the one and only true God
 - V.7 makes the point succinctly...God is both the one creating light and darkness
 - All things in creation come from God's decree and according to His purpose
 - A powerful verse to contend with those who see God as only half a God, only in control of "half" of creation

[Is. 45:8](#) ¶ “ Drip down, O heavens, from above,
 And let the clouds pour down righteousness;
 Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit,
 And righteousness spring up with it.
 I, the LORD, have created it.

[Is. 45:9](#) ¶ “Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker —
 An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth!
 Will the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you doing?’
 Or the thing you are making say, ‘He has no hands?’

[Is. 45:10](#) “Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’
 Or to a woman, ‘To what are you giving birth?’”

[Is. 45:11](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker:
 “ Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons,
 And you shall commit to Me the work of My hands.

[Is. 45:12](#) “It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it.
 I stretched out the heavens with My hands
 And I ordained all their host.

[Is. 45:13](#) “I have aroused him in righteousness
 And I will make all his ways smooth;
 He will build My city and will let My exiles go free,
 Without any payment or reward,” says the LORD of hosts.

- Isaiah inserts another one-verse song of praise in v.8
- Then in vs.9-13, for those who read the previous section and scoff at the idea of God causing calamity or working through pagan men who do not know Him
 - God prepares this wake up call
 - He says there will be woe to those who quarrel with his Maker
 - What kind of quarrel is He talking about?
 - Isaiah defines questioning God’s way of working in creation as a quarrel
 - The best captured in the found at the end of v.9
 - The one being formed by the Maker will look up at the Maker and declare, “You have no hands.”
 - If the one forming you by his hands doesn’t have hands, then you don’t exist
 - Likewise, if you believe that God observes some kind of boundary or restraint in how far He influences His creation, you are arguing against your own existence

- More importantly, you are quarreling with God
 - It must be that God can call it a quarrel to question His right to do what He will in creation because you refuse to accept the counsel of Scripture on the matter
- For example, to the issue of Cyrus and his suitability as an instrument of God
 - God chose the man, equipped him and called him to a task...THOUGH HE DIDN'T KNOW GOD
 - In other words, Cyrus' will and knowledge was irrelevant to God
 - God was perfectly capable of causing Cyrus to do exactly as God wishes without Cyrus' awareness, much less his agreement
 - What does this say about "free will"
 - Is there such a thing in the traditional sense of those words?
 - Does man have a will in the face of God's decrees and purposes
 - Now consider the next time in the Bible this same passage is used
 - We find it in Romans 9:

[Rom. 9:16](#) So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.

[Rom. 9:17](#) For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."

[Rom. 9:18](#) So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

[Rom. 9:19](#) ¶ You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?"

[Rom. 9:20](#) On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?

[Rom. 9:21](#) Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?

[Rom. 9:22](#) What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?

[Rom. 9:23](#) And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

- Paul references the same verses from Isaiah to make the same point
 - As God decides, some men are set on a path to destruction while others are set on a path to glory
 - This is the right of the creator, and when we doubt His authority and work in this way, we are quarreling with God
 - And this quarrel will bring us woe, Isaiah says
 - Just like the child who might question his earthly father or mother concerning how they gave birth to a child
 - Remember, understanding it is not a prerequisite to accepting it
 - God's word declares it to be so
 - And the example of Cyrus proves that this is how God chooses to work in His creation
- Returning to Isaiah, look at vs.11
 - He says if you ask me about what will happen to my sons
 - And once God tells us what will happen, we will have committed God to carry it through because He never fails to keep His word
 - God calls the future itself, the "work of My hands"
 - God is at work creating the future as He prefers it to be
 - Finally, God reasserts His authority to work through Cyrus
 - He created all things
 - And He will work through Cyrus "in righteousness" to make him conquer
 - So that his decree and wealth will lead to the city being rebuilt
 - And the Jewish people set free
 - And these things will happen without any payment or ransom being paid for Israel
 - God will have provided the way alone

Isaiah 45B-48A

- Last week, we heard God the Father telling Israel that the man who would deliver them from bondage in Babylon wouldn't be their Messiah
 - He wouldn't be a David or Solomon
 - He wouldn't be a Moses or Joshua
 - He wouldn't even be a JEW
 - He would be Cyrus, a Gentile conquerer
 - And this fact was so offensive to the Jewish reader that God spends a good chapter or so explaining that His sovereignty permits Him to do as He wishes
 - Including creating light and darkness, well-being and calamity
 - So what follows in this last part of our "God the Father" section is an a boost of confidence for the Israelites
 - The chapters emphasize God the Father as a deliverer, stronger than idols and righteous

[Is. 45:14](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,
"The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush
And the Sabeans, men of stature,
Will come over to you and will be yours;
They will walk behind you, they will come over in chains
And will bow down to you;
They will make supplication to you:
' Surely, God is with you, and there is none else,
No other God.'"

[Is. 45:15](#) Truly, You are a God who hides Himself,
O God of Israel, Savior!

[Is. 45:16](#) They will be put to shame and even humiliated, all of them;
The manufacturers of idols will go away together in humiliation.

[Is. 45:17](#) Israel has been saved by the LORD
With an everlasting salvation;
You will not be put to shame or humiliated
To all eternity.

- Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Sabeans (also from Egypt) are enemies of Israel
 - But in a future day (the Millennium) they will be subject to Israel

- God describes a reversed role with Israel
 - They bow to Israel, they come over in chains, meaning in serving Israel
 - This is reversed from Israel in the time of captivity when the Gentiles made Israel slaves
 - In a sense, God hid Himself during this time only to emerge in the future to put the Gentiles to shame
 - And bring Israel to glory
- So Israel is called upon to have confidence in their God
 - We can see proof here of what we learned last week concerning our perspective problem in judging God by our circumstances
 - From the perspective of the Jew in captivity, is God "good?"
 - From the perspective of the Jew in the Millennium He is
 - But can He be good sometimes and not others?
 - Or good to some and not to others?
 - He's either always good or never good
 - Also remember our description of Israel as a lack of water
 - The individual molecules in the lake may change, but it's still the same lake
 - God is dealing with Israel throughout history,
 - And while the people who make it up vary over the course of history, from God's point of view it's always the same Israel
 - And God is good to Israel and shows that goodness fully in the end
 - Just as He promises to do here

[Is. 45:18](#) ¶ For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited),

“I am the LORD, and there is none else.

[Is. 45:19](#) “ I have not spoken in secret,

In some dark land;

I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,

‘ Seek Me in a waste place’;

I, the LORD, speak righteousness,

Declaring things that are upright.

[Is. 45:20](#) ¶ “ Gather yourselves and come;

Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations;

They have no knowledge,

Who carry about their wooden idol

And pray to a god who cannot save.

[Is. 45:21](#) “ Declare and set forth your case;

Indeed, let them consult together.

Who has announced this from of old?

Who has long since declared it?

Is it not I, the LORD?

And there is no other God besides Me,

A righteous God and a Savior;

There is none except Me.

[Is. 45:22](#) “ Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth;

For I am God, and there is no other.

[Is. 45:23](#) “ I have sworn by Myself,

The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness

And will not turn back,

That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.

[Is. 45:24](#) “They will say of Me, ‘Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.’

Men will come to Him,

And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.

[Is. 45:25](#) “In the LORD all the offspring of Israel

Will be justified and will glory.”

- Let’s put aside verse 18 for a moment and briefly look through the remainder of the text
 - In v.19 God declares that His words have not been kept secret
 - He has told Israel what they must do to remain in His pleasure
 - And He told them what would happen if they didn’t
 - And He told them through the prophets that they weren’t heeding His word

- And He told them the coming punishments
 - And He is now telling them that there is yet to be a future redemption
- Everything has been declared
- So in v.20 and onward God says as He did before, what did your idols do for you?
 - None of them could save you
 - But God will save Israel
 - And His word applies to the entire Earth
 - It has gone forth and will not turn back
 - Doesn't that just thrill you to know?
 - God's word is so sure, there is nothing to stop it from accomplishing His will
 - Every tongue will confess in the end
 - And the Lord and Israel will receive the glory they deserve
- Now to v.18, Isaiah records that God is the creator of the Heavens and Earth
 - And God didn't create the Earth a wasteland
 - He created it as a place to be inhabited
 - The word for waste is tohu
 - We can see that same word used in Genesis in the story of creation

[Gen. 1:1](#) ¶ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[Gen. 1:2](#) The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

- In v.2, the Hebrew word for formless is tohu, which Isaiah 45:18 translates waste place
 - Isaiah says this is not how the Lord created the Earth

- Yet Gen 1:2 says this is how the Earth appeared on the first day of creation
- This is where the gap theory originates and gains its proponents
 - The Theory says that there is a gap of time between verses 1 and two of Genesis 1
 - And some unknown period of time existed between them
 -
- Consider these points
 - God uses water as a picture of judgment, sin and death
 - He judges the earth in Noah's day with a flood
 - The Hebrew word for the depths of the sea is the same word for hell or the abyss
 - In the New Earth there are no seas because there is no longer any sin to represent by the picture of a deep dark place
 - And yet in the beginning of the creation story, the world is covered in a sea
 - And it's a waste place
 - Yet Isaiah seems to say that's not the way the Earth was created
- What was the original creation then?
 - They point to Ezekiel 28

[Ezek. 28:12](#) "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,
 "You had the seal of perfection,
 Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

[Ezek. 28:13](#) "You were in Eden, the garden of God;
 Every precious stone was your covering:
 The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
 The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
 The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
 And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets,
 Was in you.
 On the day that you were created
 They were prepared.

[Ezek. 28:14](#) "You were the anointed cherub who covers,
 And I placed you there.
 You were on the holy mountain of God;
 You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

[Ezek. 28:15](#) "You were blameless in your ways
 From the day you were created
 Until unrighteousness was found in you.

[Ezek. 28:16](#) "By the abundance of your trade
 You were internally filled with violence,
 And you sinned;
 Therefore I have cast you as profane
 From the mountain of God.
 And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,
 From the midst of the stones of fire.

[Ezek. 28:17](#) "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
 You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.
 I cast you to the ground;
 I put you before kings,
 That they may see you.

[Ezek. 28:18](#) "By the multitude of your iniquities,
 In the unrighteousness of your trade
 You profaned your sanctuaries.
 Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you;
 It has consumed you,
 And I have turned you to ashes on the earth
 In the eyes of all who see you.

[Ezek. 28:19](#) "All who know you among the peoples
 Are appalled at you;
 You have become terrified
 And you will cease to be forever.'""

- Satan was placed on an earth in the Garden
 - He sinned, and fell and God brought judgment waters upon the Earth
 - Followed by the days of creation in Genesis 1:2 and onward

- Arguments against the gap theory abound as well
 - First, they point to Gen 1:1-2 as simply an introduction showing that God first created the raw materials
 - Then proceeded to fashion them into a final form
 - The raw materials were formless until they were formed into something better
 - From this interpretation, then Isaiah 45:18 is read differently
 - We would see Isaiah's statement that the world was created formless or as a waste place to simply remind the reader that God didn't stop there
 - He continued on to create a perfect inhabitable planet for man
 - Which would then supports Isaiah's conclusion that God's purposes are good from the eternal perspective
 - Finally, there are some internal contradictions in the Gap Theory
 - For example, the Gap Theory says Ezekiel 28 is a description of Earth during the Gap
 - Ezek 28 says that Satan was in the garden of Eden
 - But the garden wasn't created until Day Six, according to Genesis 2, which is after the suppose Gap
 - I don't Isaiah means that God's intent in the creation was not to create something formless, but to continue forward toward a final product for man
- Now God ends the section for the Father with a series of pronouncements against Neb's Babylon and reminders to Israel to rely on the Lord

[Is. 46:1](#) ¶ Bel has bowed down, Nebo stoops over;
 Their images are consigned to the beasts and the cattle.
 The things that you carry are burdensome,
 A load for the weary beast.

[Is. 46:2](#) They stooped over, they have bowed down together;
 They could not rescue the burden,
 But have themselves gone into captivity.

•

- Bel and Nebo were idols of Babylon
 - Bel is Bel-Marduk, which later became the god Jupiter of the Romans
 - Nebo was the son of Bel-Marduk and later the god Mercury
 - They were a burden to carry around on beasts
 - And they have stooped over or fallen over because they are lying in the backs of carts as Cyrus carries them off to Babylon
 - In contrast to that, Israel's God carries Her:

[Is. 46:3](#) ¶ " Listen to Me, O house of Jacob,
 And all the remnant of the house of Israel,
 You who have been borne by Me from birth
 And have been carried from the womb;

[Is. 46:4](#) Even to your old age I will be the same,
 And even to your graying years I will bear you!
 I have done it, and I will carry you;
 And I will bear you and I will deliver you.

[Is. 46:5](#) ¶ " To whom would you liken Me
 And make Me equal and compare Me,
 That we would be alike?

[Is. 46:6](#) "Those who lavish gold from the purse
 And weigh silver on the scale
 Hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god;
 They bow down, indeed they worship it.

[Is. 46:7](#) "They lift it upon the shoulder and carry it;
 They set it in its place and it stands there.
 It does not move from its place.
 Though one may cry to it, it cannot answer;
 It cannot deliver him from his distress.

- Jehovah is carrying Israel through history
 - Both into and out of these circumstances
 - And of course, idols are a futile pursuit
 - Remember these reminders and these images had their greatest impact on the audience that lived through these circumstances
 - It seems clear that because of these specific pronouncements, God cured Israel of idol worship as they read these words and realized their folly

- Furthermore, remember God's works

[Is. 46:8](#) ¶ "Remember this, and be assured;
Recall it to mind, you transgressors.

[Is. 46:9](#) "Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,

[Is. 46:10](#) Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, 'My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

[Is. 46:11](#) Calling a bird of prey from the east,
The man of My purpose from a far country.
Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
I have planned it, surely I will do it.

[Is. 46:12](#) ¶ "Listen to Me, you stubborn-minded,
Who are far from righteousness.

[Is. 46:13](#) "I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off;
And My salvation will not delay.
And I will grant salvation in Zion,
And My glory for Israel.

- God says trust my word by reflecting on my past works for the sake of Israel
 - And consider that I have called a bird of prey from the East (Cyrus)
 - Who will accomplish my plan
 - And His plan to bring Israel righteousness is "not long off"
 - Time is a relative thing
- If chapter 45 spoke about the end of Babylon's idolatry, then chapter 46 speaks of the empire itself coming to an end
 - This follows the same pattern of Revelation
 - Spiritual Babylon is judged in Revelation 17 while the empire of Babylon is judged in Revelation 18
 - That similarity tells us that this is another example of a near term version of the prophecy and a far term version of the prophecy
 - Neb's Babylon experiences a judgment against idols first, followed by the nation itself coming to an end

- The antichrist's empire experiences the same events in Tribulation

[Is. 47:1](#) ¶ "Come down and sit in the dust,
 O virgin daughter of Babylon;
 Sit on the ground without a throne,
 O daughter of the Chaldeans!
 For you shall no longer be called tender and delicate.

[Is. 47:2](#) "Take the millstones and grind meal.
 Remove your veil, strip off the skirt,
 Uncover the leg, cross the rivers.

[Is. 47:3](#) "Your nakedness will be uncovered,
 Your shame also will be exposed;
 I will take vengeance and will not spare a man."

[Is. 47:4](#) Our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name,
 The Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 47:5](#) "Sit silently, and go into darkness,
 O daughter of the Chaldeans,
 For you will no longer be called
 The queen of kingdoms.

[Is. 47:6](#) "I was angry with My people,
 I profaned My heritage
 And gave them into your hand.
 You did not show mercy to them,
 On the aged you made your yoke very heavy.

[Is. 47:7](#) "Yet you said, 'I will be a queen forever.'
 These things you did not consider
 Nor remember the outcome of them.

[Is. 47:8](#) ¶ "Now, then, hear this, you sensual one,
 Who dwells securely,
 Who says in your heart,
 'I am, and there is no one besides me.
 I will not sit as a widow,
 Nor know loss of children.'

[Is. 47:9](#) "But these two things will come on you suddenly in one day:
 Loss of children and widowhood.
 They will come on you in full measure
 In spite of your many sorceries,
 In spite of the great power of your spells.

[Is. 47:10](#) "You felt secure in your wickedness and said,
 'No one sees me,'
 Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you;
 For you have said in your heart,
 'I am, and there is no one besides me.'

[Is. 47:11](#) "But evil will come on you
Which you will not know how to charm away;
And disaster will fall on you
For which you cannot atone;
And destruction about which you do not know
Will come on you suddenly.

[Is. 47:12](#) ¶ "Stand fast now in your spells
And in your many sorceries
With which you have labored from your youth;
Perhaps you will be able to profit,
Perhaps you may cause trembling.

[Is. 47:13](#) "You are wearied with your many counsels;
Let now the astrologers,
Those who prophesy by the stars,
Those who predict by the new moons,
Stand up and save you from what will come upon you.

[Is. 47:14](#) "Behold, they have become like stubble,
Fire burns them;
They cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame;
There will be no coal to warm by
Nor a fire to sit before!

[Is. 47:15](#) "So have those become to you with whom you have labored,
Who have trafficked with you from your youth;
Each has wandered in his own way;
There is none to save you.

- There are a number of important things to note in the imagery of this description
 - And the images will teach us a lot about how God uses Babylon as a picture or symbol
 - First, notice that this nation is described as a woman
 - She thinks herself beautiful
 - She clothing becomes a way of measuring her beauty
 - Let's start drawing a comparison to another woman associated with Babylon
 - The Harlot of Revelation
 - She is clothing in fine clothes until she is made naked

[Rev. 17:16](#) "And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.

- Then second the number of references to pride
 - Babylon's pride is her downfall
 - She claimed to be most powerful, indestructible
 - No one besides me (v.10)
- This compares to the description of Satan we read in Ezekiel 28
 - His pride and attempts to be the only one led to His downfall
 - It was also his appearance that caused Satan to swell with pride
- Next, notice the references to the occult throughout the passage
 - Sorcery, spells, etc.
- We know from Scripture these secret dark arts are accessing Satan's power
- What this chapter suggests clearly is that Babylon is the Bible's creation to give us a clearer understanding of who Satan is and how he works within creation
 - He is the author of the occult, the father of lies
 - He is the one behind every form of opposition to God
 - His calling card is pride and a his desire is to challenge God for His throne
 - He takes the form of a seductive woman, who entices men into spiritual harlotry
 - Trading a true relationship with the living God for a cheap, immoral, imitation relationship with false gods
 - When God decides to judge Babylon, He will first make Babylon a poster child for Satan and judge both together
- Finally, chapter 48
 - The chapter is a summary of the entire first section of Second Isaiah

- It reviews the same themes but it also introduces some new concepts
- It begins with a review of His sovereignty as evidenced in God's unique ability to pronounce future events and bring them about exactly as He intended

[Is. 48:1](#) ¶ " Hear this, O house of Jacob, who are named Israel
And who came forth from the loins of Judah,
Who swear by the name of the LORD
And invoke the God of Israel,
But not in truth nor in righteousness.

[Is. 48:2](#) "For they call themselves after the holy city
And lean on the God of Israel;
The LORD of hosts is His name.

[Is. 48:3](#) "I declared the former things long ago
And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them.
Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.

[Is. 48:4](#) "Because I know that you are obstinate,
And your neck is an iron sinew
And your forehead bronze,

[Is. 48:5](#) Therefore I declared them to you long ago,
Before they took place I proclaimed them to you,
So that you would not say, 'My idol has done them,
And my graven image and my molten image have commanded them.'

[Is. 48:6](#) "You have heard; look at all this.
And you, will you not declare it?
I proclaim to you new things from this time,
Even hidden things which you have not known.

[Is. 48:7](#) "They are created now and not long ago;
And before today you have not heard them,
So that you will not say, 'Behold, I knew them.'

[Is. 48:8](#) "You have not heard, you have not known.
Even from long ago your ear has not been open,
Because I knew that you would deal very treacherously;
And you have been called a rebel from birth.

[Is. 48:9](#) " For the sake of My name I delay My wrath,
And for My praise I restrain it for you,
In order not to cut you off.

[Is. 48:10](#) "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

[Is. 48:11](#) " For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act;
For how can My name be profaned?
And My glory I will not give to another.

- We'll finish the summary next week and then use it as a bridge into the next section, The Suffering Servant

Isaiah 48B-49

- Tonight we transition from the Father to the Son in the three part division of Second Isaiah
 - Remember that chapter 48 as a whole is a summary of chapters 40-47
 - The remainder of this chapter forms a transition to our next section on the Son
 - And as part of that transition, we find the clearest statement of the Trinity in the Old Testament

[Is. 48:12](#) ¶ "Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called;
I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.

[Is. 48:13](#) "Surely My hand founded the earth,
And My right hand spread out the heavens;
When I call to them, they stand together.

[Is. 48:14](#) " Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him; he will carry out His good pleasure on Babylon,
And His arm will be against the Chaldeans.

[Is. 48:15](#) "I, even I, have spoken; indeed I have called him,
I have brought him, and He will make his ways successful.

[Is. 48:16](#) " Come near to Me, listen to this:
From the first I have not spoken in secret,
From the time it took place, I was there.
And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit."

- Some of these opening verses are familiar, since they are a summary of God's sovereignty
 - God, the One speaking in these verses, is the first and the last
 - He is the One Who called Israel
 - He is the One Who created the universe
 - He is one (v.14) Who has spoken the future to the nations, meaning He is the one Who knows and controls the future
 - God "loves" him, meaning Cyrus
 - He uses Cyrus to accomplish His purpose
 - He makes Cyrus successful because God has that control

- So in these descriptions, we see a single voice throughout
 - Speaking in the first person about all He has done
 - Who exactly is speaking?
 - To the Hebrew, it was God, the Lord, Yhwh
 - But in v.16 the Speaker is revealed to be Someone other than God the Father
- V.16 says that now the Lord God (Yhwh in Hebrew) sent Me and His Spirit
 - The reference to “now” points us forward to the future day of the Messiah’s arrival
 - Clearly there are three persons mentioned in that verse
 - And the One speaking has been the one accomplishing everything through the earlier verses
 - It’s been the One sent Who has been the Author of creation and the One speaking to the nations
 - Who was that?
 - Consider these NT teachings

[Col. 1:15](#) ¶ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

[Col. 1:16](#) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him.

[John 1:1](#) ¶ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[John 1:2](#) He was in the beginning with God.

[John 1:3](#) All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

- Scripture tells us that the Son is the One Who performed the act of Creation
 - And we remember it took place through a spoken word (“Let there be light.”)
 - And the Son is the Word, the expression of the Father into the creation

- Here Isaiah is confirming that truth hundreds of years before Christ was incarnate
- So clearly now Isaiah is transition our focus away from the Father and toward His suffering Son

[Is. 48:17](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel,
 “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit,
 Who leads you in the way you should go.

[Is. 48:18](#) “If only you had paid attention to My commandments!
 Then your well-being would have been like a river,
 And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

[Is. 48:19](#) “Your descendants would have been like the sand,
 And your offspring like its grains;
 Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from My presence.”

[Is. 48:20](#) ¶ Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans!
 Declare with the sound of joyful shouting, proclaim this,
 Send it out to the end of the earth;
 Say, “The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob.”

[Is. 48:21](#) They did not thirst when He led them through the deserts.
 He made the water flow out of the rock for them;
 He split the rock and the water gushed forth.

[Is. 48:22](#) “There is no peace for the wicked,” says the LORD.

- Now the Lord ends the chapter by summoning up the problem
 - God has lead them into the proper way, the way of righteousness
 - But they didn’t follow
 - Notice that God doesn’t address why they didn’t or couldn’t follow
 - There’s no discussion of the incurable sin nature of man
 - God simply states the fundamental truth
 - He gave them the Law which defined righteousness
 - And the Jewish nation didn’t follow it
- But if they had followed His commandments, then they would have been righteous
 - And righteousness would naturally bring certain results

- Their well-being would have been like a river, a never ending supply
 - Their righteousness would have been like waves, also unceasing
- This is a fundamental truth of Scripture
 - To keep God's commandments in the full sense (i.e., in action, word and thought), would bring both righteousness and well-being
 - Again, God is not suggesting that such an outcome was ever possible
 - He's just affirm the basic truth of what would follow were the nation to follow God in perfection
- But the fact that Israel didn't follow in this way led to consequences, as sin always does
 - For example, the Jewish nation has been in existence as long or longer than any currently existing nation
 - Yet today there are only roughly 14 million Jews
 - Normal reproduction rates should have resulted in hundreds of millions of Jews
 - That's what God means in v.19
 - Instead, wars, disease, famine and other calamities have combined to keep the Jewish population under the threat of extinction for most of it's existence
 - Yet it has survived
 - God is indicating here that Israel's disobedience under the covenant of the Law is the reasons for its historical place of misery and weakness in the world
 - This same truth is pictured in the story of Ruth (see Ruth course)
- But now God is moving His plan for Israel forward, so Isaiah declares (in advance again) that it is time for Israel to leave Babylon
 - Declare that the Lord freed us from Babylon

- Interestingly, Isaiah declares that the fleeing Israelites would find water provided for them gushing out of rocks in the desert
 - This is the only reference to this event
 - It's not recorded in Ezra or Nehemiah
- The similarities to the Exodus story suggest to us a similar message
 - The exodus from Egypt was a picture of God setting His people free from bondage
 - Likewise, the return from Babylon was another release from bondage
 - God making clear that He protects His people and brings them out according to His plan and purpose
- But in contrast to God's care for His people, the wicked never find that peace
 - Remember we said each of the three sections ends with this single verse declaring the fate for the wicked
 - Just like the parables Jesus taught would sometimes end with a single verse contrasting the outcome for the righteous with that for the unrighteous
 - This is our clue that the first section has ended
- Now on to part 2 of Second Isaiah, the Suffering Servant
 - Since we know we're talking about the Messiah and His suffering on the cross, then we know this entire section is a far prophecy
 - Isaiah is looking into the distant future from his day
 - The point of this section is HOW the Lord will accomplish the pardoning He promised in the early section
 - He does it through a sacrifice of His Son
 - The organization of this section is fairly easy to see
 - Chapter 49 is the calling of the Servant (His mission)
 - Chapters 50-51 is the suffering of the Servant
 - Chapters 52-53 the death of the Servant

[Is. 49:1](#) ¶ Listen to Me, O islands,
And pay attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called Me from the womb;
From the body of My mother He named Me.

[Is. 49:2](#) He has made My mouth like a sharp sword,
In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me;
And He has also made Me a select arrow,
He has hidden Me in His quiver.

[Is. 49:3](#) He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel,
In Whom I will show My glory."

[Is. 49:4](#) But I said, "I have toiled in vain,
I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity;
Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the LORD,
And My reward with My God."

[Is. 49:5](#) ¶ And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant,
To bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him
(For I am honored in the sight of the LORD,
And My God is My strength),

[Is. 49:6](#) He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also make You a light of the nations
So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

[Is. 49:7](#) Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One,
To the despised One,
To the One abhorred by the nation,
To the Servant of rulers,
"Kings will see and arise,
Princes will also bow down,
Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen
You."

- Notice as we begin part 2 that Someone is speaking in the first person
 - It's the same Person Who was speaking at the end of chapter 48
 - The Messiah speaking of His own situation
 - And the discussion is a discouraging one for Him
 - Notice the details
 - He will come from a womb, called by the Father (v.1)
 - He was named before He was born (v.1) in the mother's womb
 - Both Isaiah 7:14 and Matt 1:21 show this fulfilled

- By the way, though the OT often mentioned the coming Messiah's mother, it never mentions the father (because there will be no earthly father)
 - He has the power to deliver truth and judgment with His words
 - He receives special protection from the Father and His identity is concealed until the Father chooses to reveal it for a purpose (v.2)
- He is a Servant, but the Father calls Him Israel
 - What does it mean that Isaiah uses the name "Israel" to describe this Servant?
 - Could we look at this entire passage and conclude that perhaps the discussion is really about Israel the nation and not the Messiah?
 - For example, looking farther down the text we come to v. 14 where the Person speaking refers to Himself as "Zion"
 - Zion means Jerusalem, so we might assume that the one speaking here is actually Israel rather than the Messiah
 - We can dismiss this view easily by looking at the passage again
 - First, look at vs.5-6
 - This Person is also described as the One Who will bring Jacob back to God
 - And in v.6 He is the One Who will raise up Jacob and preserve Israel
 - Clearly, the One doing these things for Israel and Israel itself can't be the same Person or entity
 - So how do we explain God's naming of Jesus as "Israel" or "Zion" in this passage?
 - Two reasons and perhaps others
 - First, the Messiah is a Jew and embodies all that Israel should be to God
 - Law keeping, honoring to God and serving God

- In that sense, the Messiah will be the truest expression of an Israelite
- Secondly, the name Israel means a prince with God, which is an accurate description of the Messiah
- Through these verses, we begin to see a new picture
 - Israel the nation was a picture of sorts of the Messiah Himself
 - Only Israel is the failure to fulfill what only the Messiah Himself could fulfill
 - A perfect sinless servant of God ruling with Him
 - Israel was called to be this servant, but couldn't fulfill it in its own power
 - The Messiah fulfills it and then restore Israel so she can accomplish it in the Kingdom
- Going further, the Messiah's discouragement is evident in v.4a where He says He toiled or worked in vain
 - This references the inability to persuade Israel to receive their Messiah in His earthly ministry
 - And His strength was spent for "nothing"
 - But the second half of the verse clarifies that the reward for His work isn't found in the day His work was accomplished
 - The reward comes later "with God"
 - This prophecy fits perfectly with Christ's suffering on the cross followed by His ascension to the right hand of God
 - Finally, the passage ends with references to Christ's ultimate mission
 - To bring Israel back to God, to raise up Jacob
 - And in v.6 the Father says as if restoring Israel weren't honor enough, He will grant the Son the opportunity to be a light to the nations (Gentiles) as well
- Salvation reaches to the ends of the earth

- This is the basis for John 1 where Christ is described as the light of the world
 - John was likely referencing this passage
- Also, the Hebrew for salvation is only one letter different than the name of Jesus - yeshuah vs. Yeshua
- He is the Salvation that goes to the ends of the earth
 - So though He is despised in the eyes of the nation (Israel) in v.7
 - Nevertheless, all kings and princes will bow to this Lord of Lords, chosen by God to be the Holy One of Israel
 - In that one verse you have the entire career of the Messiah
 - He is despised in His first coming
 - But just as assuredly He will be recognized as King of kings in Second Coming
- Notice all the parallels to Jesus of Nazareth
 - It's almost amazing that the disciples didn't understand the need for the Messiah to die until He explained all these things in Luke 24
 - Perhaps it's a stretch, but consider that so much was available to them in their OT yet they were ignorant of it to a large degree
 - Are we in danger of similar mistakes today?
 - Remaining willfully ignorant of what God has purposely provided in His word?
 - What will we miss in the events of today because we didn't take time to understand scripture?
 - How will that ignorance impact our service to Christ?

[Is. 49:8](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,
 "In a favorable time I have answered You,
 And in a day of salvation I have helped You;
 And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people,
 To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages;

[Is. 49:9](#) Saying to those who are bound, 'Go forth,'
 To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.'
 Along the roads they will feed,
 And their pasture will be on all bare heights.

[Is. 49:10](#) "They will not hunger or thirst,
 Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down;
 For He who has compassion on them will lead them
 And will guide them to springs of water.

[Is. 49:11](#) "I will make all My mountains a road,
 And My highways will be raised up.

[Is. 49:12](#) "Behold, these will come from afar;
 And lo, these will come from the north and from the west,
 And these from the land of Sinim."

[Is. 49:13](#) Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth!
 Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains!
 For the LORD has comforted His people
 And will have compassion on His afflicted.

- Now we see the mission or purpose of the call in full view
 - At an appointed time that the Father sets, the Messiah will become a salvation for Israel
 - He will become a covenant for His people
 - The people are Israel
 - The covenant is the New Covenant given in Jeremiah 31:31

[Jer. 31:31](#) ¶ "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

[Jer. 31:32](#) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

[Jer. 31:33](#) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

[Jer. 31:34](#) "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

- Notice this is a covenant with Israel
 - It will arrive at them living the Law perfectly (they are no longer sinful)

- They will all know the Lord
 - No Jew in that day will be left behind
 - All are “saved” and all are regenerated into a new body
- Isaiah says this is a day the Father appoints
 - Speaking of the moment of His return, Christ says:

[Matt. 24:36](#) ¶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

- How does the Father alone know this? Because the Father alone determines it
 - As Isaiah 49:8 the Father says it will be day and a favorable time that this will occur
 - Though we don’t know when it happens, we do see it described in Zech 12
 - When the Jews of Tribulation receive the Holy Spirit and call out upon the name of Christ
- At that moment, Jesus becomes a covenant to the people (to Israel)
 - The remaining verses describe the effects of that moment
 - The Messianic Kingdom and Israel’s glory
 - Things we’ve seen already

[Is. 49:14](#) ¶ But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me,
And the Lord has forgotten me.”

[Is. 49:15](#) “Can a woman forget her nursing child
And have no compassion on the son of her womb?
Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.

[Is. 49:16](#) “Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands;
Your walls are continually before Me.

[Is. 49:17](#) “Your builders hurry;
Your destroyers and devastators
Will depart from you.

[Is. 49:18](#) “Lift up your eyes and look around;
All of them gather together, they come to you.
As I live,” declares the LORD,
“You will surely put on all of them as jewels and bind them on as a bride.

[Is. 49:19](#) "For your waste and desolate places and your destroyed land —
Surely now you will be too cramped for the inhabitants,
And those who swallowed you will be far away.

[Is. 49:20](#) "The children of whom you were bereaved will yet say in your ears,
'The place is too cramped for me;
Make room for me that I may live here.'

[Is. 49:21](#) "Then you will say in your heart,
'Who has begotten these for me,
Since I have been bereaved of my children
And am barren, an exile and a wanderer?
And who has reared these?
Behold, I was left alone;
From where did these come?'"

[Is. 49:22](#) ¶ Thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations
And set up My standard to the peoples;
And they will bring your sons in their bosom,
And your daughters will be carried on their shoulders.

[Is. 49:23](#) "Kings will be your guardians,
And their princesses your nurses.
They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth
And lick the dust of your feet;
And you will know that I am the LORD;
Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.

[Is. 49:24](#) ¶ "Can the prey be taken from the mighty man,
Or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?"

[Is. 49:25](#) Surely, thus says the LORD,
"Even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away,
And the prey of the tyrant will be rescued;
For I will contend with the one who contends with you,
And I will save your sons.

[Is. 49:26](#) "I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh,
And they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine;
And all flesh will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior
And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

- The first half of this chapter described the call of the Messiah from the Messiah's perspective
 - The second half turns to viewing that same calling and purpose from Israel's perspective
 - We will run through these verses quickly because they are largely a repetition of things we have already studied in Isaiah

- Verses 14-18 describe Israel's plight while they are outside their land and their city
 - And God answers them by saying a mother can't forget her own child
 - And God won't forget the child He birthed in Israel
- He has inscribed Israel's name on His palms
 - And Jerusalem's walls are always before God or constantly have God's attention
 - Later in Isaiah God says that these walls are so important to Him that He has permanently stationed angels upon them
 - Arnold Fruchtenbam tells this anecdote:

Around the walls of Jerusalem to this day there are angelic beings standing upon them. One of my favorite pastimes when I am in Jerusalem is to walk around the walls of [the city]. It is about a 2.5 mile walk...I am always conscious that on those walls are angelic messengers. They only have one ministry as angelic beings. They sit upon the walls of Jerusalem and they are God's remembrances. Their ministry is [to demonstrate that God is continually mindful] of Jerusalem [and His promises to Jerusalem.]

- Going on, God promises to restore the city and the people
 - At a future time, the city will feel cramped because so many Jews will return
 - We see that situation even beginning today
- In v.21 the Jews will even question how it was that they could suddenly find their way back into their land after so long an exile
 - The answer is in v.22...the Gentile nations will make it possible
 - This has also begun already
 - The Gentile nations made a way possible for political Israel to emerge in 1948
 - And nations like the US and others have made it possible for Jewish refugees to leave other countries and go to Israel from around the world

- Ultimately in v.23 the call of the Messiah arrives at Israel becoming the chief nation of the earth as promised
 - And the nation of Israel will rise victorious over all of their oppressors
- Consider this...these prophecies culminate in the arriving Messiah and the triumph of Israel in their Kingdom
 - And they begin with the nation regathering in their land (vs.19-22)
 - Well, since the regathering has already started, how far away do you think Christ's return will be from today?
 - Are we living with a full awareness that we may only have a few years or decades before this age comes to an end?

Isaiah 50-52

- Chapter 49 was the call of the Messiah to serve God
 - Now in chapter we see the sufferings of that Servant

[Is. 50:1](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,
“Where is the certificate of divorce
By which I have sent your mother away?
Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you?
Behold, you were sold for your iniquities,
And for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

[Is. 50:2](#) “Why was there no man when I came?
When I called, why was there none to answer?
Is My hand so short that it cannot ransom?
Or have I no power to deliver?
Behold, I dry up the sea with My rebuke,
I make the rivers a wilderness;
Their fish stink for lack of water
And die of thirst.

[Is. 50:3](#) “I clothe the heavens with blackness
And make sackcloth their covering.”

[Is. 50:4](#) ¶ The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples,
That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word.
He awakens Me morning by morning,
He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple.

[Is. 50:5](#) The Lord GOD has opened My ear;
And I was not disobedient
Nor did I turn back.

[Is. 50:6](#) I gave My back to those who strike Me,
And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard;
I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

[Is. 50:7](#) For the Lord GOD helps Me,
Therefore, I am not disgraced;
Therefore, I have set My face like flint,
And I know that I will not be ashamed.

[Is. 50:8](#) He who vindicates Me is near;
Who will contend with Me?
Let us stand up to each other;
Who has a case against Me?
Let him draw near to Me.

[Is. 50:9](#) Behold, the Lord GOD helps Me;
Who is he who condemns Me?
Behold, they will all wear out like a garment;
The moth will eat them.

[Is. 50:10](#) Who is among you that fears the LORD,
 That obeys the voice of His servant,
 That walks in darkness and has no light?
 Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

[Is. 50:11](#) Behold, all you who kindle a fire,
 Who encircle yourselves with firebrands,
 Walk in the light of your fire
 And among the brands you have set ablaze.
 This you will have from My hand:
 You will lie down in torment.

- As we look at this chapter, remember the complicated historic timeline of Second Isaiah
 - Isaiah writes these words to a future generation of Jews
 - Ones who will live 150 years in the future from his day
 - And they will be living in the captivity of Babylon when they read his words here
 - And Isaiah speaks in the present tense as if he is there with them
 - And so we must read these words as they would be seen and understood from their vantage point
- The Lord opens this chapter answering a cry from the Jews in captivity
 - They have cried out to God that He “divorced” them
 - He has forsaken them in captivity
 - In response, God answered in v.1 that He didn’t divorce them
 - If He had, He would have issued a bill of divorcement
 - In a future day through another prophet, God discussing having divorced Northern Israel
 - The writ of divorce is discussed in the book of Jeremiah
 - But here He hasn’t done that to Judah
 - Secondly, God says in v.2 that He was not in debt to any man so as to need to ransom or sell His children
 - A man in too much debt might sell his children to get out from under the debt

- But God wasn't in that situation
 - So Judah wasn't ransomed or divorced
 - Furthermore, in verses 2-3, He adds that it's not that He lacks the power to save them
- So what placed Judah in bondage?
 - God doesn't answer that directly here
 - But He begins to allude to it by transition to a discussion of the Suffering Servant
 - Who must come to pay the price of this sin and free Judah and all Israel from their bondage
 - In v.4 the early life of the Messiah is discussed
 - It's interesting that not much is known of Jesus' early Life
 - Luke gives us what little we have, and it only begins at age 12
 - By then, Jesus is teaching the Pharisees in the temple
 - How did He acquire so much knowledge as a young child?
 - Maybe you assumed Jesus simply had it all in His head from birth since He was God incarnate
 - To assume that is to make the mistake of placing too much emphasis on His divinity at the expense of His humanity
 - Jesus was fully man, and required training to learn all that He knew
 - Being without sin undoubtedly made the learning process easier in many ways, but He still needed to learn
 - I wonder how He gained His awareness that He was God Himself
- Isaiah tells us how that happened here in this verse
 - The Father gave Jesus the tongue of disciples - meaning the Father spoke to Him as a student
 - The Father awoke the Son every morning to teach Jesus and Jesus listened

- Taught directly by the Father on all things pertaining to godliness
 - And in v.5 Jesus says his ears were opened and He didn't turn back or disobey
 - A subtle jab at Adam, who was taught by the Father yet did turn back and disobey
 - That reference to obeying is critical, because it ties two thoughts in the text
 - Above it we found Israel complaining for their bondage, a bondage due to sin
 - And below this point, we're going to see a description of the Messiah's willingness to serve the Father in suffering
 - And the connection between the two events is the Messiah's perfect sinlessness
 - Because Christ was taught of the Father and was sinless, He could serve in Israel's place to remove her sin
- Now the sufferings come to the foreground
 - Notice the sense of the description throughout
 - It doesn't merely describe the tortures He endured
 - It also emphasizes how Jesus allowed it, and submitted to it
 - In v.6 He "gave" His back to the blows
 - He didn't cover His face from spit
 - He didn't stop them from pulling out His beard (by the way, Jesus was bearded as were all Law-abiding Jewish men)
 - So Jesus is despised by men, but He find His strength in the Lord
- Father is Christ's help
 - Eternally, the Father rescues Christ though He decided He must suffer for a time
 - But Christ's vindication is near

- The Father helps Him while those who persecute Him will wear out
 - The eternal God contrasted with the mortal flesh of men
- And the chapter ends beautifully with a clear contrast
 - In v.10 Jesus extends an appeal to the reader to follow His lead
 - Obey the Father as a servant
 - If you are in darkness, then trust in the name of the Lord and rely on His (Christ's) God
 - In v.11 the other group is called out
 - Those who kindle a fire
 - The idea is that our sin is the fuel stoking our own judgment fires
 - Sinner encircle themselves with this fire so that there is no escape
 - And they will lie down in their own torment in Hell
- Moving to chapter 51, we are still looking at the Messiah suffering not to include the death itself
 - The death of the Messiah awaits chapter 52
 - Now if you are a Jew following this discussion closely, you may begin to worry a lot
 - First, you hear that the call of the Messiah in chapter 49 was a call to discouragement in His day
 - He would triumph ultimately, but not before He was rejected by His own people
 - As a Jew, especially one in the remnant of Israel, that doesn't sound like a good thing
 - Then in chapter 50 you've read that He is suffering greatly, including humiliation and shame
 - That's even worse

- Then in chapter 53, the reader will encounter the most unexpected thing of all
 - The Messiah will die
 - Without an understanding of propitiation for sin, the reader would have no reason for hope
- So in chapters 51-52, God speaks through Isaiah to the remnant of Israel to encourage them in the face of the Messiah's trials and death

[Is. 51:1](#) ¶ " Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
Who seek the LORD:
Look to the rock from which you were hewn
And to the quarry from which you were dug.

[Is. 51:2](#) "Look to Abraham your father
And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain;
When he was but one I called him,
Then I blessed him and multiplied him."

[Is. 51:3](#) Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion;
He will comfort all her waste places.
And her wilderness He will make like Eden,
And her desert like the garden of the LORD;
Joy and gladness will be found in her,
Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

- To those who pursue righteousness are the remnant of Israel
 - Think how few in number and weak Abraham and Sarah were
 - Yet God blessed them and multiplied them
 - The application for the remnant of Israel is easy to make
 - He can do the same for us
 - And today if you are feeling like the "real" Christians are fewer and fewer, remember this promise as well
 - Small numbers doesn't mean God is defeated or weak
 - In v.3 the promises are repeated for Israel to rise in strength and peace again

[Is. 51:4](#) ¶ “ Pay attention to Me, O My people,
 And give ear to Me, O My nation;
 For a law will go forth from Me,
 And I will set My justice for a light of the peoples.

[Is. 51:5](#) “My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth,
 And My arms will judge the peoples;
 The coastlands will wait for Me,
 And for My arm they will wait expectantly.

[Is. 51:6](#) “ Lift up your eyes to the sky,
 Then look to the earth beneath;
 For the sky will vanish like smoke,
 And the earth will wear out like a garment
 And its inhabitants will die in like manner;
 But My salvation will be forever,
 And My righteousness will not wane.

[Is. 51:7](#) “ Listen to Me, you who know righteousness,
 A people in whose heart is My law;
 Do not fear the reproach of man,
 Nor be dismayed at their revilings.

[Is. 51:8](#) “For the moth will eat them like a garment,
 And the grub will eat them like wool.
 But My righteousness will be forever,
 And My salvation to all generations.”

- Speaking to Israel, the Lord describes His plan to redeem them as a Law and Justice that goes forth
 - It means both the embodiment of Law and Justice in Christ Himself
 - But it also refers to the nature of His reign on Earth, a time of Law and justice
 - This coming righteousness is Christ judging the world and the nations
 - And bringing a salvation from that judgment that endures forever
 - You could sum these words up by saying have eyes for eternity
 - Look beyond your circumstances
- Now the text shifts back to talking to the Messiah again

[Is. 51:9](#) ¶ Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD;
 Awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago.
 Was it not You who cut Rahab in pieces,
 Who pierced the dragon?

[Is. 51:10](#) Was it not You who dried up the sea,
 The waters of the great deep;
 Who made the depths of the sea a pathway
 For the redeemed to cross over?

[Is. 51:11](#) So the ransomed of the LORD will return
 And come with joyful shouting to Zion,
 And everlasting joy will be on their heads.
 They will obtain gladness and joy,
 And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

[Is. 51:12](#) ¶ "I, even I, am He who comforts you.
 Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies
 And of the son of man who is made like grass,

[Is. 51:13](#) That you have forgotten the LORD your Maker,
 Who stretched out the heavens
 And laid the foundations of the earth,
 That you fear continually all day long because of the fury of the oppressor,
 As he makes ready to destroy?
 But where is the fury of the oppressor?

[Is. 51:14](#) "The exile will soon be set free, and will not die in the dungeon, nor will his bread be lacking.

[Is. 51:15](#) "For I am the LORD your God, who stirs up the sea and its waves roar (the LORD of hosts is His name).

[Is. 51:16](#) "I have put My words in your mouth and have covered you with the shadow of My hand, to establish the heavens, to found the earth, and to say to Zion, 'You are My people.'"

- The "arm of the Lord" is a reference to Jesus
 - He is called to "awake"
 - This is a subtle reference to His coming back to earth
 - Where once before He did works
 - He cut Rahab into pieces, pierced the dragon and dried up the sea, making a pathway in the sea for the redeemed to cross over
 - We know the sea and pathway refer to Exodus, but what about Rahab and the dragon
 - It's all the same really

- Rahab is another name for Egypt in scripture
 - You can see it used that way in Psalm 87:4
- And the dragon is a reference to Pharaoh
 - You can see that reference in Ezekiel 29:3
- So Christ we learn was the One in the Godhead Who actually performed those miracles as they occurred
 - And He did them in a time when Israel was under great distress and felt helpless
- So the call to awake indicates the Messiah's return at a future time to perform another rescue (In Tribulation)
- In v.12-13 God sets up a decision for the reader
 - On the one hand you have threats from men
 - But men die and have no power
 - In fact the Hebrew word here for man is enosh, which means a weak, feeble man
 - On the other hand, if you fear these weak men, it's only because you have forgotten the Lord
 - If the power and sovereignty of God is always on our mind, we can fear men
 - Just as Christ didn't fear His oppressors
 - Finally, in vs.14-16 God draws the point to conclusion
 - This verse could reference the return of exiles from Babylon
 - It probably also references the regathering of Israel in the last days (today)

[Is. 51:17](#) ¶ Rouse yourself! Rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem,
 You who have drunk from the LORD'S hand the cup of His anger;
 The chalice of reeling you have drained to the dregs.

[Is. 51:18](#) There is none to guide her among all the sons she has borne,
 Nor is there one to take her by the hand among all the sons she has reared.

[Is. 51:19](#) These two things have befallen you;
 Who will mourn for you?
 The devastation and destruction, famine and sword;
 How shall I comfort you?

[Is. 51:20](#) Your sons have fainted,
 They lie helpless at the head of every street,
 Like an antelope in a net,
 Full of the wrath of the LORD,
 The rebuke of your God.

[Is. 51:21](#) ¶ Therefore, please hear this, you afflicted,
 Who are drunk, but not with wine:

[Is. 51:22](#) Thus says your Lord, the LORD, even your God
 Who contends for His people,
 "Behold, I have taken out of your hand the cup of reeling,
 The chalice of My anger;
 You will never drink it again.

[Is. 51:23](#) "I will put it into the hand of your tormentors,
 Who have said to you, 'Lie down that we may walk over you.'
 You have even made your back like the ground
 And like the street for those who walk over it."

- In this passage, God walks Israel through about 2,000+ years of her history
 - In vs.17-21 Isaiah describes the coming judgment against Israel for their sins in rejecting the Covenant
 - Culminating in AD 70 with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem
 - God has a chalice or cup of judgment and they have drained it
 - The people can't be found in the city any longer (v.18)
 - And two things have come upon the them
 - The city is devastated and destroyed
 - And in v.20 the people are killed and taken like animals into slavery
 - Then the history lesson jumps forward to a point where God removes the cup
 - And after God removes this cup, they will never drink again
 - Instead, it will be a drink for her oppressors
 - Israel redeemed and in her land again after Tribulation

- Continuing the calls to “awake,” the third call is for Zion
 - Zion is a word that means Jerusalem but it is uniquely associated with the New Jerusalem, the redeemed Jerusalem that every Jew hopes to see
 - Today we see “Zionists” who seek to produce a triumphant Jewish nation, but they usually try to obtain it in manmade ways
 - Only God can establish the true Zion

[Is. 52:1](#) ¶ Awake, awake,
 Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion;
 Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments,
 O Jerusalem, the holy city;
 For the uncircumcised and the unclean
 Will no longer come into you.

[Is. 52:2](#) Shake yourself from the dust, rise up,
 O captive Jerusalem;
 Loose yourself from the chains around your neck,
 O captive daughter of Zion.

[Is. 52:3](#) ¶ For thus says the LORD, “You were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money.”

[Is. 52:4](#) For thus says the Lord GOD, “My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there; then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

[Is. 52:5](#) “Now therefore, what do I have here,” declares the LORD, “seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?” Again the LORD declares, “Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually blasphemed all day long.

[Is. 52:6](#) “Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, ‘Here I am.’”

- We are looking at New Jerusalem and the question is how does Israel arrive at this point?
 - We know the answer...Christ!
 - They were sold for nothing
 - God placed them in bondage but not because He owed anyone
 - They will be redeemed without money
 - They are not bought with money, but with Christ’s blood

- Just as their oppressors came upon them not for their own reasons but because God brought them
- Likewise, salvation will come because of God and no other reason

[Is. 52:7](#) ¶ How lovely on the mountains
 Are the feet of him who brings good news,
 Who announces peace
 And brings good news of happiness,
 Who announces salvation,
 And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

[Is. 52:8](#) Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices,
 They shout joyfully together;
 For they will see with their own eyes
 When the LORD restores Zion.

[Is. 52:9](#) Break forth, shout joyfully together,
 You waste places of Jerusalem;
 For the LORD has comforted His people,
 He has redeemed Jerusalem.

[Is. 52:10](#) The LORD has bared His holy arm
 In the sight of all the nations,
 That all the ends of the earth may see
 The salvation of our God.

- Perhaps some of the most poetic and beautiful verses in all Isaiah in Hebrew
 - Isaiah's Hamlet
 - In v.7 we have the Hebrew word for gospel
 - How lovely are the feet of Him who brings the gospel
 - Who announces salvation
 - We know this is Jesus, but why the mention of "feet"
 - Well, remember Jesus return is associated with His feet on the Mount of Olives
 - And looking at v.10 the word play in Hebrew is unmistakable
 - The Lord has bared His holy arm, Who we know is Jesus
 - Bared as in make visible - Jesus is made known

- All the ends of the earth see Him
 - Sounds like the Second Coming doesn't it?
- What do they see?
 - The salvation of the our God
 - Remember, salvation is Yeshuah and Jesus' name is Yeshua
- The word play is intentional, of course
 - The world will see Jesus, their salvation

[Is. 52:11](#) ¶ Depart, depart, go out from there,
Touch nothing unclean;
Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves,
You who carry the vessels of the LORD.

[Is. 52:12](#) But you will not go out in haste,
Nor will you go as fugitives;
For the LORD will go before you,
And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

- At Jesus' return, the nation of Israel is called to "go out"
 - Meaning they are called to come out of hiding and out from under of oppression
 - They enter the New Jerusalem and they enter to serve God in the Millennial temple (v.11)
 - Interestingly, they don't go out in haste
 - The point is to compare this going out to the one in Exodus
 - Before they left so quickly they didn't have time to let the bread rise
 - Now they can follow their Lord into the gates without worry
- Now Isaiah returns to the main subject, the Suffering Servant again
 - We've moved from the call of the Servant, to His suffering
 - But now Isaiah picks up the theme again by providing the answer to why must He suffer

[Is. 52:13](#) ¶ Behold, My servant will prosper,
He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.

[Is. 52:14](#) Just as many were astonished at you, My people,
So His appearance was marred more than any man
And His form more than the sons of men.

[Is. 52:15](#) Thus He will sprinkle many nations,
Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him;
For what had not been told them they will see,
And what they had not heard they will understand.

- I've read this section, but I'm not going to discuss it this week
 - It begins a new section that extends through 53
 - It describes the death of the Messiah and His resurrection
 - So it covers both the crucifixion and the redemption of Israel at the time of the national confession in Zech 12
 - We'll look at it then, moving about 4-5 chapters forward next week
 -

Isaiah 53-56

- This is the fourth and most important of the "Servant" passages within Second Isaiah
 - The first section was Isaiah 42:1-4 - mission of the Messiah
 - The second was Isaiah 49:1-13 - the trials of that mission
 - The third was Isaiah 50:4-9 - the suffering of the Servant
 - The fourth began at the end of 52:13 and continues into chapter 53

"The profoundest thoughts in the Old Testament revelation are to be found in this section. It is a vindication of the Servant, so clear and so true, and wrought out with such a pathos and potency, that it holds first place in Messianic prophecy." - George Robinson

- Also, remember that we saw in Isaiah 51 the reference to the arm of Jehovah
 - If you remember this was a reference to Christ, Who is the arm of the Lord
 - The "arm" and Jehovah are two different entities in the text
 - Remember from last time that when the Gentiles people look upon arm of the Lord, they see salvation (Yeshua)
 - Finally, we saw Isaiah proclaim that God's people wouldn't be redeemed with money
 - But the statement suggests they will be redeemed but in a different way
 - This chapter describes how that redemption takes place
- To get the full sense of the death as it's portrayed in the text, let's read the entire Servant song, beginning with the end of 52

[Is. 52:13](#) ¶ Behold, My servant will prosper,
He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.
[Is. 52:14](#) Just as many were astonished at you, My people,
So His appearance was marred more than any man
And His form more than the sons of men.

[Is. 52:15](#) Thus He will sprinkle many nations,
Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him;
For what had not been told them they will see,
And what they had not heard they will understand.

- Looking at the passage, we read the final three verses of Chapter 52 last week, and they are a mini outline of the chapter to follow
 - Christ will be exalted (though at first He seems to fail)
 - But not before His appearance is marred more than any other man
 - In the end, He will rule over the nations
- Now chapter 53
 - There are 80 references to Isaiah in the NT...most come from this single chapter

[Is. 53:1](#) ¶ Who has believed our message?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

[Is. 53:2](#) For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,
And like a root out of parched ground;
He has no stately form or majesty
That we should look upon Him,
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

[Is. 53:3](#) He was despised and forsaken of men,
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And like one from whom men hide their face
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

[Is. 53:4](#) ¶ Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.

[Is. 53:5](#) But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.

[Is. 53:6](#) All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him.

[Is. 53:7](#) ¶ He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
 Yet He did not open His mouth;
 Like a lamb that is led to slaughter,
 And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,
 So He did not open His mouth.

[Is. 53:8](#) By oppression and judgment He was taken away;
 And as for His generation, who considered
 That He was cut off out of the land of the living
 For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?

[Is. 53:9](#) His grave was assigned with wicked men,
 Yet He was with a rich man in His death,
 Because He had done no violence,
 Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

[Is. 53:10](#) ¶ But the LORD was pleased
 To crush Him, putting Him to grief;
 If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,
 He will see His offspring,
 He will prolong His days,
 And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.

- Keeping in mind all that was written here was prepared centuries before Christ's arrival
 - Ironically, some Bible critics have tried to discount the possibility that this book was actually written by Isaiah because of its accuracy
 - They say that because the book was so accurate in foretelling future events, it must have been written afterward
- The next thing to note is that chapter 53 describes both a near term fulfillment and a long term fulfillment
 - The near term is Christ's crucifixion and death
 - The long term view is the end of Tribulation when the Jewish nation comes to know Christ as Messiah and turns to Him in faith
 - In vs.1-10 we have the near term fulfillment
 - For example, Isaiah gives a vivid description of Jesus in His human form
 - A root from parched ground, a reference back to Isaiah 11 and the root of Jesse
 - Not from David, the King, but from Jesse the unremarkable one

- A man without remarkable form or appearance
 - An ordinary Joe
 - It's easy for us to imagine Jesus in a form so naturally attractive that we assume we would have seen His divinity with our eyes
 - Isaiah says God chose a plain appearance for Christ
 - He was probably a little shorter than you assume
 - And more than plain, He repelled men

In Israel today, orthodox Jews hold the name of Jesus in contempt. His true name is Yeshua, but orthodox Jews have taken to calling Him Yeshu, which is a word made up of the first three Hebrew initials in a line of Hebrew, which reads "May His Name and Memory Be Blotted Out." - Fruchtenbaum

- Why did God chose such a humble appearance
 - Because no flesh will be glorified
 - This has always been His pattern
 - Remember, the nation chose a king in Saul who looked the part
 - Meanwhile, the right king for Israel was a young shepherd boy
 - No doubt Jesus' appearance challenged the faith of Israel all the more in that they didn't see a mighty figure
 - Remember God will often call the unlikely man or woman to serve Him...don't judge on appearances
- Look at the remaining details of His life
 - Despised and forsaken (v.3)
 - Not merely on the cross, but in His ministry and probably before, as a man from Nazareth
 - Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief
 - The Hebrew word for sorrows is pains and the Hebrew for grief is disease

- He was acquainted with pain and disease
 - Whether in Himself or others
- He grieved over the loss of friends, including Lazarus
- He grieved over Joseph's death at some point
- He grieved in His own death of course
- In vs.4-6, you have a mini version of Romans
 - If you've ever heard it suggested, as I have, that the doctrine of substitutionary atonement is only a New Testament invention of Paul
 - Then consider vs.4-6 of this chapter
 - He bore our grief, our iniquity fell on Him and we are healed
- Then in vs.7-10, the death of Christ is described
 - But more than the process, Isaiah also describes the purpose
 - Christ was silent and like a sheep, predicting the Messiah's willingness to go to death
 - His life was taken by oppression and judgment
 - And His own generation has no idea what's happening (v.8)
 - His grave was with criminals (hanging on a cross with the thieves)
 - But Jesus was ultimately buried in a rich man's tomb (Joseph of Arimathia)
 - And Jesus was innocent (v.9)
 - Who brought the Messiah to this end? The Father
 - But the Lord will bring Christ to see His offspring and prolong His days
- That was the near term prophecy, in all it's perfect accuracy
- Now the long term prophecy is clearly seen in v.12

[Is. 53:11](#) As a result of the anguish of His soul,
 He will see it and be satisfied;
 By His knowledge the Righteous One,
 My Servant, will justify the many,
 As He will bear their iniquities.

[Is. 53:12](#) Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great,
 And He will divide the booty with the strong;
 Because He poured out Himself to death,
 And was numbered with the transgressors;
 Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,
 And interceded for the transgressors.

- Ultimately, Jesus is victorious over death and receives His reward and divides it with the strong, those He has redeemed
 - Looking back over the entire passage, we can see further evidence that this passage looks into the distant future
 - Specifically to the moment Israel turns to Christ and calls out for Jesus

[Zech. 12:9](#) "And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

[Zech. 12:10](#) ¶ "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

- Remember that prophecy...now compare it to the first person statements on Isaiah 53 starting in v.2
 - Look at all the first person pronouns
 - This is Israel speaking from the first person during the last moments of Tribulation
- And what happens in response to Israel's cry out to the Lord at that moment?

[Is. 54:1](#) ¶ "Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child;
 Break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud, you who have not travailed;
 For the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous
 Than the sons of the married woman," says the LORD.

- [Is. 54:2](#) "Enlarge the place of your tent;
Stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not;
Lengthen your cords
And strengthen your pegs.
- [Is. 54:3](#) "For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left.
And your descendants will possess nations
And will resettle the desolate cities.
- [Is. 54:4](#) ¶ "Fear not, for you will not be put to shame;
And do not feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced;
But you will forget the shame of your youth,
And the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.
- [Is. 54:5](#) "For your husband is your Maker,
Whose name is the LORD of hosts;
And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel,
Who is called the God of all the earth.
- [Is. 54:6](#) "For the LORD has called you,
Like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit,
Even like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected,"
Says your God.
- [Is. 54:7](#) "For a brief moment I forsook you,
But with great compassion I will gather you.
- [Is. 54:8](#) "In an outburst of anger
I hid My face from you for a moment,
But with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,"
Says the LORD your Redeemer.
- [Is. 54:9](#) ¶ "For this is like the days of Noah to Me,
When I swore that the waters of Noah
Would not flood the earth again;
So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you
Nor will I rebuke you.
- [Is. 54:10](#) "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake,
But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you,
And My covenant of peace will not be shaken,"
Says the LORD who has compassion on you.
- [Is. 54:11](#) ¶ "O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted,
Behold, I will set your stones in antimony,
And your foundations I will lay in sapphires.
- [Is. 54:12](#) "Moreover, I will make your battlements of rubies,
And your gates of crystal,
And your entire wall of precious stones.
- [Is. 54:13](#) "All your sons will be taught of the LORD;
And the well-being of your sons will be great.
- [Is. 54:14](#) "In righteousness you will be established;
You will be far from oppression, for you will not fear;
And from terror, for it will not come near you.

[Is. 54:15](#) "If anyone fiercely assails you it will not be from Me.

Whoever assails you will fall because of you.

[Is. 54:16](#) "Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals

And brings out a weapon for its work;

And I have created the destroyer to ruin.

[Is. 54:17](#) " No weapon that is formed against you will prosper;

And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn.

This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD,

And their vindication is from Me," declares the LORD.

- What a beautiful song sung by the Lord to Israel in response to their sorrow over piercing their Messiah
 - The Lord is truly full of mercy, even to Israel who rejected His Son
 - One note worth making of that passage is in v.17
 - Have you heard v.17 quoted in other contexts before?
 - Perhaps in conjunction with a Christian or the Church?
 - Considering how it appears in Isaiah, we should be very careful to apply this passage broadly to anyone other than Israel
 - While it may be true that those in faith expect a similar vindication upon our resurrection
 - Proper Biblical scholarship must separate interpretation from application
 - The proper interpretation of this verse is that God is speaking to Israel and about Israel alone
 - But a reasonable application of this verse would be that God makes similar assurances to Gentiles believers
- Isaiah's next two chapters record another beautiful sonnet from God
 - This time to audience is both Jew and Gentile, all men
 - It's His invitation to salvation, first to the Jew in chapter 55 and then to the Gentile in 56

[Is. 55:1](#) ¶ "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters;
And you who have no money come, buy and eat.
Come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without cost.

[Is. 55:2](#) "Why do you spend money for what is not bread,
And your wages for what does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good,
And delight yourself in abundance.

[Is. 55:3](#) "Incline your ear and come to Me.
Listen, that you may live;
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
According to the faithful mercies shown to David.

[Is. 55:4](#) "Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples,
A leader and commander for the peoples.

[Is. 55:5](#) "Behold, you will call a nation you do not know,
And a nation which knows you not will run to you,
Because of the LORD your God, even the Holy One of Israel;
For He has glorified you."

[Is. 55:6](#) ¶ Seek the LORD while He may be found;
Call upon Him while He is near.

[Is. 55:7](#) Let the wicked forsake his way
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the LORD,
And He will have compassion on him,
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.

[Is. 55:8](#) "For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.

[Is. 55:9](#) "For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

[Is. 55:10](#) "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
And do not return there without watering the earth
And making it bear and sprout,
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;

[Is. 55:11](#) So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;
It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

[Is. 55:12](#) "For you will go out with joy
And be led forth with peace;
The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you,
And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

[Is. 55:13](#) "Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up,
And instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up,
And it will be a memorial to the LORD,
For an everlasting sign which will not be cut off."

- This chapter makes an invitation to Israel that they might receive this Suffering Servant
 - The open invitation uses three drinks to picture the receiving of this spiritual life
 - Water is for refreshment, wine for enjoyment and milk for nourishment
 - A reflection of three benefits of our relationship with the Lord
 - But notice none of this can come through a purchase
 - For we have no money to buy these things
 - It must come by grace, an invitation
 - Christ's own words in Matthew 11 echo this statement

[Matt. 11:28](#) ¶ "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

[Matt. 11:29](#) "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

[Matt. 11:30](#) "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

- The answer is found in an everlasting covenant, the New Covenant
 - And this is assured by the mercies shown to David
 - Meaning that the same God who assured David concerning His descendant ruling on a throne is giving a similar assurance to us
- In v.5 we see that this chapter is speaking to Israel
 - As a nation they will see a foreign nation run to them because of a calling
 - This is a prophecy of how the saved nation of Israel will attract the Gentile nations of the kingdom

- As chief nation on the earth, Israel receives streams of Gentiles coming to the temple
 - Then before it's too late for each person, call upon the Lord and seek Him
 - Repent, turn to the Lord and He will have compassion
 - The gospel message again
- Finally, consider vs.10-12 in their context
 - No doubt we've heard Isaiah 55:11 quoted many times
 - God's word will not go forth from His mouth and not return empty
 - The context of the second part of Second Isaiah has been the Suffering Servant doing the Father's bidding to bring a people back to God
 - The Servant is the Word, according to John 1
 - It would seem that in the context, the meaning of this passage is directly at the Son Himself going out and not returning without accomplishing the Father's purpose concerning Israel
 - And of course, that same principle holds true for God's word
 - What God proclaims will come to pass
 - And the proof will be seen in an Israel that will bloom again in new ways

[Is. 56:1](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,
 "Preserve justice and do righteousness,
 For My salvation is about to come
 And My righteousness to be revealed.

[Is. 56:2](#) "How blessed is the man who does this,
 And the son of man who takes hold of it;
 Who keeps from profaning the sabbath,
 And keeps his hand from doing any evil."

[Is. 56:3](#) Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say,
 "The LORD will surely separate me from His people."
 Nor let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree."

[Is. 56:4](#) For thus says the LORD,
 "To the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths,
 And choose what pleases Me,
 And hold fast My covenant,

[Is. 56:5](#) To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial,
And a name better than that of sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off.

[Is. 56:6](#) ¶ "Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
To minister to Him, and to love the name of the LORD,
To be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the sabbath
And holds fast My covenant;

[Is. 56:7](#) Even those I will bring to My holy mountain
And make them joyful in My house of prayer.
Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar;
For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples."

[Is. 56:8](#) The Lord GOD, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares,
"Yet others I will gather to them, to those already gathered."

[Is. 56:9](#) ¶ All you beasts of the field,
All you beasts in the forest,
Come to eat.

[Is. 56:10](#) His watchmen are blind,
All of them know nothing.
All of them are mute dogs unable to bark,
Dreamers lying down, who love to slumber;

[Is. 56:11](#) And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied.
And they are shepherds who have no understanding;
They have all turned to their own way,
Each one to his unjust gain, to the last one.

[Is. 56:12](#) "Come," they say, "let us get wine, and let us drink heavily of strong drink;
And tomorrow will be like today, only more so."

- Now the invitation is extended to the Gentile
 - In vs.1-2 the invitation for salvation is repeated
 - And in v.3 the audience for this repeated offer is identified
 - Isaiah talks about not profaning the sabbath
 - Understanding that the Sabbath is Christ for the believer'
 - We rest in Christ's work, so our Sabbath is perpetual in Christ
 - Therefore, to believe in Christ is to observe the Sabbath today
 - Then Isaiah talks about two groups of Gentiles who now have hope to attach themselves to the assembly of Israel
 - Here's evidence of Gentiles grafted into the root of Israel

- First the foreigner in v.3 and the eunuch in v.4
 - Those who observe the Sabbath (in Christ) can now have entrance into the assembly of Israel
- Why these two groups?
 - There is another time that two groups like this are mentioned together in the OT
 - Deut 23:

[Deut. 23:1](#) ¶ “ No one who is emasculated or has his male organ cut off shall enter the assembly of the LORD.

[Deut. 23:2](#) “No one of illegitimate birth shall enter the assembly of the LORD; none of his descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall enter the assembly of the LORD.

[Deut. 23:3](#) “ No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the LORD; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the LORD,

[Deut. 23:4](#) because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

- In this passage, the Ammonites and Moabites, descendants of Lot are banned from entering the assembly of the Israel
 - The assembly specifically referred to a participation in Temple services
 - They might become a faithful follower of YHWH but they still had to wait until the tenth generation before they could participate in the Temple services
- Now by faith in Christ, this prohibition has been removed (v.7)
 - Remember Acts 8 when Phillip meets the Ethiopian eunuch on the road?
 - That encounter is provided in Acts to demonstrate how this prophecy of Isaiah was coming true
 - Remember what the Eunuch was reading? Isaiah 53
 - And immediately afterward, the Eunuch asks what prevents me from being baptized? The sense of the question is in relationship to the lifting of this prohibition

- The original prohibition was given under the Mosaic Law, but now that we are under the Law of Christ, grace is made available to everyone
 - For what Law couldn't do, grace will do
- Also notice in v.7 that their attaching to Israel will allow them to come to the Temple, which is the Temple of the Millennial reign
- Finally, vs.9-12 give us a transition to the final chapter of the second part of Second Isaiah
 - Isaiah turns his attention back to the corrupt leadership of Israel who leads the Jewish people astray and against their Messiah
 - This reminds us of the way the Pharisees convince the people of Israel that Jesus is possessed by Satan Himself
 - And as a result, the nation is devoured by Gentile nations (Rome in AD 70) called "beasts"
 - And the cause for this calamity are the corrupt Jewish leaders
 - This is a transition to the final chapter where Isaiah returns to condemning the evil in Israel that stands opposed to God and His Suffering Servant

Isaiah 57-61

- Today we end the Suffering Servant section of Second Isaiah and enter the final section of this monumental work:
 - The third part of Second Isaiah devoted to the work of the Spirit
 - Remember, this book has consistently pointed forward to a specific future in the last days
 - The future of Israel being judged during Tribulation
 - After which the nation is restored into a glorious kingdom in which they are the preeminent nation
 - That theme reaches it's climax in the transition from this section into the last section
 - Remember the outline of Second Isaiah provided in Isaiah 40:2

[Is. 40:2](#) " Speak kindly to Jerusalem;
And call out to her, that her warfare has ended,
That her iniquity has been removed,
That she has received of the LORD'S hand
Double for all her sins."

- Part 1 was the Father, and it dealt with the ending of God's warfare against Israel
- Part 2 was the Son, which we are finishing in chapter 57 tonight, and it dealt with the next statement
 - Israel's iniquity is removed (through Christ's suffering)
- The final Part which we start tonight is the Spirit and describes the final statement
 - Israel receives double for her sins
 - That statement refers specifically to what Israel experiences during the Tribulation
 - And the Spirit's work during that seven year time is the principle focus for the final section of Isaiah

- Because we're going to read through so much scripture this week and next week, I'm going to teach a little differently
 - I'm going to provide an overview of each section and then provide a running commentary of the text
 - So the first half of chapter 57 is a continuation of what we saw last week at the end of chapter 56
 - The leaders of Israel are being criticized as the instigators of Israel's evil
 - That's a constant theme in both the OT and Gospels
 - The Jewish leaders in Israel are held especially culpable for leading Israel astray
 - Now we see God describes the fruit of their evil
 - And the chapter is framed by an interesting opening and ending, which tell us something of where Isaiah is headed later

[Is. 57:1](#) ¶ The righteous man perishes, and no man takes it to heart;
And devout men are taken away, while no one understands.
For the righteous man is taken away from evil,

[Is. 57:2](#) He enters into peace;
They rest in their beds,
Each one who walked in his upright way.

- The righteous man is "abad" in Hebrew
 - Obliterated, given up for lost
 - And no man takes it to heart
 - He is "taken away" from evil
 - And enters into peace
 - Suggests the rapture for the righteous
 - Resting away from the evil world
- Meanwhile...

[Is. 57:3](#) "But come here, you sons of a sorceress,
Offspring of an adulterer and a prostitute.

- Speaking of Israel as offspring of an adulterous history
 - Adultery = cheating on their covenant with God

[Is. 57:4](#) "Against whom do you jest?

Against whom do you open wide your mouth
And stick out your tongue?
Are you not children of rebellion,
Offspring of deceit,

- They stick their tongue out a God in rebellion

[Is. 57:5](#) Who inflame yourselves among the oaks,
Under every luxuriant tree,
Who slaughter the children in the ravines,
Under the clefts of the crags?

- Their worship of false gods was like an inflamed passion
 - And it included slaughtering children in sacrifice

[Is. 57:6](#) "Among the smooth stones of the ravine

Is your portion, they are your lot;
Even to them you have poured out a drink offering,
You have made a grain offering.
Shall I relent concerning these things?

[Is. 57:7](#) "Upon a high and lofty mountain

You have made your bed.
You also went up there to offer sacrifice.

- Speaking of their worship at false temples and altars
 - God asked must He remind them of their past unfaithfulness

[Is. 57:8](#) "Behind the door and the doorpost

You have set up your sign;
Indeed, far removed from Me, you have uncovered yourself,
And have gone up and made your bed wide.
And you have made an agreement for yourself with them,
You have loved their bed,
You have looked on their manhood.

[Is. 57:9](#) "You have journeyed to the king with oil

And increased your perfumes;
You have sent your envoys a great distance
And made them go down to Sheol.

- In v.8 God mentions the doorpost as a reference back to Deut 6:9 which required them to post the words of the Law on their doorposts to remind them
 - Instead they have posted symbols honoring the false gods
 - He then uses references to prostitution and sleeping around to describe their false worship, which probably did involve prostitution
- In v. 9 a king is mentioned
 - The word for king is Molech, which was the king of the Ammonites
 - As a result, Israel's envoys ended up in Sheol

[Is. 57:10](#) "You were tired out by the length of your road,
 Yet you did not say, 'It is hopeless.'
 You found renewed strength,
 Therefore you did not faint.

- No matter how long they pursued this false path, they never tired of their rebellion
- Now the outset of this chapter mentioned the rapture for the saints
 - Then it launched into a recounting of the past sins of Israel
 - Remember, the next chapter begins the section where God describes how Israel will receive double for her sins
 - And here are all the sins that will require a double payment
 - That's quite a payment
 - What kind of situation would amount to a double payment?
 - We know this is Tribulation
 - And the mention of the rapture at the outset of this chapter is intended to set our minds on the last days and the Tribulation that follows
 - So now as we are on the verge of entering the final section, Isaiah begins the transition with a description of how God will respond to their history of sin

[Is. 57:11](#) ¶ “Of whom were you worried and fearful
 When you lied, and did not remember Me
 Nor give Me a thought?
 Was I not silent even for a long time
 So you do not fear Me?”

- During the time they disobeyed God, He remained silent
 - So that they lost all fear of Him
 - An accurate description of Israel today? As we approach the last days and Tribulation?

[Is. 57:12](#) “I will declare your righteousness and your deeds,
 But they will not profit you.

- This is a sarcastic statement by God
 - You should read the word righteousness in quotes, since Israel’s deeds were anything but righteous, though they believed them to be
 - That’s why He can say their deeds will not profit them

[Is. 57:13](#) “When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you.
 But the wind will carry all of them up,
 And a breath will take them away.
 But he who takes refuge in Me will inherit the land
 And will possess My holy mountain.”

- The nation will cry out, and He says let your idols save you
 - But the idols are swept away

[Is. 57:14](#) ¶ And it will be said,
 “ Build up, build up, prepare the way,
 Remove every obstacle out of the way of My people.”

- But those who take refuge in Christ will inherit the land
- And this time when some in Israel are turning to Christ is a time when it will be said “remove every obstacle out of the way...”
 - What does that remind you of?

[Mal. 4:5](#) ¶ “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

[Mal. 4:6](#) “He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.”

- And then:

[Luke 1:17](#) “It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, **TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN**, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

- John the Baptist came before Christ’s first coming, in the power of Elijah
 - Elijah himself will return in the days before Christ’s second coming
 - This verse in Isa 57:14 alludes to that moment, and places the events at the end of this chapter in that context
 - The inheriting of the holy mountain will happen at a time when people are declaring “prepare a way”

[Is. 57:15](#) For thus says the high and exalted One
 Who lives forever, whose name is Holy,
 “I dwell on a high and holy place,
 And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit
 In order to revive the spirit of the lowly
 And to revive the heart of the contrite.

[Is. 57:16](#) “For I will not contend forever,
 Nor will I always be angry;
 For the spirit would grow faint before Me,
 And the breath of those whom I have made.

- Christ says that He dwells on high with those who are contrite of heart
 - But He will not contend with men forever
 - Evocative of the words God spoke before the flood
 - And we know that the judgment of Noah was a picture of the judgement that comes in Tribulation
 - So here’s another reference that demonstrates this final chapter is speaking of Tribulation and the events of the end judgment

[Is. 57:17](#) "Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry and struck him;
I hid My face and was angry,
And he went on turning away, in the way of his heart.

[Is. 57:18](#) "I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners,

[Is. 57:19](#) Creating the praise of the lips.
Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near,"
Says the LORD, "and I will heal him."

- Because God was angry at "him" or the disobedient Jew
 - He struck Israel
 - In setting them outside the land, destroying the Temple
 - Causing them to live in exile since AD70
- And the disobedient Jews remained that way throughout this time of God turning His back upon them
 - But in this last moment (which moment? The end times of Tribulation), God returns to Israel
 - The beginning of the return is the 144,000 jews who becomes believers after the rapture
 - And God is the one creating the praise of their lips
 - As He does for every man, prompting faith when it suits God
 - This is the regeneration that begins in Tribulation and culminates at the very end
- Now before we go into the final section and watch as the Lord does this work with Israel
 - We see the classic statement that marks the end of a section of Second Isaiah
 - The statement of what happens to the wicked

[Is. 57:20](#) But the wicked are like the tossing sea,
For it cannot be quiet,
And its waters toss up refuse and mud.

[Is. 57:21](#) " There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

- Now the beginning of the the Holy Spirit section
 - Remember, the theme of this last section is “double payment for sins” and it centers on the last days of Tribulation

[Is. 58:1](#) ¶ “ Cry loudly, do not hold back;
 Raise your voice like a trumpet,
 And declare to My people their transgression
 And to the house of Jacob their sins.

- There is a commission to declare to Israel her sins
 - But no speaker is named
 - When an actor goes unnamed in Scripture, it sometimes points to Who? The Holy Spirit (e.g., the Servant in Gen 24, Boaz’s servant in Ruth)

[Is. 58:2](#) “Yet they seek Me day by day and delight to know My ways,
 As a nation that has done righteousness
 And has not forsaken the ordinance of their God.
 They ask Me for just decisions,
 They delight in the nearness of God.

[Is. 58:3](#) ‘Why have we fasted and You do not see?
 Why have we humbled ourselves and You do not notice?’
 Behold, on the day of your fast you find your desire,
 And drive hard all your workers.

- They begin to feel the conviction of the Spirit but they respond incorrectly to the conviction
 - They question how God could be unhappy with them
 - They have done righteousness

[Is. 58:4](#) “Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist.
 You do not fast like you do today to make your voice heard on high.

[Is. 58:5](#) “Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself?
 Is it for bowing one’s head like a reed
 And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed?
 Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD?”

- They practice the empty outward religious activities only
 - They don’t fast the way God expects, as a day of humbling themselves

- That isn't acceptable to the Lord

[Is. 58:6](#) "Is this not the fast which I choose,
To loosen the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the bands of the yoke,
And to let the oppressed go free
And break every yoke?"

[Is. 58:7](#) "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry
And bring the homeless poor into the house;
When you see the naked, to cover him;
And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"

[Is. 58:8](#) "Then your light will break out like the dawn,
And your recovery will speedily spring forth;
And your righteousness will go before you;
The glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

- God describes the kind of "fast" He desires
 - A fast from evil
 - A true worship will result in a true righteousness
 - And with it, the Lord's glory
- They must not only strive to do righteousness, but they must be righteous

[Is. 58:9](#) "Then you will call, and the LORD will answer;
You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'
If you remove the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness,

[Is. 58:10](#) And if you give yourself to the hungry
And satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
Then your light will rise in darkness
And your gloom will become like midday.

[Is. 58:11](#) "And the LORD will continually guide you,
And satisfy your desire in scorched places,
And give strength to your bones;
And you will be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.

[Is. 58:12](#) "Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins;
You will raise up the age-old foundations;
And you will be called the repairer of the breach,
The restorer of the streets in which to dwell.

[Is. 58:13](#) ¶ “If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot
 From doing your own pleasure on My holy day,
 And call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable,
 And honor it, desisting from your own ways,
 From seeking your own pleasure
 And speaking your own word,

[Is. 58:14](#) Then you will take delight in the LORD,
 And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
 And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
 For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

- Then those who are humble in this way will call upon the Lord
 - We know this refers to the time of Kingdom again
 - But notice in particular v.12
 - They rebuild the ancient ruins
 - The Temple of the Millennial reign
 - And they restore the streets of the city
 - And to Israel, God calls them to keep the Sabbath in the true way (like the fast earlier)
 - Turn your foot away (don't walk on holy ground by desecrating the Sabbath)
 - Don't conduct business on that day
 - Often business conversations take place during synagogue services on the Sabbath
 - And don't recite empty meaningless prayers
 - Keeping the Sabbath in this true way was symbolic of keeping the entire Law
 - And it's a heartfelt response of faith, not a means to faith
- What pattern are we seeing in these early chapters of the Holy Spirit section?
 - The role of the Spirit to call us out for our sin, to convict us and reveal our need for salvation
 - For example, look at 59, a well-known chapter for it's description of sin in Israel, but in all men

[Is. 59:1](#) ¶ Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short
That it cannot save;
Nor is His ear so dull
That it cannot hear.

- The Lord can save and He does hear Israel's pleas, but they don't realize they are sinful

[Is. 59:2](#) But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God,
And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

[Is. 59:3](#) For your hands are defiled with blood
And your fingers with iniquity;
Your lips have spoken falsehood,
Your tongue mutters wickedness.

[Is. 59:4](#) No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly.
They trust in confusion and speak lies;
They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.

[Is. 59:5](#) They hatch adders' eggs and weave the spider's web;
He who eats of their eggs dies,
And from that which is crushed a snake breaks forth.

[Is. 59:6](#) Their webs will not become clothing,
Nor will they cover themselves with their works;
Their works are works of iniquity,
And an act of violence is in their hands.

[Is. 59:7](#) Their feet run to evil,
And they hasten to shed innocent blood;
Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity,
Devastation and destruction are in their highways.

[Is. 59:8](#) They do not know the way of peace,
And there is no justice in their tracks;
They have made their paths crooked,
Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

- What happens in response to the conviction of the Holy Spirit?

[2Cor. 7:10](#) For the **sorrow** that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the **sorrow** of the world produces death.

- So now we see the pronoun change to first person, as Israel begins to speak in response to the convicting work of the Spirit in the last days

[Is. 59:9](#) ¶ Therefore justice is far from us,
And righteousness does not overtake us;
We hope for light, but behold, darkness,
For brightness, but we walk in gloom.

[Is. 59:10](#) We grope along the wall like blind men,
 We grope like those who have no eyes;
 We stumble at midday as in the twilight,
 Among those who are vigorous we are like dead men.

[Is. 59:11](#) All of us growl like bears,
 And moan sadly like doves;
 We hope for justice, but there is none,
 For salvation, but it is far from us.

[Is. 59:12](#) For our transgressions are multiplied before You,
 And our sins testify against us;
 For our transgressions are with us,
 And we know our iniquities:

[Is. 59:13](#) Transgressing and denying the LORD,
 And turning away from our God,
 Speaking oppression and revolt,
 Conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words.

- So now, what does God do in response to the one who confesses His sin under the influence of the Holy Spirit?
 - He rescues them
 - And as we move forward, notice that the Lord says there is no one else to rescue Israel except Himself

[Is. 59:14](#) Justice is turned back,
 And righteousness stands far away;
 For truth has stumbled in the street,
 And uprightness cannot enter.

[Is. 59:15](#) Yes, truth is lacking;
 And he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey.
 Now the LORD saw,
 And it was displeasing in His sight that there was no justice.

[Is. 59:16](#) And He saw that there was no man,
 And was astonished that there was no one to intercede;
 Then His own arm brought salvation to Him,
 And His righteousness upheld Him.

[Is. 59:17](#) He put on righteousness like a breastplate,
 And a helmet of salvation on His head;
 And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing
 And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle.

[Is. 59:18](#) According to their deeds, so He will repay,
 Wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies;
 To the coastlands He will make recompense.

[Is. 59:19](#) So they will fear the name of the LORD from the west
 And His glory from the rising of the sun,
 For He will come like a rushing stream
 Which the wind of the LORD drives.

[Is. 59:20](#) "A Redeemer will come to Zion,
 And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares the LORD.

- Remember Paul's words at the end of Romans 11?

[Rom. 11:25](#) ¶ For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

[Rom. 11:26](#) and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,
 "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
 HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

- This moment is the result of the work of the Spirit, according to Zech 12:10

[Zech. 12:10](#) ¶ "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

- And so we can see the obvious connection to the end of this chapter

[Is. 59:21](#) ¶ "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD: "My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the LORD, "from now and forever."

- And as we've seen before, what's the next thing Isaiah talks about anytime he brings up the redemption moment of Israel?
 - Predictable, he will launch into a discussion of the kingdom
 - This is one of the more beautiful in the entire book

[Is. 60:1](#) ¶ "Arise, shine; for your light has come,
 And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

[Is. 60:2](#) "For behold, darkness will cover the earth
 And deep darkness the peoples;
 But the LORD will rise upon you
 And His glory will appear upon you.

[Is. 60:3](#) " Nations will come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.

- This light is the Shechinah glory visible in the Temple with Christ's arrival

[Is. 60:4](#) ¶ " Lift up your eyes round about and see;
They all gather together, they come to you.
Your sons will come from afar,
And your daughters will be carried in the arms.

[Is. 60:5](#) "Then you will see and be radiant,
And your heart will thrill and rejoice;
Because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you,
The wealth of the nations will come to you.

[Is. 60:6](#) "A multitude of camels will cover you,
The young camels of Midian and Ephah;
All those from Sheba will come;
They will bring gold and frankincense,
And will bear good news of the praises of the LORD.

[Is. 60:7](#) "All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you,
The rams of Nebaioth will minister to you;
They will go up with acceptance on My altar,
And I shall glorify My glorious house.

[Is. 60:8](#) " Who are these who fly like a cloud
And like the doves to their lattices?

[Is. 60:9](#) "Surely the coastlands will wait for Me;
And the ships of Tarshish will come first,
To bring your sons from afar,
Their silver and their gold with them,
For the name of the LORD your God,
And for the Holy One of Israel because He has glorified you.

- The kingdom will be structured with Israel at the center of the world,,
Christ ruling from Jerusalem
 - And all the Gentile nations that live on the earth will give all their
service and attention to Israel and the Lord

[Is. 60:10](#) ¶ " Foreigners will build up your walls,
And their kings will minister to you;
For in My wrath I struck you,
And in My favor I have had compassion on you.

[Is. 60:11](#) "Your gates will be open continually;
They will not be closed day or night,
So that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations,
With their kings led in procession.

[Is. 60:12](#) "For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve you will perish,
And the nations will be utterly ruined.

[Is. 60:13](#) "The glory of Lebanon will come to you,
The juniper, the box tree and the cypress together,
To beautify the place of My sanctuary;
And I shall make the place of My feet glorious.

[Is. 60:14](#) "The sons of those who afflicted you will come bowing to you,
And all those who despised you will bow themselves at the soles of your feet;
And they will call you the city of the LORD,
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

[Is. 60:15](#) ¶ "Whereas you have been forsaken and hated
With no one passing through,
I will make you an everlasting pride,
A joy from generation to generation.

[Is. 60:16](#) "You will also suck the milk of nations
And suck the breast of kings;
Then you will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior
And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

[Is. 60:17](#) "Instead of bronze I will bring gold,
And instead of iron I will bring silver,
And instead of wood, bronze,
And instead of stones, iron.
And I will make peace your administrators
And righteousness your overseers.

[Is. 60:18](#) "Violence will not be heard again in your land,
Nor devastation or destruction within your borders;
But you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise.

[Is. 60:19](#) "No longer will you have the sun for light by day,
Nor for brightness will the moon give you light;
But you will have the LORD for an everlasting light,
And your God for your glory.

[Is. 60:20](#) "Your sun will no longer set,
Nor will your moon wane;
For you will have the LORD for an everlasting light,
And the days of your mourning will be over.

[Is. 60:21](#) "Then all your people will be righteous;
They will possess the land forever,
The branch of My planting,
The work of My hands,
That I may be glorified.

[Is. 60:22](#) "The smallest one will become a clan,
And the least one a mighty nation.
I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time."

- Notice at the end, that all Israel is prosperous and all Israel knows the Lord
 - The kingdom will have no unbelieving Jews

- The opening of the next chapter shows the Spirit's work in the first coming of Christ

[Is. 61:1](#) ¶ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
Because the LORD has anointed me
To bring good news to the afflicted;
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to captives
And freedom to prisoners;

[Is. 61:2](#) To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,

- If you remember these verses as Jesus quoted them at the beginning of His ministry in Nazareth, then you'll remember He stopped in the middle of verse 2
 - Because the second half of v.2 isn't fulfilled until His Second Coming
 - But here we see the Spirit of the Lord upon Christ working through His first coming and into His second coming
 - While His first coming was to declare the gospel (good news) to those who are captives and prisoners of sin
 - Now the text moves to the purpose of His second coming

[Is. 61:3](#) To grant those who mourn in Zion,
Giving them a garland instead of ashes,
The oil of gladness instead of mourning,
The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting.
So they will be called oaks of righteousness,
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

[Is. 61:4](#) ¶ Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins,
They will raise up the former devastations;
And they will repair the ruined cities,
The desolations of many generations.

[Is. 61:5](#) Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks,
And foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers.

[Is. 61:6](#) But you will be called the priests of the LORD;
You will be spoken of as ministers of our God.
You will eat the wealth of nations,
And in their riches you will boast.

[Is. 61:7](#) Instead of your shame you will have a double portion,
And instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion.
Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land,
Everlasting joy will be theirs.

[Is. 61:8](#) For I, the LORD, love justice,
I hate robbery in the burnt offering;
And I will faithfully give them their recompense
And make an everlasting covenant with them.

- Because of Israel's sins, the Lord will give them their recompense upon His return
 - This is the judgment of Tribulation that must precede the giving of the New Covenant
- But after Tribulation, the covenant from Jer 31:31 becomes Israel's
 - The nation of Israel doesn't see this covenant until the time of the Millennial kingdom
 - Because they must first pay double for their sins, as required in the Mosaic Covenant

[Is. 61:9](#) Then their offspring will be known among the nations,
And their descendants in the midst of the peoples.
All who see them will recognize them
Because they are the offspring whom the LORD has blessed.

[Is. 61:10](#) ¶ I will rejoice greatly in the LORD,
My soul will exult in my God;
For He has clothed me with garments of salvation,
He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness,
As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

[Is. 61:11](#) For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,
And as a garden causes the things sown in it to spring up,
So the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
To spring up before all the nations.

- The reference to offspring in this context refers to the offspring of the nation of Israel
 - The descendants of the nation will be those Jews in that future day who receive faith in the last days of Tribulation and enter the kingdom
 - They are the offspring of the nation Israel whom the Lord has blessed
 - Because they were the ones to survive the Tribulation and be saved

- As Jesus says in Matt 24:13 speaking of the Jews at the end of Tribulation:

[Matt. 24:13](#) " But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

Isaiah 62-66

- Our final lesson in Isaiah will complete the section on the Holy Spirit
 - It begins tonight in chapter 62 with stunning descriptions of how the Lord will fulfill His promises to Israel
 - Once again looking at the final days of Tribulation, when the work of the Spirit will bring faith to Israel
 - And watch for new details of those last day events, though some we have already studied during past weeks
 - Chapter 62 begins with mysterious first person speaker

[Is. 62:1](#) ¶ For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet,
Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness,
And her salvation like a torch that is burning.

[Is. 62:2](#) The nations will see your righteousness,
And all kings your glory;
And you will be called by a new name
Which the mouth of the LORD will designate.

[Is. 62:3](#) You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
And a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

[Is. 62:4](#) It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken,"
Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate";
But you will be called, "My delight is in her,"
And your land, "Married";
For the LORD delights in you,
And to Him your land will be married.

[Is. 62:5](#) For as a young man marries a virgin,
So your sons will marry you;
And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
So your God will rejoice over you.

[Is. 62:6](#) ¶ On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen;
All day and all night they will never keep silent.
You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves;

[Is. 62:7](#) And give Him no rest until He establishes
And makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

[Is. 62:8](#) The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm,
"I will never again give your grain as food for your enemies;
Nor will foreigners drink your new wine for which you have labored."

[Is. 62:9](#) But those who garner it will eat it and praise the LORD;
And those who gather it will drink it in the courts of My sanctuary.

- For the sake of Zion - meaning for the kingdom of Israel in the Millennial
 - Someone can't remain silent
 - Until her righteousness and salvation are established
 - And this person remains actively speaking or working until Israel is in her glory
 - At that time Israel will have a new name
 - No longer Israel (which means strives with God)
 - Instead, she will have a new name that the mouth of the Lord will designate
 - Isaiah doesn't give us Israel's new name, but a later prophet does
 - Ezekiel says that Israel's new name will be Yahweh Shammah or "The Lord is there"
 - They will be with the Lord and married to Him as the wife of Jehovah
 - Who works tirelessly until this comes about?
 - The role of the Spirit is to work among men in the absence of the Lord, to bring men to faith and strengthen them for the work of the Lord
 - He continues to call a remnant of Israel
- Secondly, in v.6 the Lord has appointed watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem to continually remind Him of His promises
 - Not that God forgets, but it's a symbolic assurance to the nation that God will bring about these promises
 - These watchmen may be angelic or human agents that God has appointed
 - In either case, how would God ensure their constant vigilance, especially if these were human agents?
 - It seems likely that this is another work of the Spirit
 - Moving to protect and preserve Israel and Jerusalem

- If we're looking at human agency, then this could be a description of how God causes men and countries to come to Israel and Jerusalem's aid
- As these verses end the Lord isn't resting until all the promises to Israel come to pass
- For any who might suggest that God has moved on from Israel to blessing the Gentile church in place of Israel, chapters like this one from Isaiah put an end to that thinking
 - God has committed Himself to bringing these promises to bear for a certain people, the ones Isaiah wrote to and for
 - And the Jewish people are made jealous by another people
 - Not replaced by them
- The final verses of 62 are actually connected to the scene in 63
 - This is the moment that these promises are finally kept
 - It's a scene we've studied before, so we" simply remind ourselves of what we've already seen here
 - The scene is at the moment of Jesus' Second Coming

[Is. 62:10](#) ¶ Go through, go through the gates,
Clear the way for the people;
Build up, build up the highway,
Remove the stones, lift up a standard over the peoples.

[Is. 62:11](#) Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth,
Say to the daughter of Zion, "Lo, your salvation comes;
Behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him."

[Is. 62:12](#) And they will call them, "The holy people,
The redeemed of the LORD";
And you will be called, "Sought out, a city not forsaken."

- The scene clearly describes a procession of people leaving a gated place and going up a highway
 - They are led by "Him" who is called "salvation" or Yeshua
 - He has His reward with Him and His justice against the wicked (recompense) is before Him

- So this is Christ leading a group through gates and along a highway
 - The group is called the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord
 - And a city not forsaken
- Clearly these people are Israel
- To see the events clearly, we need to read into chapter 63

[Is. 63:1](#) ¶ Who is this who comes from Edom,
 With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah,
 This One who is majestic in His apparel,
 Marching in the greatness of His strength?
 "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

[Is. 63:2](#) Why is Your apparel red,
 And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

[Is. 63:3](#) "I have trodden the wine trough alone,
 And from the peoples there was no man with Me.
 I also trod them in My anger
 And trampled them in My wrath;
 And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments,
 And I stained all My raiment.

[Is. 63:4](#) "For the day of vengeance was in My heart,
 And My year of redemption has come.

[Is. 63:5](#) "I looked, and there was no one to help,
 And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold;
 So My own arm brought salvation to Me,
 And My wrath upheld Me.

[Is. 63:6](#) "I trod down the peoples in My anger
 And made them drunk in My wrath,
 And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

- Now we know that Jesus is seen coming from Edom, specifically Botzrah
 - This is the procession of the Jews led free from Botsrah as Jesus makes His Second Coming to earth
 - From Isaiah's perspective seeing this future vision from the city of Jerusalem, he describes Jesus approaching from Edom
 - And His garments are red with blood because of His defeat of the enemy gathered at Edom against Jerusalem

- His reference to no one to help sounds like Rev 5 when John learned that no one was found worthy to open the scrolls
- Both in Rev 5 and here, the point of the phrase “no one” is to emphasize that no man is able to accomplish the saving work that the Lamb alone can accomplish
 - In order to appreciate the significance of Christ’s work on our behalf and on behalf of the fallen creation, we first must recognizing the astonishing fact that there is no other option
 - Secondly, we know from Rev 19 that the saints will return with the Lord at His Second Coming, but this passage clarifies that we have no part in the battle

[Is. 63:7](#) I shall make mention of the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, the praises of the LORD,

According to all that the LORD has granted us,
And the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
Which He has granted them according to His compassion
And according to the abundance of His lovingkindnesses.

[Is. 63:8](#) For He said, “Surely, they are My people,
Sons who will not deal falsely.”
So He became their Savior.

[Is. 63:9](#) In all their affliction He was afflicted,
And the angel of His presence saved them;
In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them,
And He lifted them and carried them all the days of old.

[Is. 63:10](#) But they rebelled
And grieved His Holy Spirit;
Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy,
He fought against them.

[Is. 63:11](#) Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses.
Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock?

Where is He who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them,
[Is. 63:12](#) Who caused His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses,
Who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name,

[Is. 63:13](#) Who led them through the depths?
Like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble;

[Is. 63:14](#) As the cattle which go down into the valley,
The Spirit of the LORD gave them rest.
So You led Your people,
To make for Yourself a glorious name.

- This passage is a recounting of the Lord's goodness for Israel
 - And it provides the historical background for His arrival to save them on this final day
- The text goes back to the first person, but this time it seems to be the Jews of those days declaring God's goodness in recognition of Him
 - They declare God's goodness according to all that the Lord has granted them
 - Which He granted based on lovingkindness, covenantal language
 - In v.9 we hear that in their afflictions of bondage in Israel, the Lord felt their bondage
 - And in the angel of His presence, He saved them
 - This confirms that the Lord was the One in the OT described as the Angel of the Lord
 - He loved them and redeemed them out of Egypt
 - After Israel grieved the Holy Spirit (notice how often the HS is named in this section of Second Isaiah)
 - So God became their enemy for a time
 - And during that time, He was silent with the nation as we learned in Isaiah last week
 - Then the Jews began asking over the course of history where was the God WHO did all these things of their past?
 - Parting the sea, placing the HS in their midst, etc.?
- Finally, these Jews of the Tribulation remnant come to the recognition that all their misery and God's silence as been the result of Israel's disobedience
 - And they credit the Spirit (again) for the Lord leading His people and giving them rest in the end

[Is. 63:15](#) ¶ Look down from heaven and see from Your holy and glorious habitation;
Where are Your zeal and Your mighty deeds?
The stirrings of Your heart and Your compassion are restrained toward me.

[Is. 63:16](#) For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us
 And Israel does not recognize us.
 You, O LORD, are our Father,
 Our Redeemer from of old is Your name.

[Is. 63:17](#) Why, O LORD, do You cause us to stray from Your ways
 And harden our heart from fearing You?
 Return for the sake of Your servants, the tribes of Your heritage.

[Is. 63:18](#) Your holy people possessed Your sanctuary for a little while,
 Our adversaries have trodden it down.

[Is. 63:19](#) We have become like those over whom You have never ruled,
 Like those who were not called by Your name.

- Now that same remnant of Israel who has seen their redeemer visit Botsrah and have received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, call on the name of the Lord
 - Look down from heaven...
 - The Jews are pleading here with the Lord to return to them and stir up a love again for them
 - This is the response of a people awakened by the Spirit
 - And they ask for a moment as strong as those the Lord demonstrated in the time of Moses
 - We can see the obvious connection that Isaiah produces here
 - The coming redemption of the remnant during Tribulation will be a situation comparable to the Exodus
 - Set free and redeemed so they may enter the promised land
 - They possessed the sanctuary for a little while, which refers to the temple of Tribulation
 - But now the adversaries have taken it over
 - And the nation of Israel has begun to look like a nation that was never God's during this last time
 - So this remnant will plead for the Lord's return

[Is. 64:1](#) ¶ Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down,
 That the mountains might quake at Your presence —

[Is. 64:2](#) As fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes water to boil —
To make Your name known to Your adversaries,
That the nations may tremble at Your presence!

[Is. 64:3](#) When You did awesome things which we did not expect,
You came down, the mountains quaked at Your presence.

[Is. 64:4](#) For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear,
Nor has the eye seen a God besides You,
Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him.

[Is. 64:5](#) You meet him who rejoices in doing righteousness,
Who remembers You in Your ways.
Behold, You were angry, for we sinned,
We continued in them a long time;
And shall we be saved?

[Is. 64:6](#) For all of us have become like one who is unclean,
And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;
And all of us wither like a leaf,
And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

[Is. 64:7](#) There is no one who calls on Your name,
Who arouses himself to take hold of You;
For You have hidden Your face from us
And have delivered us into the power of our iniquities.

[Is. 64:8](#) ¶ But now, O LORD, You are our Father,
We are the clay, and You our potter;
And all of us are the work of Your hand.

[Is. 64:9](#) Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD,
Nor remember iniquity forever;
Behold, look now, all of us are Your people.

[Is. 64:10](#) Your holy cities have become a wilderness,
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.

[Is. 64:11](#) Our holy and beautiful house,
Where our fathers praised You,
Has been burned by fire;
And all our precious things have become a ruin.

[Is. 64:12](#) Will You restrain Yourself at these things, O LORD?
Will You keep silent and afflict us beyond measure?

- Notice again the first person singular voice
 - The remnant confesses their sin and calls on Christ to return
 - The first verse is a specific call for the Messiah's return, since it refers to God coming down amidst an earthquake (Zech 14 and Habb 3)
 - They associated His return with judgment for the nations

- And the rest of the chapter is a confession of Israel of their sin
- In response to this confession, we now see these two beautiful chapters revealing God's dispensation of grace to Israel, and specifically to the remnant

[Is. 65:1](#) ¶ "I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me;
I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me.
I said, 'Here am I, here am I,'
To a nation which did not call on My name.

[Is. 65:2](#) " I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people,
Who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts,

[Is. 65:3](#) A people who continually provoke Me to My face,
Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks;

[Is. 65:4](#) Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places;
Who eat swine's flesh,
And the broth of unclean meat is in their pots.

[Is. 65:5](#) "Who say, 'Keep to yourself, do not come near me,
For I am holier than you!'
These are smoke in My nostrils,
A fire that burns all the day.

[Is. 65:6](#) "Behold, it is written before Me,
I will not keep silent, but I will repay;
I will even repay into their bosom,

[Is. 65:7](#) Both their own iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers together," says the LORD.

"Because they have burned incense on the mountains
And scorned Me on the hills,
Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom."

- As Paul explains in Romans, the Lord declares through Isaiah that the Gentiles received the Lord's grace during a people when the Jewish nation was set outside God's grace
 - Apart from a remnant, the Lord had left Israel in their sins during this time as repayment for their sins
 - Both their sins and the sins of their fathers
 - Because of their scorning of the Lord

[Is. 65:8](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,
"As the new wine is found in the cluster,
And one says, 'Do not destroy it, for there is benefit in it,'
So I will act on behalf of My servants
In order not to destroy all of them.

[Is. 65:9](#) "I will bring forth offspring from Jacob,
And an heir of My mountains from Judah;
Even My chosen ones shall inherit it,
And My servants will dwell there.

[Is. 65:10](#) "Sharon will be a pasture land for flocks,
And the valley of Achor a resting place for herds,
For My people who seek Me.

[Is. 65:11](#) "But you who forsake the LORD,
Who forget My holy mountain,
Who set a table for Fortune,
And who fill cups with mixed wine for Destiny,

[Is. 65:12](#) I will destine you for the sword,
And all of you will bow down to the slaughter.
Because I called, but you did not answer;
I spoke, but you did not hear.
And you did evil in My sight
And chose that in which I did not delight."

[Is. 65:13](#) ¶ Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, My servants will eat, but you will be hungry.
Behold, My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty.
Behold, My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.

[Is. 65:14](#) "Behold, My servants will shout joyfully with a glad heart,
But you will cry out with a heavy heart,
And you will wail with a broken spirit.

[Is. 65:15](#) "You will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones,
And the Lord GOD will slay you.
But My servants will be called by another name.

[Is. 65:16](#) "Because he who is blessed in the earth
Will be blessed by the God of truth;
And he who swears in the earth
Will swear by the God of truth;
Because the former troubles are forgotten,
And because they are hidden from My sight!

- The basis structure of these verses is God's grace coming to the remnant
 - Contrasted with His judgment and anger against the larger apostate Israel
 - We can see the back and forth references throughout this passage
 - The first verse sets the principle of the remnant being reason enough to preserve the nation

- In a cluster of grapes, you don't throw away the entire cluster simply because some grapes are bad
- You can make new wine with the good grapes
- Likewise God is prepared to preserve the nation of Israel for the sake of the remnant
- In v.11 Isaiah names two occult gods that Israel worshipped at one point
 - Fortune and Destiny
 - Then in typical fashion, Isaiah makes a play on the Hebrew words to shame the nation
 - In v.12, God says though you called upon the name of Destiny, I will destine you for the sword
- Then in vs.13-16, God speaks specifically of how these two groups will see different outcomes in Tribulation
 - The remnant of Tribulation is held in safety during that time, eating, drinking and rejoicing
 - While the rest of the unfaithful Israel will suffer

[Is. 65:17](#) ¶ "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.

[Is. 65:18](#) "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing
And her people for gladness.

[Is. 65:19](#) "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people;
And there will no longer be heard in her
The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

[Is. 65:20](#) "No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days,
Or an old man who does not live out his days;
For the youth will die at the age of one hundred
And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred
Will be thought accursed.

[Is. 65:21](#) "They will build houses and inhabit them;
They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

[Is. 65:22](#) "They will not build and another inhabit,
They will not plant and another eat;
For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people,
And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands.

[Is. 65:23](#) "They will not labor in vain,
Or bear children for calamity;
For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD,
And their descendants with them.

[Is. 65:24](#) "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

[Is. 65:25](#) "The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

- A description of the reward for the remnant...the kingdom
 - Notice the interesting descriptions of that day
 - A "new heavens and earth" here refers to the renewed earth of the Millennial kingdom, not the Eternal Order described in Rev 21 & 22, which follows this kingdom
 - We know they are not the same, because in this time Isaiah describes death, which isn't a part of the Eternal Order
 - Now this text raises an interesting issue, one that touches on something we studied last week as well
 - These verses describe life during the kingdom time
 - In v.20 the nature of life and death during this time is explained
 - Remember that there are "natural" men and women in the kingdom
 - Natural is the term Paul uses in 1Cor 15 to describe the kind of body we received when we were born the first time on Earth
 - Paul contrasts this with the heavenly or imperishable bodies we will receive upon our resurrection at the Rapture
 - Jesus tells us in Matt 22:30 that we will not marry in this new body, which implies strongly that we will not have need for reproduction either
 - Since marriage is the institution God established to provide for the creating and raising of children
 - So the kingdom period is marked by a mixing of heavenly resurrected bodies that won't marry or reproduce

- Combined with natural bodies of those who enter the Kingdom following Tribulation and are able to marry and reproduce
 - More importantly, a natural body is still a sinful body, so the children produced by such a body will also be sinful
 - And all the same spiritual truths for natural men would apply, including the inability to know and trust in the Lord apart from God's grace
- Let's look at what Isaiah says here, and then we'll compare it to what we've studied earlier
 - First, he says that this is a time of rejoicing and a time when former things are not remembered
 - A new time which we know is the Millennial kingdom
 - Then Isaiah speaks in Hebrew poetry in v.20 to describe the length of life for those living in the kingdom in natural bodies
 - Infants will not live but a few days
 - So infant mortality is eliminated
 - And old men live out their days in the Kingdom
 - So there is no death from old age either
 - So no one is dying young or old
 - But then Isaiah says the youth of that day die at 100
 - So it seems to set a minimum age for death
 - The earliest someone can die is 100 years old
 - But then next is a difficult one to translate and interpret
 - The NASB gets it wrong I think
 - A better translation I believe is found in the Douay translation or the Darby translation

[Is. 65:20](#) There shall no more be an infant of days there, nor an old man that shall not fill up his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.

- Putting it together, the text seems to suggest that the one hundredth year of life in the kingdom is a milestone for every natural person
 - They won't die before that time, but at their 100th birthday they are brought to death if they haven't come to know the Lord
 - If they are a "sinner" at that point, they are accursed, which means judged eternally
 - A "sinner" in OT Scripture is one without the forgiveness of sin through faith in the Messiah
- So this fact means that believers, both heavenly and natural, are living the entire length of the Kingdom
 - But unbelievers who are born during this time are dying at 100
 - It would be interesting to ask ourselves why this pattern wouldn't be enough by itself to convince everyone to believe in Christ and save themselves
 - Or for that matter, why the very presence of Christ on the Earth isn't enough
 - But then again, if His presence in the first coming wasn't sufficient, then we shouldn't expect His presence again to arrive at anything more
 - The simple answer is that the natural man is incapable of understanding spiritual

[1Cor. 2:14](#) ¶ But a **natural** man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

- One question this passage raises is who are the natural men of the Millennial Kingdom?
 - Previously, we've seen passages in Isaiah like chapter 25 and elsewhere that suggest that the Jewish nation will be free from sin during the Kingdom time

[Is. 25:6](#) ¶ The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain;

A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow,
And refined, aged wine.

[Is. 25:7](#) And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples,

Even the veil which is stretched over all nations.

[Is. 25:8](#) He will swallow up death for all time,

And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces,
And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth;
For the LORD has spoken.

[Is. 25:9](#) And it will be said in that day,

“Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us.
This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”

- Then we have passages like this one in Isaiah 65 and before in Isaiah 58 from last week which suggest that the Jews in the Millennial Kingdom are having offspring
 - So the dilemma is if the Jews are having offspring, then there must be some natural Jews among the nation
 - Then they would also have sin
 - But based on God’s promise in Jer 31:34, we also know that God brings all Jews to faith
 - Then the Gentile natural men are the ones who are left in unbelief (at least some)
- On the other hand, if we interpret Isaiah to teach that all Jews are in heavenly bodies, then they are not having offspring
 - And then all children are the product of the Gentile nations
 - There is room in Scripture to accept either view, though only one can be correct
- We’ll conclude Isaiah with a running commentary on his final chapter describing the rebirth of Israel

[Is. 66:1](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,

“Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool.
Where then is a house you could build for Me?
And where is a place that I may rest?”

[Is. 66:2](#) "For My hand made all these things,
Thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD.
"But to this one I will look,
To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.

[Is. 66:3](#) ¶ "But he who kills an ox is like one who slays a man;
He who sacrifices a lamb is like the one who breaks a dog's neck;
He who offers a grain offering is like one who offers swine's blood;
He who burns incense is like the one who blesses an idol.
As they have chosen their own ways,
And their soul delights in their abominations,

[Is. 66:4](#) So I will choose their punishments
And will bring on them what they dread.
Because I called, but no one answered;
I spoke, but they did not listen.
And they did evil in My sight
And chose that in which I did not delight."

- In these verses, God declares His rejection of the Tribulation temple and the sacrifices that were made in it by the orthodox (unbelieving) Jews
 - The Temple they built was not to be God's dwelling place
 - And the sacrifices were not pleasing to him, as the writer of Hebrews says concerning the temple that existed in Jerusalem following Christ's first coming
 - So judgment still came upon them in that seven year period

[Is. 66:5](#) Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word:
"Your brothers who hate you, who exclude you for My name's sake,
Have said, 'Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy.'
But they will be put to shame.

[Is. 66:6](#) "A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple,
The voice of the LORD who is rendering recompense to His enemies.

- In contrast to the unbelieving orthodox Jews, God then speaks encouragement to the faithful remnant of Tribulation who rejected the Temple sacrifices
 - This includes the 144,000 of Rev 7

[Is. 66:7](#) ¶ "Before she travailed, she brought forth;
Before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy.

[Is. 66:8](#) "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things?

Can a land be born in one day?

Can a nation be brought forth all at once?

As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons.

[Is. 66:9](#) "Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery?" says the LORD.

"Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?" says your God.

- Isaiah describes the coming rebirth of Israel into the glory promised to Her
 - It will come so fast that the birth arrives before the labor pains (v. 7)
 - In a single day it happens (Zech 12:10 moment again)

[Is. 66:10](#) "Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her;

Be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her,

[Is. 66:11](#) That you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts,

That you may suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom."

[Is. 66:12](#) For thus says the LORD, "Behold, I extend peace to her like a river,

And the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream;

And you will be nursed, you will be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees.

[Is. 66:13](#) "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you;

And you will be comforted in Jerusalem."

[Is. 66:14](#) Then you will see this, and your heart will be glad,

And your bones will flourish like the new grass;

And the hand of the LORD will be made known to His servants,

But He will be indignant toward His enemies.

- The rebirth of the nation is a comfort to all who love Zion
 - Like one who mourns with a woman over the loss of a child, now we can rejoice with Israel over Her rebirth at the beginning of the kingdom
 -

[Is. 66:15](#) For behold, the LORD will come in fire

And His chariots like the whirlwind,

To render His anger with fury,

And His rebuke with flames of fire.

[Is. 66:16](#) For the LORD will execute judgment by fire

And by His sword on all flesh,

And those slain by the LORD will be many.

[Is. 66:17](#) "Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go to the gardens,
Following one in the center,
Who eat swine's flesh, detestable things and mice,
Will come to an end altogether," declares the LORD.

[Is. 66:18](#) ¶ "For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory.

[Is. 66:19](#) "I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations.

[Is. 66:20](#) "Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to the LORD, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem," says the LORD, "just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD.

[Is. 66:21](#) "I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites," says the LORD.

- The Lord will arrive for Israel, as we've seen before
 - And with Him will come judgment for the nations
 - Those who are an abomination will come to an end
 - And the nations of the world (Gentiles) will hear from the Remnant of Israel concerning the Lord and they will see the Lord's glory in that day
 - And that will result in the Gentile nations coming to Zion to praise and worship the Lord

[Is. 66:22](#) "For just as the new heavens and the new earth
Which I make will endure before Me," declares the LORD,
"So your offspring and your name will endure.

[Is. 66:23](#) "And it shall be from new moon to new moon
And from sabbath to sabbath,
All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD.

[Is. 66:24](#) "Then they will go forth and look
On the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm will not die
And their fire will not be quenched;
And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

- We see the kingdom described in summary as a time of Israel's prominence
 - Gentiles worshipping on a monthly (by moons) and weekly (by Sabbaths) calendars

- And as a predecessor to the Lake of Fire, the unbelievers and demons will spend the 1,000 years burning in a nearby place
 - Based on earlier text in Isaiah, it's probably Edom or Babylon or both
 - They are both called a perpetual burning place during this time