

## **Review**

Being gone for a month probably mandates a review of our study in Isaiah. However, we really don't need to cover the first 14 chapters of Isaiah's prophetic writings, because chapter 13 is really where this section began. Chapter 13 began,

**Is. 13:1 The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.**

The following words foretold the destruction of Babylon and Assyria. These are not the only two people groups that God will be speaking against through the prophet. Tonight, as we pick up our study near the end of chapter fourteen, Isaiah begins to detail the grim future of several nations...

### **14:28 This Oracle Came**

Isaiah will speak many oracles and prophecies over the next nine and a half chapters. As we covered in our study of chapter 13, an oracle is the Hebrew word "**mas-SAW**," coming from a root word meaning, "**to lift, carry, take**." So, an oracle is a burden or a message which the Lord gives the prophets to carry.

Of course, because the nine oracles before us are so lengthy, we will not be able to look at each verse and every detail tonight. But we'll hit the highlights, or lowlights as the case is with these chapters, as best we can.

### **14:29-32 Oracle Concerning Philistia**

The first oracle is spoken against Philistia, the land of the Philistines. God tells them not to rejoice just because the king of the Assyrians had died. As a matter of fact, new kings would arise and be worse. The rod would be replaced by a viper, and the viper replaced by a flying serpent.

Those who are God's people will find refuge, but the Philistines will be wiped out.

### **15:1-9 Oracle Concerning Moab**

The next oracle is concerning the Moabites. God lists several of the major cities of Moab, and proclaims that they will be devastated and ruined in a night. There will be weeping and mourning when the Assyrian Empire invades them within three years (16:14).

### **16:1-14 The Moabites Appeal To Jerusalem**

When the Moabite survivors flee south, they will try to hide in the rock city of Petra, called Sela. From there, they will send a tribute to the Jews in Jerusalem, asking for protection. But Jerusalem's protection came from a righteous God. The Moabites had not repented of their pride and fury. They continued to seek their false gods. And so the God of the Jews would have no foundation on which to offer protection to these people.

This doesn't mean that Isaiah doesn't care. Notice that he had said,  
**Is. 15:5 My heart cries out for Moab...**

And again, he says,

**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...**

**Is. 16:11 Therefore my heart intones like a harp for Moab and my inward feelings for Kir-hareseth.**

### **17:1-14 Oracle Concerning Damascus And Ephraim**

This oracle concerns Damascus, the city which was the capitol of the Arameans, or Syria. The message from God is that they were about to become ruined, removed from being a city. Allied with the Arameans against Judah was Ephraim, the northern kingdom of Israel. Their destiny was the same as Damascus: destruction.

### **18:1-8 Prophecy Against Ethiopia**

This prophecy is spoken of the land beyond the rivers of Cush, which is Ethiopia. Ethiopia during Isaiah's time was much larger than today, and was known for their political power, not for starving citizens.

Isaiah compares their many diplomatic messengers going here and

there to the sound of many insects buzzing about. These diplomats were trying to form alliances to protect Ethiopia from the impending Assyrian invasion. Remember that alliances were formed by idolatrous nations not only to secure the partnership of the country's military, but also of their gods.

But the true God is not buzzing about. He will look from His dwelling place quietly. He is able to cut away spreading branches with ease, without assistance. The same people that the Ethiopians were approaching for help (18:2) will be those that approach the Lord with gifts and adoration (18:7). They are described as being "tall and smooth," which could be speaking of the Nubians of Cush.

### **19:1-16 Oracle Concerning Egypt**

Chapters 19 and 20 are the oracle concerning Egypt. Because of their idolatry and sorcery, God will incite a terrible civil war in the nation, which will weaken them and make them vulnerable. Instead of one strong world power, the many provinces were divided, fighting each other for dominance and territory.

God would give them opportunity to repent, but when they refuse, He would raise up a cruel king to rule over them, most likely speaking of the Assyrian king that would conquer Egypt.

There will also be terrible drought and famine - the economy of Egypt will grind to a halt.

### **19:17-25 Allegiance To The Lord**

On the brighter side, God also promises that in the future, the land of Judah will be the powerful one, able to strike fear in the hearts of God-rejecting nations. And there will be Egyptian cities that will speak Hebrew and follow the Lord.

The amazing promise is that one day, Egyptians, Assyrians, and Israelites will all be worshipping the Lord together!

### **20:1-6 Naked And Barefoot**

Chapter 20 is a brief historical note inserted in the midst of the or-

acles. Isaiah wanted the Jews to be sure that this was not the time to try and ally with Egypt. When the Philistine city of Ashdod fell to the Assyrians, the Jews were certainly thinking that they needed to turn to Egypt for an alliance.

God told Isaiah to dress as a prisoner of war, to illustrate that if Israel turned to Ethiopia or Egypt, they would be joining them on their march towards slavery.

### **21:1-10 A Harsh Vision Of Babylon**

Another oracle, this one going back to Babylon. Invading armies from Elam and Media are sweeping in across the desert like a sandstorm to attack Babylonia.

Notice that Isaiah seems exceptionally moved by this one - even more than the sadness he felt for the judgment of Moab back in chapters 15 and 16. He describes it as a "harsh vision." The word "**harsh**" in Hebrew is "**kaw-SHEH**," which means "**severe, fierce, and intense**." As Isaiah sees this harsh vision, he is bewildered, terrified, horrified, and trembling.

### **21:11-12 Oracle Concerning Edom**

This short oracle tells the Edomites that there would be morning, or relief, when Assyria fell. Afterwards, however, Babylon would come upon Edom and night would fall upon them again.

### **21:13-17 The Oracle About Arabia**

Another area that the Assyrians were going to invade was Arabia. The caravans of Arabian traders would be hiding in the thickets, trying to escape the invaders. This would happen within a year of Isaiah's prophecy.

### **22:1-25 The Oracle Concerning The Valley Of Vision**

The inhabitants of Jerusalem would be delivered from the Assyrians, but because of their attitude of partying instead of praying and feasting instead of fasting, God would deliver them over to the hand of

the Babylonians.

They would get serious when the Babylonians were on their way, and would even tear down houses to fortify the walls. But they did not understand that the Lord was their true defense, and that defense had been removed.

### **23:1-18 The Oracle Concerning Tyre**

The final oracle in this series is concerning Tyre. Very recently, we talked in detail about the destruction of Tyre. You can find that study in Ezekiel 26-28.