

Jerusalem

Isaiah 22

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**BIG BEND
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Isaiah 22:1-14 – Proclamation Against Jerusalem

The burden against the Valley of Vision.

What ails you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops,

² *You who are full of noise,*

A tumultuous city, a joyous city?

Your slain men are not slain with the sword,

Nor dead in battle.

³ *All your rulers have fled together;*

They are captured by the archers.

All who are found in you are bound together;

They have fled from afar.

⁴ *Therefore I said, “Look away from me,*

I will weep bitterly;

Do not labor to comfort me

Because of the plundering of the daughter of my people.”

⁵ *For it is a day of trouble and treading down and perplexity*

By the Lord God of hosts

In the Valley of Vision—

Breaking down the walls

And of crying to the mountain.

⁶ *Elam bore the quiver*

With chariots of men and horsemen,

And Kir uncovered the shield.

⁷ *It shall come to pass that your choicest valleys*

Shall be full of chariots,

And the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate.

⁸ *He removed the protection of Judah.*

You looked in that day to the armor of the House of the Forest;

⁹ *You also saw the damage to the city of David,*

That it was great;

And you gathered together the waters of the lower pool.

¹⁰ *You numbered the houses of Jerusalem,*

And the houses you broke down

To fortify the wall.

¹¹ *You also made a reservoir between the two walls*

For the water of the old pool.

But you did not look to its Maker,

Nor did you have respect for Him who fashioned it long ago.

¹² *And in that day the Lord God of hosts*

Called for weeping and for mourning,

For baldness and for girding with sackcloth.

¹³ *But instead, joy and gladness,*

Slaying oxen and killing sheep,

Eating meat and drinking wine:

“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”

¹⁴ *Then it was revealed in my hearing by the Lord of hosts,*

“Surely for this iniquity there will be no atonement for you, Even to your death,” says the Lord God of hosts.

v1 – What is the Valley of Vision?

This is Jerusalem, a city on a hill but overlooked by a still higher hill (Mount of Olives), and in the midst of three valleys. Since Jerusalem was a center for the worship of God and some of the prophets of God (including Isaiah), it is called the Valley of Vision.

Why are we finding here a prophecy against Judah and Jerusalem in a section that deals with the nations?

Since Judah had chosen to behave like her neighbors and to desert the Lord, she deserved to be judged with the nations

What would cause people to go up to the housetops?

The idea is that people have come out of their houses and up to their housetops to see the coming calamity.

- As they used to do in times of great confusion and consternation, they might cry to Heaven for help.

v2 – What caused all the commotion in Jerusalem?

A tumultuous city, a joyous city: In his prophecy, Isaiah saw the commotion all around Jerusalem, and asked, “Is it the result of an evil tumult, or is it an expression of joy?”

How is it their slain men are not slain with the sword?

When Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians, many of the men of Judah did not bravely die in battle. They died either being starved to death in the siege of the city or as they fled in cowardly retreat.

v3 – What became of Jerusalem’s rulers?

They all fled or were killed or suffered the same fate as the common people.

v4 – Who would weep bitterly?

I will weep bitterly; do not labor to comfort me: We usually think of Jeremiah as the “weeping prophet.” But Isaiah also said “I will weep bitterly” when he saw God’s judgment coming against God’s people.

v5 – What was the day of trouble?

Isaiah saw an army full of arrows and chariots coming against Jerusalem. He prophesied the attack and overthrow of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

v6 – How is it that Elam bore the quiver?

Elam was Babylon’s neighbor to the east and had supported them in their struggle against Assyria.

v7 – How would Babylon come to Jerusalem?

Your choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate: Attacking armies will once again surround Jerusalem, and in that day the LORD will not deliver them.

v8 – What did Judah trust in for their deliverance from Babylon?

They did not trust in God who removed His protection from them. Instead, they trusted in other nations like Lebanon (*House of the Forest*).

- It is not clear why they would trust in Lebanon instead of God but those without God are often irrational.

v9-10 – What did Jerusalem do to prepare for the Babylonian siege?

You gathered together the waters of the lower pool...to fortify the wall: When Jerusalem was faced with this subsequent attack, they prepared the city for battle and for siege, strengthening the wall of the city and making sure there was adequate water for a siege.

v11 – What did Judah neglect to do in their preparations?

Look for help from the Creator-God. *He removed the protection of Judah* (v8) All their care in defending the city would not matter because God had removed the protection of Judah. Instead of their building projects, the best thing Jerusalem could do for her protection was to turn her heart toward the LORD.

Psalm 127:1 – *Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.*

v12-13 – What should Jerusalem been doing instead of preparing for a siege?

In that day the Lord GOD of hosts called for weeping and mourning: Instead of preparing Jerusalem for an attack, they should have turned their hearts in humble repentance to the LORD. Instead of humbly seeking the LORD, the

people of Jerusalem had both confidence in their own preparation (*joy and gladness*), and a fatalistic outlook toward the future (*“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”*).

V14 – What was the great sin of Judah?

For this iniquity there will be no atonement for you: What is this sin that can’t be forgiven, that has no atonement? It is the sin of ignoring God, of refusing to humble yourself before the LORD and repent. Jerusalem was doing everything except the essential thing they had to do to prepare for the attack, and because they rejected the LORD, there would be no atonement for them.

Isaiah 22:15-25 – The Judgment on Shebna

¹⁵ *Thus says the Lord God of hosts:*

*“Go, proceed to this steward,
To Shebna, who is over the house, and say:*

¹⁶ *‘What have you here, and whom have you here,
That you have hewn a sepulcher here,
As he who hews himself a sepulcher on high,
Who carves a tomb for himself in a rock?’*

¹⁷ *Indeed, the Lord will throw you away violently,
O mighty man,
And will surely seize you.*

¹⁸ *He will surely turn violently and toss you like a ball
Into a large country;*

*There you shall die, and there your glorious chariots
Shall be the shame of your master’s house.*

¹⁹ *So I will drive you out of your office,
And from your position he will pull you down.*

²⁰ *‘Then it shall be in that day,
That I will call My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah;*

²¹ *I will clothe him with your robe
And strengthen him with your belt;
I will commit your responsibility into his hand.
He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem
And to the house of Judah.*

²² *The key of the house of David
I will lay on his shoulder;*

*So he shall open, and no one shall shut;
And he shall shut, and no one shall open.*

²³ *I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place,
And he will become a glorious throne to his father’s house.*

²⁴ *‘They will hang on him all the glory of his father’s house,
the offspring and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity,
from the cups to all the pitchers.’ ²⁵ In that day,’ says
the Lord of hosts, ‘the peg that is fastened in the secure
place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the
burden that was on it will be cut off; for the Lord has
spoken.’ ”*

v15 – Who was Shebna?

Shebna was a servant of King Hezekiah, both a steward...over the house and a scribe (2 Kings 18:18, Isaiah 37:2). These were both positions of honor and responsibility. Shebna was one of King Hezekiah's chief assistants.

Given that the king of Judah at this time was Hezekiah, a good king, why was his assistant called out here?

God's condemnatory judgment fell on the next person in line. Shebna and the populace in general did not share the godly principles of King Hezekiah.

v16 – What was the condemnation against Shebna?

What have you here, and whom have you here: The LORD spoke to Shebna, that proud man, and essentially said, "Who do you think you are? What do you think you have? You really are nothing and you have nothing."

What had Shebna done with his honor and authority?

As he who hews himself a sepulcher on high: He made himself a fancy and prestigious tomb. In that day, this was a display of significant power and wealth. In this, Shebna represented all of Jerusalem with his obsessive self-interest.

What kind of statement did Shebna's fancy tomb make?

Isaiah had prophesied that the people of Judah and Jerusalem would be carried away into exile, but Shebna didn't believe it. He built this elaborate tomb to himself in Jerusalem, as if to say, "I will never be carried away in exile. I am so certain that I will die here that I will build my tomb here."

v17-19 – What would become of Shebna?

He will surely turn violently and toss you like a ball into a large country; there you shall die...so I will drive you out of your office: Shebna sought honor and glory but would never find it. Instead, the LORD would make certain that he was never even buried in his prestigious, expensive tomb, but would die in exile instead.

- Shebna is the same kind of man Jesus spoke about in Luke 12:16-21, in the parable of the rich fool. That man spent his resources building great things, but he died without God and it all meant nothing. Now, all of Shebna's accomplishments — the beautiful tomb, the glorious chariots — meant worse than nothing; they were a shame to him instead.

v20 – With whom does God replace Shebna?

Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah: This man is mentioned in passages like 2 Kings 18:18 and Isaiah 36:3 as another assistant to King Hezekiah.

What does God referring to Eliakim as *my servant* tell us about him?

Both Shebna and Eliakim were servants of Hezekiah, but Shebna's heart was directed towards selfish ambition and glory, and Eliakim's heart was turned towards the LORD.

v21 – How would God exalt Eliakim?

I will clothe him with your robe and strengthen him with your belt; I will commit your responsibility into his hand: The LORD would take the office and authority of the unfaithful Shebna and give it to Eliakim instead. God will get His work done! If a Shebna is unfaithful, the LORD will remove him from his office, strip him of his authority, and give it to another.

How would Eliakim be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem?

He would not be driven by selfish ambition but would care for the inhabitants of Jerusalem as would a father for his children.

v22 – How is it *the key of the house of David* will be on his shoulder?

Because Eliakim is the LORD's servant, the LORD will give him great authority. In that day, the chief royal steward would have the large master key of the palace fastened to the shoulder of his tunic. The key was a picture and demonstration of the authority of the chief steward. Here, the LORD gives Eliakim the authority to open and shut as the LORD's representative, which no man can oppose.

How did Eliakim become a prophecy of the Messiah?

Jesus told us this passage spoke of Himself: *These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens."* (Revelation 3:7) Jesus is the one with the keys of Hades and of Death (Revelation 1:18), who has all authority both in heaven and on earth. Jesus delegates this authority as it pleases Him (Matthew 16:19).

What are open and closed doors?

He shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut and no one shall open: Since Eliakim is a picture of Jesus, we know that Jesus has the authority to open and shut doors in our lives as He pleases. We need to accept both the open and the shut doors.

v23 – How is it God would fasten Eliakim as a peg in a secure place?

Because the LORD established Eliakim's authority, it was secure. Shebna sought glory for himself but would instead find shame. Eliakim was the LORD's servant and would become a glorious throne to his father's house.

- In those days, houses didn't really have cupboards or storage closets as we think of them. Things were stored on pegs set up all around the room. If something was on its peg, it was safe and secure, stored properly and ready for use at the appropriate time.

v24 – How would all the glory of his father's house hang on Eliakim?

The godly Eliakim was a secure peg and could spiritually support his father's house and his offspring. Since Eliakim is a picture of Jesus, we also see in this the believer's total dependence on Jesus.

Given that we are all vessels of the Lord, how is it we all hang on Him?

There are many different vessels in the LORD's house, with many different sizes and purposes. But they all must hang on the same peg!

- All will be equally wrecked if they drop from the peg.
- The safety isn't in the size or the quality of the vessel, but in its attachment to the peg.

v25 – What is the peg that is fastened?

If Eliakim is yet to be promoted to the place of honor and responsibility pictured by the peg (*I will fasten him as a peg*, Isaiah 22:23), then Shebna is the peg that is fastened at the moment. Therefore, before Eliakim could be put in his rightful place, Shebna must be removed and be cut down and fall.

What is the principle here that we need to keep in mind?

Daniel 2:21 – *He removes kings and raises up kings*
God is sovereign and in control...

Romans 13:1 – *For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

So, did God raise up Shebna as well as Eliakim?

Of course, the LORD gave Shebna a place of honor and authority, but he didn't hold it as a faithful servant of the LORD. So, the LORD took the place of honor and authority away from him.

- The authority Jesus gave His disciples was neither unlimited nor unattached from His direction. Even though Jesus gave the promise of the keys to Peter (Matthew 16:19), Peter did not have unlimited authority and was rightly rebuked by another apostle, Paul, when he was out of line (Galatians 2:11-21).

If all authorities are from God, does that mean we must obey those authorities who become wicked?

Not if they are requiring us to do something that is contrary to the will of God. In those cases, we must resist.

How was it that the burden that was on it (the peg of Shebna) will be cut off?

When Shebna was removed, all those who "hung" on him were also cut off. We have to make sure that we are resting on the right "peg."

What applications come to mind from our discussion?

- Trusting in the created instead of the Creator is idolatry and such trust will fail.
- God often allows our circumstances to be as they are so that we will turn to Him for help.
- Trying to deliver ourselves using our own limited resources will only serve to make matters worse.
- Pride causes God to remove and replace leaders.
- God opens and closes doors... we should go through the open doors and pass the closed doors by.
- We are secure if we hang on the peg of the Lord.
- God is sovereign and in control, all authority is from Him.