

April 8, 2018

“Judgment of the Nations”

Background Chapters: Isaiah 15-24 (NIV)

Focal Passages: Isaiah 22; 24:1-3 (NIV)

Cross References: 1 Samuel 2:25; 12:20-25; Proverbs 3:5-6; Hosea 4:1-9; 1 Corinthians 7:29-32; Hebrews 10:26-31; 1 John 2:15-17; Revelation 3:7

Lesson Idea: We need to humbly repent and seek the Lord, because His judgment is sure on those who do not obey Him faithfully.

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

Apr 1 1 Samuel 18-20	Apr 2 1 Samuel 21-24
Apr 3 1 Samuel 25-27	Apr 4 1 Samuel 28-31
Apr 5 2 Samuel 1-3	Apr 6 2 Samuel 4-7
Apr 7 2 Samuel 8-12	Apr 8 2 Samuel 13-15

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF THE PASSAGE:

- **Don’t put your faith in the kingdoms of men or the protection and security you think this world offers.**
- **Trust only in the Lord God Almighty and be faithful to Him.**
- **Judgment is sure to come upon those who ignore the call of God upon their lives.**
- **What the Lord *opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.***
- **God can remove or establish people in places of authority.**
- **What the Lord says will surely come about.**

We will not cover chapters 15-24 in full, because they all deal with judgments against the nations surrounding Israel at the time of Isaiah. Our Sunday School lesson will focus on **Isaiah 22** which deal with a prophecy about Jerusalem and the first few verses from **Isaiah 24**. These chapters teach us that no power on earth can stand against the judgment of God. God is always in control and accomplishes His purposes.

SUBJECTS OF CHAPTERS 15-24

The following list shows the subject heading of each chapter and some major verses for a few of them.

- **Isaiah 15-16: Prophecy Against Moab**
- **Isaiah 17: Prophecy Against Damascus**
*7 In that day people will look to their Maker and turn their eyes to the Holy One of Israel.
8 They will not look to the altars, the work of their hands, and they will have no regard for the Asherah poles and the incense altars their fingers have made.*
- **Isaiah 18: Prophecy Against Cush**
7 At that time gifts will be brought to the Lord Almighty from a people tall and smooth-skinned, from a people feared far and wide, an aggressive nation of strange speech, whose land is divided by rivers— the gifts will be brought to Mount Zion, the place of the Name of the Lord Almighty.
- **Isaiah 19: Prophecy Against Egypt**
*1 A prophecy against Egypt: See, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear.
19 In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to the Lord at its border. 20 It will be a sign and witness to the Lord Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the Lord because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them. 21 So the Lord will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge the Lord. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to the Lord and keep them. 22 The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them.*
- **Isaiah 20: Prophecy Against Egypt and Cush**
- **Isaiah 21: Prophecy Against Babylon and Arabia**
- **Isaiah 22: Prophecy About Jerusalem**
- **Isaiah 23: Prophecy Against Tyre**
9 The Lord Almighty planned it, to bring down her pride in all her splendor and to humble all who are renowned on the earth.

➤ **Isaiah 24: The Lord's Devastation of the Earth**

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOCAL PASSAGE

Isaiah 22 Background: from David Guzik, *Enduring Word Commentary*:

v. 1 The burden against the Valley of Vision: This is Jerusalem, a city on a hill but surrounded by still higher hill, 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.

"It is strange to find a prophecy against Judah and Jerusalem in a section that deals with the nations. But since Judah had chosen to behave like her neighbors and to desert the Lord, she deserved to be judged." (Wolf)

What ails you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops: "As they used to do in times of great confusion and consternation, that they might mourn, and look, and cry to Heaven for help." (Poole)

Isaiah 22:1-14 The Lord Called Them to Repentance

1 A prophecy against the Valley of Vision:

What troubles you now,

that you have all gone up on the roofs,

2 you town so full of commotion,

you city of tumult and revelry?

Your slain were not killed by the sword,

nor did they die in battle.

3 All your leaders have fled together;

they have been captured without using the bow.

All you who were caught were taken prisoner together,

having fled while the enemy was still far away.

4 Therefore I said, "Turn away from me;

let me weep bitterly.

Do not try to console me

over the destruction of my people."

5 The Lord, the Lord Almighty, has a day

of tumult and trampling and terror

in the Valley of Vision,

a day of battering down walls

and of crying out to the mountains.

6 Elam takes up the quiver,

with her charioteers and horses;

Kir uncovers the shield.

7 Your choicest valleys are full of chariots,

and horsemen are posted at the city gates.

8 The Lord stripped away the defenses of Judah,

and you looked in that day

to the weapons in the Palace of the Forest.

9 You saw that the walls of the City of David

were broken through in many places;

you stored up water

in the Lower Pool.

10 You counted the buildings in Jerusalem

and tore down houses to strengthen the wall.

11 You built a reservoir between the two walls

for the water of the Old Pool,

but you did not look to the One who made it,

or have regard for the One who planned it long ago.

12 The Lord, the Lord Almighty,

called you on that day

to weep and to wail,

to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth.

13 But see, there is joy and revelry,

slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep,

eating of meat and drinking of wine!

"Let us eat and drink," you say,

"for tomorrow we die!"

14 The Lord Almighty has revealed this in my hearing:

"Till your dying day this sin will not be atoned for," says

the Lord, the Lord Almighty.

DISCUSSION:

- v 1-11. According to these verses, what was troubling them?
- V 8. Why were all their preparations not able to save them?
- V 11b. According to the second part of this verse, what was their main problem? How do you see this same problem reflected in our society today? How is it often reflected in God's people and His church today? (see 1 Samuel 12:20-25; Proverbs 3:5-6)
- V 12. Amid it all, what had God desired for them to do? What does sackcloth symbolize? Why is repentance essential to avoiding God's judgment?
- V 13. What was the prevailing attitude of the people even in their challenging times? Why? How is this attitude still reflected today? (see 1 Corinthians 7:29-32; 1 John 2:15-17)
- V 14. Why did the Lord tell Isaiah that "this sin will not be atoned for?" (see 1 Samuel 2:25; Ezekiel 24:13; Hebrews 10:26-31)

NOTE: from Guzik:

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.

But none of this would matter, because He removed the protection of Judah. The best thing Jerusalem could do for her protection was turn her heart toward the Lord, **But you did not look to its Maker, nor did you have respect for Him who fashioned it long ago.**

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

For this iniquity there will be no atonement for you: What is this sin that can’t be forgiven? 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 God is in Control

15 *This is what the Lord, the Lord Almighty, says:*

“Go, say to this steward,

to Shebna the palace administrator:

16 *What are you doing here and who gave you permission*

to cut out a grave for yourself here,

hewing your grave on the height

and chiseling your resting place in the rock?

17 *“Beware, the Lord is about to take firm hold of you and hurl you away, you mighty man.*

18 *He will roll you up tightly like a ball and throw you into a large country.*

There you will die

and there the chariots you were so proud of will become a disgrace to your master’s house.

19 *I will depose you from your office,*

and you will be ousted from your position.

20 *“In that day I will summon my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiah. 21 I will clothe him with your robe and fasten*

your sash around him and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the people of Judah. 22 I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. 23 I will drive him like a peg into a firm place; he will become a seat of honor for the house of his father. 24 All the glory of his family will hang on him: its offspring and offshoots—all its lesser vessels, from the bowls to all the jars.

25 *“In that day,” declares the Lord Almighty, “the peg driven into the firm place will give way; it will be sheared off and will fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut down.” The Lord has spoken.*

DISCUSSION:

- v 15-19. What happens to those who try to exalt themselves?
- V 16-24. What was God going to do concerning the leadership of His people?
- V 22. Read Revelation 3:7. How is Isaiah 22:22 applied to Jesus in Revelation? Why does this description fit Him the best?

NOTE: from Guzik:

Eliakim the son of Hilkiah is mentioned in passages like 1 Kings 18:18 and Isaiah 36:3 as another assistant to King Hezekiah. He should be distinguished from Eliakim the son of Josiah, who was a puppet king established by Pharaoh (2 Kings 23:34).

My servant: What a glorious title for Eliakim! 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.

The place of Eliakim the son of Hilkiah before Hezekiah is somewhat obscure in the Scriptures; he is only mentioned in six passages, and the only description of him is that *he was over the household* (1 Kings 18:18, 37 and Isaiah 36:3, 22). But Eliakim was famous in heaven! *He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.*

The Lord would take the office and authority of the unfaithful Shebna, and give it to Eliakim instead (*I will clothe him with your robe and strengthen him with your belt; I will commit your responsibility into his hand*). 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.

Because Eliakim is the Lord's servant, the *Lord will give him great authority: The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder.* 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.

In this, Eliakim becomes a prophecy of the Messiah, because 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 1:8), who has *all authority both in heaven and on earth.* Jesus delegates this authority as it pleases Him (Matthew 16:19).

He shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut and no one shall open: Eliakim would have this kind of authority from the Lord. Since he 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!

Because the Lord established Eliakim's authority, it was secure: ***I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place.*** Shebna sought glory for himself, but would find shame. But Eliakim was the Lord's servant, and would become a glorious throne to his father's house.

Isaiah 24:1-3 God's Judgment is Sure

1 See, the Lord is going to lay waste the earth and devastate it;

he will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants—

2 it will be the same for priest as for people, for the master as for his servant, for the mistress as for her servant, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor.

3 The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered.

The Lord has spoken this word.

DISCUSSION:

- v 1. Why is the Lord going "to lay waste the earth and devastate it?"
- v 2. Is anyone exempt from the judgment of God? Why or why not?

- v 3. How do we know this will happen? When God speaks is He ever unsure or mistaken or dishonest?

NOTE: from Guzik:

Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty: Isaiah invites us to ***behold***, to look upon the scene of God's judgment. The principles revealed here apply universally to the judgment of the Lord, but the ultimate fulfillment of this will be in the ultimate period of judgment, the time of the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21-22), which will immediately precede the second coming of Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:29-30).

APPLICATION:

- ✓ What attitude does your life reflect more?
*Humble repentance and seeking the Lord, OR...
Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!*
- ✓ How do you respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit in your life?
- ✓ Do you believe and rely on the Word of God? How does your life reflect that?

Lesson by Bro Stan