

## Isaiah 14-15 Sure Promises

Good evening and thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to Isaiah 14?

Now if you remember from our study last week, starting in Isaiah 13, God launches a series of judgments against the Gentile nations of Isaiah's day. Hey, God keeps precise records! And on the docket for judgment are the nations of Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Ethiopia, Egypt, Edom, Tyre, and Syria. In the book of Isaiah God declares His judgments against each of these wicked nations.

But in the midst of these judgments God repeatedly comforts His people with the fact that Israel will not be completely overcome

We're gonna study chapters 14-15, and the title of tonight's message is Sure Promises

Let's pray

Now if you'll recall, chapters 13 and 14 are really focused upon the nation of Babylon. Chapter 13 is God's judgment on the city of Babylon. But now, Chapter 14 points a finger at Babylon's king. Historically, at the time of Babylon's fall to the Medes and Persians, King Belshazzar ruled over Babel - but the spiritual king of Babel is someone far more sinister.

But before we get into that, we see God's mercy on Jacob  
1-2

1 For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. 2 Then people will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the LORD; they will take them captive whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors.” Remember the Babylonians will conquer the southern kingdom of Judah about 100 years after this is written. But God promises a return of the Hebrews to their own land.

Now the prophecies in Isaiah are so precise that critics allege that there were 2 different authors who wrote this book. I won't get into all of this, but when you study the gospels, you'll notice that Jesus quoted both the beginning of the book and the end of this book, noting each time that the author was Isaiah.

3-6 describes the fall of the King of Babylon

3 It shall come to pass in the day the LORD gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve, 4 that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say:

“How the oppressor has ceased,  
The golden city ceased!

5 The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked,  
The scepter of the rulers;

6 He who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke,  
He who ruled the nations in anger,

**Is persecuted and no one hinders.** The Babylonian king will taste some of his own medicine. He will be humbled.

7-8

**7 The whole earth is at rest and quiet;**

**They break forth into singing.**

**8 Indeed the cypress trees rejoice over you,**

**And the cedars of Lebanon,**

**Saying, 'Since you were cut down,**

**No woodsman has come up against us.'** Remember, the book of Isaiah was written 100 years before the Jews were taken into captivity to Babylon. God used King Nebuchadnezzar's army to judge His people.

But during Judah's captivity, these words of Isaiah provided hope. The Jews were assured that one day God would turn the tables and cut down Babylon.

Verse 9 speaks directly to the King of Babylon.

**9 "Hell from beneath is excited about you,**

**To meet you at your coming;**

**It stirs up the dead for you,**

**All the chief ones of the earth;**

**It has raised up from their thrones**

**All the kings of the nations.** Wow, Hell is excited to meet you.

Belshazzar was the Babylonian king who mocked God by bringing out His sacred vessels and filling them with wine and whiskey. He used holy saucers and bowls to toast the idols of Babylon. It was

blasphemy. Now Isaiah sends him an invitation... to Hell. Hell looks forward to his arrival.

10-11

10 They all shall speak and say to you:  
'Have you also become as weak as we?  
Have you become like us?

11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,  
And the sound of your stringed instruments;  
The maggot is spread under you,  
And worms cover you.' Notice in these past few verses what Isaiah teaches us about hell.

First, people are conscious in hell. They're very much aware of their condition and their surroundings. They speak and see. They have thoughts and feelings.

Second, hell's inhabitants recognize each other. Here the former kings of the Earth know the King of Babylon when they see him.

Third, they mock others. Here, its residents sneer at the king of Babylon, "Have you become as weak as we?" It's a spiteful place.

And fourth, Hell's inhabitants are subject to great pain and disgusting conditions we can't even fathom. They're lying on maggots and covered in worms. **SHOW PIC** A maggot is a slug-like, worm-like parasite. It has a mouth hook that tears into its food and rips it apart. **CLOSE PIC**

In Mark 9 when Jesus warns us of hell, He mentions three times, "Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."

Luke 16 tells us that hell is forever on fire. Like the burning bush Moses saw on Mt. Sinai, hell burns, but isn't consumed. Its torment is eternal. Your thirst is never quenched.

The reality of a literal, eternal, infernal Hell should shake every Christian out of a spiritual apathy.

Several years ago, I read a Gallup poll that revealed 60% of Americans believed in hell, but here's the kicker only 4% thought they were going there.

Some folks trust in the fact that they're a good person... or they try hard... or they mean well. They're hoping God grades on the curve.

AW Tozer once wrote, "The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions."

Other people hedge their bets, and buy into some religious dogma and ritual.

Yet the Bible says if you're trusting in anyone or anything other than the finished work of Jesus Christ you're going to spend eternity in hell.

Jesus said **John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**

Realize, God’s one and only provision for sin is the shed blood of His Son, Jesus! He’s made no other way.

Verse 12 continues to address the King of Babylon.

**12 “How you are fallen from heaven,  
O Lucifer,[fn] son of the morning!  
How you are cut down to the ground,  
You who weakened the nations!** Recall, biblical prophecy often has dual fulfillments. Prophecy often comes in pairs!

Until this point, Isaiah 14 has spoken of Belshazzar, king of Babylon. But Belshazzar was only a puppet on a string. A far more sinister force was pulling the strings.

Here Isaiah sees past the human kings of Babylon to the evil power that inspired them. This also happens in other prophecies- for example Ezekiel 28 is describing the King of Tyre, when the Holy Spirit shifts His conversation to Satan, the power behind Tyre.

And notice how Isaiah refers to Satan in v12. He calls him “O Lucifer, son of the morning.”

Satan didn’t begin as the epitome of evil. **Ezekiel 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
Every precious stone was your covering:**

The sardius, topaz, and diamond,  
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,  
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.  
The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes  
Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

14 “You were the anointed cherub who covers;  
I established you;  
You were on the holy mountain of God;  
You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.

Notice the descriptions. Some theologians believe Satan was actually heaven's worship leader.

Here, Isaiah calls him, “Lucifer” which means “light bearer.” And “son of the morning” - this was the star that shined so brightly it was seen after the sun was up.

We're wrong to think of Satan as a cartoonish creature in a red suit, pointed ears, horns, and pitchfork. He's far more glamorous and sophisticated. Satan comes in the most pleasing shapes and attractive forms! 2 Cor 11:4 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

Satan is the master deceiver.

And here's the sin that caused Satan's colossal fall,  
13-14

13 For you have said in your heart:

'I will ascend into heaven,  
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;  
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation  
On the farthest sides of the north;  
14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,  
I will be like the Most High.' Five times in two verses Lucifer says "I will." Pride entered his heart.

Pride caused Lucifer to get tired of worshipping God. He desired to be worshipped and tried to steal God's glory. Lucifer was already high on heaven's chain of command. He was "anointed cherub who covers," but that wasn't enough. He coveted "Most High."

Satan desired to be exalted like God, yet God informs him in verse 15,

15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,  
To the lowest depths of the Pit. In **Luke 10:18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."**

Satan no longer makes his home in heaven. Today he roams planet Earth. The NT refers to Satan as "ruler of this world" and "prince of the power of the air." He has a stranglehold on rebellious men and the systems that influence them.

But at the cross Satan's final and ultimate defeat was sealed. Jesus broke the power of sin and death. When Jesus returns He'll lock up the devil in Hell. **Matthew 25:41 Then He will also say to**



those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

When Jesus returns He'll assign Satan to the very place he's tried to avoid.

Verses 16 is one that causes me to just ponder...

16 "Those who see you will gaze at you,  
And consider you, saying:  
'Is this the man who made the earth tremble,  
Who shook kingdoms, When Satan is finally forced out of the shadowy recesses in which he works into the light of day we'll be astonished.

Satan was a defeated foe all along. 1 John 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

17 Who made the world as a wilderness  
And destroyed its cities,  
Who did not open the house of his prisoners?' Here's a description of Satan's work. He imprisons people. He keeps folks locked up and in bondage to sin. Only Jesus can overthrow Satan in our lives and truly set a person free.

V18-23 describes the future destruction of Babylon

18 "All the kings of the nations,  
All of them, sleep in glory,  
Everyone in his own house;

19 But you are cast out of your grave  
Like an abominable branch,  
Like the garment of those who are slain,  
Thrust through with a sword,  
Who go down to the stones of the pit,  
Like a corpse trodden underfoot.  
20 You will not be joined with them in burial,  
Because you have destroyed your land  
And slain your people.  
The brood of evildoers shall never be named.  
21 Prepare slaughter for his children  
Because of the iniquity of their fathers,  
Lest they rise up and possess the land,  
And fill the face of the world with cities.”

22 “For I will rise up against them,” says the LORD of hosts,  
“And cut off from Babylon the name and remnant,  
And offspring and posterity,” says the LORD.

23 “I will also make it a possession for the porcupine,  
And marshes of muddy water;  
I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,” says the LORD of hosts.

Chapter 14 ends by shifting from Babylon to the judgment of Assyria and the Philistines. Remember from earlier studies that Assyria invaded Judah in Isaiah’s day. They were the immediate threat. Babylon came later.

In verse 24 God predicts Judah’s deliverance from Assyria,  
24-25

24 The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying,  
“Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass,  
And as I have purposed, so it shall stand:  
25 That I will break the Assyrian in My land,  
And on My mountains tread him underfoot.  
Then his yoke shall be removed from them,  
And his burden removed from their shoulders. Remember we  
talked about how the Angel of the Lord came in a single night,  
and slew 185,000 troops who were camped against Jerusalem.

26-27

26 This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth,  
And this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.  
27 For the LORD of hosts has purposed,  
And who will annul it?  
His hand is stretched out,  
And who will turn it back?”What a powerful verse! Who can fight  
against God’s purpose and win? No one!

What God purposes will prevail - and that includes His promises  
to us. Always remember **1 Thessalonians 5:24 He who calls you  
is faithful, who also will do it.**

Chapter 14 closes with God’s warning to the Philistines.

28-29

28 This is the burden which came in the year that King Ahaz died.

29 "Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia,  
Because the rod that struck you is broken;  
For out of the serpent's roots will come forth a viper,  
And its offspring will be a fiery flying serpent. Just because you've  
escaped judgment this time, doesn't mean God's judgment failed.  
It's sure to come.

30-32

30 The firstborn of the poor will feed,  
And the needy will lie down in safety;  
I will kill your roots with famine,  
And it will slay your remnant.  
31 Wail, O gate! Cry, O city!  
All you of Philistia are dissolved;  
For smoke will come from the north,  
And no one will be alone in his appointed times."

32 What will they answer the messengers of the nation?  
That the LORD has founded Zion,  
And the poor of His people shall take refuge in it. In the midst of  
the judgment of the nations, what does God have to say to His  
people and to all the nations, when those nations are being  
judged?

God's place of security is not for the rich and self-sufficient. It is  
the poor in spirit who find refuge in God.

Is 15

Judgment against Moab

## 1 The burden against Moab.

Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste

And destroyed,

Because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste

And destroyed, Moab was the incestuous offspring of Abraham's nephew, Lot. Physically, Lot escaped Sodom, but spiritually he took the immorality of Sodom with him.

One night Lot got drunk and had sex with his two daughters. Both of them became pregnant. The eldest daughter named her little boy, "Moab," and the younger daughter named her son, "Ammon."

Over the centuries, Moab and Ammon lived next door to Israel. They were family. Nothing was stopping them from embracing Abraham's God and joining the worship of Yahweh. In fact, the Law of Moses, Deuteronomy 23, laid out provisions for accepting and assimilating Moabites into the nation of Israel.

This is how David's great-grandma, Ruth - a Moabite - became part of the lineage of Jesus. A Moabite is a member of God's family tree.

God loved Moab, and gave these people every opportunity to join Israel in true worship, but instead Moab chose to be Israel's enemy and serve idols.

2 He has gone up to the temple<sup>[fn]</sup> and Dibon,

To the high places to weep.

Moab will wail over Nebo and over Medeba;

On all their heads will be baldness,  
And every beard cut off. Ancient Dibon was the site of a famous archaeological discovery. In 1868, near the Dead Sea, a German missionary found an ancient stone plaque. Prior to its discovery skeptics of the Bible doubted the existence of King David. He was only mentioned in the Scriptures.

**SHOW PIC** There was no extra-biblical corroboration... until the finding of The Moabite Stone. Written on the stone were the names “Yahweh,” “Israel,” and “House of David.”

Engraved by the Moabite king the Stone authenticated a big slice of biblical history. Today the Stone is on exhibit at the Louvre in Paris, France. **CLOSE PIC**

3-4

3 In their streets they will clothe themselves with sackcloth;  
On the tops of their houses  
And in their streets  
Everyone will wail, weeping bitterly.  
4 Heshbon and Elealeh will cry out,  
Their voice shall be heard as far as Jahaz;  
Therefore the armed soldiers[fn] of Moab will cry out;  
His life will be burdensome to him. Life will be painful and  
“burdensome.”

5 “My heart will cry out for Moab;  
His fugitives shall flee to Zoar,  
Like a three-year-old heifer.[fn]  
For by the Ascent of Luhith

They will go up with weeping;  
For in the way of Horonaim  
They will raise up a cry of destruction, A three-year-heifer was  
prime beef. The idea is that Moab will be cut off in the prime of  
life.  
6-7

6 For the waters of Nimrim will be desolate,  
For the green grass has withered away;  
The grass fails, there is nothing green.  
7 Therefore the abundance they have gained,  
And what they have laid up,  
They will carry away to the Brook of the Willows. Calamity is  
coming that will strip Moab of its prosperity. Storehouses will be  
emptied.  
8-9

8 For the cry has gone all around the borders of Moab,  
Its wailing to Eglaim  
And its wailing to Beer Elim.  
9 For the waters of Dimon<sup>[fn]</sup> will be full of blood;  
Because I will bring more upon Dimon,<sup>[fn]</sup>  
Lions upon him who escapes from Moab,  
And on the remnant of the land. Those who try to escape God's  
judgment will be cut down.

Even though the Assyrians didn't conquer Judah, the Assyrians  
decimated moab.

All this is a reminder that God's promises never fail!