

Isaiah 21-23 – 30 November 2023

“Fastest Ways To Fall”

Introduction

- *In chap 13-23, God has Isaiah address mostly the foreign nations that have influenced Israel
- *These ‘hard’ messages are designed to remind Israel that God is just & won’t let others get away w/ sin
- *Additionally, they’re designed to show God’s heart to save & bring righteousness to ALL people
- *God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that they would turn...& NOT fall into condemnation
- *I believe God is today warned away from 3 of the fastest ways of falling into sin & condemnation
- *As we finish our look at these prophecies against nations, let’s learn to stand against our enemy

So today, let’s look at 3 of the fastest ways to fall into uselessness & trouble

#1: No Vision: Watchmen need to see what others cannot (Chap 21)

Read Chap 21:1-2 – *Burden of Babylon*

1. “Desert of the sea” is a name for Babylon b/c the plain it was built on was divided up by lakes
2. Like a whirlwind, the Medo-Persians are prophesied to conquer Babylon
 - a. Calling out the Medo-Persians is an internal proof of the Bible’s super-natural inspiration
 - b. Isa 44-45 actually calls Cyrus by name 150 years before he’s even born!
3. Notice the Lord will cause the suffering caused by Babylon to cease - fully described in Daniel 5
 - a. In Isaiah’s day, it hasn’t even begun yet

Read Vs 3-4

1. Notice Isaiah’s sadness at seeing a vision of Babylon’s destruction
2. These are said not to scare but to prepare you

Read Vs 5-10

1. This same terror that strikes this watchman when Babylon falls to the Medo-Persians will yet again happen in the Tribulation
2. John quotes this vs 9 in both Rev 14 & 18 as spiritual & economic Babylon falls
3. Men like Isaiah & Daniel had vision & knew Babylon would fall for their sin (Read Pro 29:18)

Read Vs 11-12 - *Burden of Edom*

1. This brief burden has been a great burden to expositors – So let me detail the words
2. Dumah is the capital of Edom (Seir) from Esau
3. Vs 11 means, ‘how much longer til the day?’
4. Then vs 12 the watchman says that the morning has come but another night is yet coming
 - a. Could indicate threat of Assyria is passed, yet the threat of Babylon is rising toward Edom
5. The final phrase says, ‘If you want to know more, come back later’ – So that’s what we’ll do

Read Vs 13-15 - *Burden of Arabia*

1. The word *forest* is really ‘clustering together’
 - a. Arabian tribe refugees will get clustered together to preserve themselves w/ food & water
2. Dedan, Temah and Kedar are Arabian tribes

Read Vs 16-17

1. Sargon of Assyria invaded Arabia in 716 BC
2. Watchmen know Saudi Arabia began as the 2 tribes of Sheba & Dedan (Grandsons to Abraham)
 - a. They’ll NOT attack Israel during Eze 38-39
 - b. Along w/ ‘the merchants of Tarshish’ & ‘all the young lions thereof’, they’ll rebuke Russia, Iran & Turkey but stand helpless

#2: No Trust: Possessions & position cannot do what the Provider can (Chap 22)

Read Chap 22:1-4 - *Burden of Jerusalem*

1. Jerusalem was nothing but great mountains & valleys in which to see

2. The picture is of a great stirring in the city
 - a. Fear of the enemy often leads people to drunken indulgence and self-lust
3. Judah is dying but not in battle, but for fear
4. Isaiah, like Jeremiah, shows great compassion
 - a. He doesn't want his people to be ruined
 - b. He doesn't want God's land desecrated

Read Vs 5-7

1. Mention of Elam seems to indicate this is fear of the Assyrians coming under Sennacherib b/c the Elamites (a Persian Tribe) were their servants

Read Vs 8-11

1. They trusted in their weapons, waterways, & walls and not in the One who is worthy!
2. Don't just reach for the resources, but be sure to credit the Creator that's provided them

Read Vs 12-14

1. What is this sin that cannot be atoned for?

- a. The sin of having God but rejecting Him
- b. The sin of placing other things as more important than God
- c. God was offering Himself, but was refused

Read Vs 15-19

1. II Kings 18 tells us there were 3 men of Judah relaying the Assyria threats at the gate to Hezekiah (Eliakim, Shebna and Joah)
2. Shebna was powerful in Hezekiah's kingdom but apparently didn't share Hezekiah's godliness
3. Shebna's judgement is b/c of pride of position & using it for self (Read Luk 12:16-21)
 - a. He won't even get to use the tomb
 - b. He'll lose his position
 - c. Read Heb 11:6 – Faith must be “in God”

Read Vs 20-24

1. Shebna & Eliakim were both Hezekiah's servants, but only Eliakim was God's servant

2. God's not just looking to bless the #1 in charge, but all those that would trust Him
3. Eliakim is given Shebna's position & influence over Kingdom of Judah w/ surety that it'll endure
4. God will exalt the faithful even while individuals or nations are facing judgement

Read Vs 25

1. Thus a reminder that Shebna will be removed for his unfaithfulness
2. Shebna was given much blessing, but it's all removed for improperly using what God has given

#3: No Humility: Pride exploits you long before its judgement ever will (Chap 23)

Read Chap 23:1-5 – *Burden of Tyre*

1. Promise of coming judgement on this commercial city of Tyre, the 'Babylon of the Sea'
2. All the merchants from Spain to Egypt lament their destruction

Read Vs 6-9

1. Pride, like for many, is their root sin
 - a. Read Prov 16:18
2. This expressed itself in them using their great wealth on themselves
 - a. Read I Tim 6:10 – They loved the gain, b/c they could spend it upon self
3. How someone uses their money tells a lot
 - a. Abraham was super rich – yet tithed to Melchizedek
 - b. Rich Y. Ruler was rich – yet couldn't let go
 - c. Zaccheus got rich by greedy pride – yet repented and give away restitution

Read Vs 10-14

1. This is prophecy of Babylon's Nebuchadnezzar coming against Tyre making it waste
2. Ezekiel gives details showing they took no spoil
 - a. Babylon has a land army
 - b. Tyre fled to their island nation of Cyprus
 - c. City wiped out, but Tyre the people endured

Read Vs 15-16

1. Babylon lifted their 13 year siege of the destroyed city about 571 BC
2. City lie in ruins for 70 years b4 being rebuilt

Read Vs 17-18

1. So Tyre will be restored seemingly without much repentance
2. Even Psm 45 shows them coming to the Lord & His bride in the Millennial Kingdom with a gift

Conclusion

So, let's avoid the fastest ways to fall

1. We Need Vision
 - a. Read Luke 24:45 – God's Word is the way to clearly see our path & the future!
2. We Need To Trust God
 - a. Read Psm 20:7 – Profit from the "item" & praise the "I AM"
3. We Need Humility
 - a. Read Luke 18:14 – Way up is the way down