

Isaiah 13-14 – 2 November 2023

“How Prophecy Speaks”

Introduction

*In chap 1-12, Isaiah spoke to Israel and Judah of, not just of coming judgement, but of the coming Messiah

*Now in chap 13-23, God has Isaiah address mostly the foreign nations that have influenced Israel

*It's appropriate that 'judgement should begin at the house of God' (I Pet 4:17), but it doesn't end there!

*Isaiah is told to give these prophecies (hard messages) to many foreign nations

*But why record these if they're not going to deliver them to these nations?

*To remind Israel that God is just & won't let others get away w/ their wickedness

*All the faithful will receive the message

Today let's look at 4 ways that prophecy speaks to us—it's 4 ways that prophecies are to be interpreted

#1: Prophecy speaks in terms of near & far fulfillment (Chap 13:1-16)

Read Chap 13:1

1. “Burden” - heavy message to carry & give out
2. Babylon was ‘just another nation’ at this point
 - a. It would be another 100 years before they become great, attack & conquer Judah
 - b. Babylon is mentioned 287 times in Bible – more than any place other than Jerusalem
 - c. Definitive collection on Babylon is Isa 13-14, Jer 50-51, Rev 17-18 & also Isa 46-47

Read Vs 2-3

1. God is calling someone to come destroy the nobles of Babylon...but He hasn't said who yet
2. We'll see that it's the Medes and the Persians

Read Vs 4-5

1. Medes were 300 miles east in modern Iran
2. Interesting that it describes this conqueror of Babylon as a ‘kingdom of nations’ b/c the M & P combined forces to rule

Read Vs 6-8

1. So this destruction of Babylon will be near the time of the 'Day of the Lord'
 - a. Certainly, speaks of 2nd Coming of Jesus
 - i. We read of the end times destruction of Babylon in Rev 17-18
 - b. So we see that prophecies very often have a near term and long term fulfillment
 - i. Exp: Jesus read most of (Read) Isa 61:1-2
2. 'They shall be amazed' Dan 5 records Belshazzar's party & the handwriting on wall just as the Medo-Persians are invading thru diverted waterway

Read Vs 9-11

1. This bears much similarities to the coming 7-year Tribulation Jesus talked of in Matt 24
2. Babylon is even identified as the 'world' (vs 11)

Read Vs 12-13

1. The population of Babylon reduced to a few
2. No doubt from many wonders from heaven

Read Vs 14-16

1. So the horrors of war & complete judgement

#2: Prophecy speaks of things that are not yet as though they are (Chap 13:17-14:11)

Read Chap 13:17-19

1. If amazing that Babylon would rise, even more so that the Medes would rise to overtake them!
 - a. These named nations is what leads skeptics to doubt Isaiah, b/c it was either written 100s of years later OR it's genuine prophecy!

Read Vs 20-22

1. This desolation didn't happen after the Medes took over, so this is yet to happen in the future
2. Babylon will rise in end (Read Rev 18:23)

Read Vs 1-2

1. So the promise that Israel will outlast Babylon
2. Imagine comfort this would bring to Ezekiel & Daniel as they would watch Babylon invade
3. Certainly vs 2 hasn't happened much yet

Read Vs 3-4

1. We'll see there's an ultimate power behind the king of Babylon that rules the world system

- a. So we too can sing this song
- b. When oppression ceases w/ heaven's rest

Read Vs 5-8

1. When evil is put under, there is rest
2. 'No feller is come up...' – Not like WV 'Hey Feller', but it's an ax welder
 - a. Enemies would deforest conquered land
 - b. So now even the land can rest

Read Vs 9-11

1. All those that used their thrones on earth in pride for evil are removed to hell
 - a. There are no thrones in hell – no glory at all
 - b. Hell is no party, but punishment

#3: Prophecy speaks to the root cause of things (Chap 14:12-23)

Read Chap 14:12

1. Now the behind the seen power of Babylon
2. Satan always attempting to counterfeit God

3. Clearly king of Babylon didn't fall from heaven
 - a. Jesus saw Satan fall from heaven as lightning
 - b. But Jesus is the only bright & morning star
 - i. Read Rev 22:16

Read Vs 13-14

1. So the root of all pride is "I will"
 - a. Read Gen 3:1-5, doubt, deny, then displace God *Himself...w/ yourself*– That's Satan's plan
 - b. Whereas Jesus said, 'not My will, but Yours'

Read Vs 15-19

1. Satan does not 'rule hell' now or later
 - a. He'll be just another rebel
 - b. He is now the 'god of this world' b/c human race forfeited rule over to him in the Garden
2. Yet there's also near fulfillment here of King of Babylon coming to his end, not way he planned

Read Vs 20-23

1. Evil promises to bring fame, riches and renown, but it never produces what it promises

#4: Prophecy speaks with power & trustworthiness (Chap 14:24-32)

Read Chap 14:24-25

1. The scene switches to the judging of Assyria
 - a. This is the near-term concern for Israel
 - b. We're reminded these nations are recorded b/c of how they've effected God's people
2. This destruction of Assyria was so powerful in Isaiah's day as Assyria came against Judah
 - a. God sent 1 angel to kill 185,000 Assyrians
 - b. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword b/c He could at any time get 12 legions of angels
 - i. Enough to take out 9-13 billion people!
 - c. Our problem is never a lack of power, but a lack of faith that God's way is always best

Read Vs 26-27

1. God's thoughts are as good as actions

Read Vs 28-29

1. The Philistines were being threatened by the Assyrians and now Assyria has stumbled

2. God tells Philistia not to rejoice b/c they would get their judgement as Assyria came back to get them

Read Vs 30-31

1. This may also be a yet future judgement on those taking the name Palestina

Read Vs 32

1. God will always keep His promises to His people and we should always trust in Him to do it

Conclusion

So OT Prophecy has a certain method of speaking

1. **It speaks in terms of near & far fulfillment**
2. **It speaks of future things as though they are**
3. **It speaks to the root cause of things**
4. **It speaks w/ power & trustworthiness**

Prophecy is the very plan of God being foretold to energize its hearers with the power of God

God has all things sorted, & has since the beginning!