



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

When the Light on a Hill becomes a Blinder in the Valley

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts: Isaiah 22:1-14; Isaiah 6:9-11; 15:5; 16:1-5; Joel 2:12-14; Ps 87; 125; Matt 5:14-16

We're in a powerful and sobering portion of Isaiah today—chapter 22, verses 1–14. The picture here is simple but piercing: God's people were called to be a **signal on the mountain**, a **light on the hill**, a **road marker** pointing to His character and His ways. But instead of being the mountain of Zion—*Har Tziyon* (Literally, "Mountain Sign")—the Lord says, "You've become a valley." A valley of vision... a valley of perception... a place where **you think you see**, but you actually can't.

Isaiah is looking at Jerusalem — the city God calls His mountain — and the Lord sarcastically calls it instead "*the Valley of Vision*." A place that is supposed to have clarity has become fogged in by pride and short-sightedness. And the Lord is saying to His people, "You're rejoicing when you should be repenting. You're partying on the rooftops when you should be crying out to Me. You think you're safe because the disaster hasn't hit yet. But you can't see. You're in a valley." Isaiah sees what the people don't want to see: that delayed judgment doesn't mean *no* judgment. That being spared for a moment doesn't mean God approves of the path we're walking. And the heart of the prophet breaks because the people who should be a sign to the nations have lost sight of the One they're supposed to point to.

1. WHEN YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A MOUNTAIN BUT YOU'RE LIVING LIKE A VALLEY

Isaiah opens with the phrase: "*The burden of the Valley of Vision*" (Isa. 22:1). Jerusalem was meant to be **Mount Zion**, the visible signpost of God's character. Zion—*Tziyon*—comes from a word meaning "a sign, a road marker." God's people were meant to be the place where the nations could look and find justice, mercy, righteousness, and truth. But instead of being a clear signal, Judah has become a valley—low, fogged in, unable to see past the immediate. They're climbing the rooftops trying to get perspective. They're looking around at the Assyrians devouring the nations and saying, "Look! We must be special. We must be better. Our people are dying natural deaths while theirs die by the sword! Things must be good!" They're mistaking delay for approval, comfort for righteousness, and temporary reprieve for permanent peace.

But Isaiah knows better. He sees through the fog. He sees that Judah is not protected because they are righteous—Judah is protected because God is patient. They are a people spared for a moment, but not transformed. And instead of falling on their faces before God, they're on the rooftops celebrating what they think they've earned. This is the danger of living in a valley of perception: you misread the moment. You interpret ease as blessing. You assume things will always be as they are right now. You get comfortable... even while the Lord is calling you to wake up.

2. WHEN YOU MISTAKE DELAYED JUDGMENT FOR "NO JUDGMENT"

As the people party, Isaiah weeps. "*Don't comfort me*," he says. "Don't try to console me." He knows something they can't see: their leaders have fled spiritually, and the people are already in captivity—they just don't feel the chains yet. The Lord says a day of **panic, trampling, and confusion** is coming (Isa. 22:5). The people can't imagine it. They think the danger has passed. But Isaiah hears the drumbeat of nations—Elam taking up the quiver, chariots rolling, charioteers, cavalry, horses, shields. He sees valleys filled with chariots, horsemen at every gate. No escape. No way out.

And what do the people do when God exposes their lack of covering? When He lets them feel the cracks in their walls? When He pulls back His hand? They run to the armory. They fortify their

walls. They inventory their supplies. They dig tunnels to bring water into the city. They gather materials. They devise strategies. They plan, plan, plan. But the Lord says, *"You did not look to the One who made it, nor consider the One who planned it long ago"* (Isa. 22:11).

This is the heart issue: **not that they made preparations... but that God was not first.** They are living as if the crisis is physical, not spiritual. They are trusting in their hands instead of in the One who formed them. We do the same. When panic hits, when the valley feels dark, our instinct is to fix, to grab control, to build our own defenses. And the Lord says, "You're looking everywhere but Me. Your blind spot is your own strength."

3. WHEN GOD CALLS FOR REPENTANCE BUT WE CHOOSE TO "EAT AND DRINK"

The Lord calls for weeping, wailing, sackcloth, heart-rending repentance. *"Turn to Me with your whole heart... rend your heart, not your garments, for I am gracious and compassionate..."* (Joel 2:12–13). But the people don't want discomfort. They don't want to deal with conviction. They don't want to face what's really happening. So instead, they choose joy—pleasure—distraction. *"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"* (Isa. 22:13). A philosophy of despair disguised as celebration. A way of numbing the soul. A false comfort in the fleeting moment.

Isaiah is devastated. He sees what blind eyes can't. He sees that a people called to be a light have chosen blindness. And the Lord says, *"Surely this sin will not be atoned for until you die"* (Isa. 22:14). Not because He refuses grace—but because they refuse repentance. Their hearts are set, their eyes are shut, their ears are dull, just as He warned in Isaiah 6. Yet even then—even then—God speaks of a remnant. A stump. A holy seed. The mercy of God persists even in judgment. But He calls us not to blind revelry, not to self-deception, not to fogged-in valleys of our own making. He calls us to see. To return. To break before Him. To be again the mountain-sign we were called to be.

CONCLUSION

Isaiah 22 is a warning to anyone who has ever mistaken comfort for righteousness, delay for approval, or reprieve for revival. It's a word for those who think they see clearly while standing knee-deep in the valley. It's a call to the people of God to become again the sign on the mountain—a people who look like Him, who act like Him, who shelter the refugee and seek justice, who repent when He calls and trust Him before we trust ourselves. May we not be blind in the Valley of Vision, but rather, the mountain of the Lord—a light that points clearly to Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Where in your life have you mistaken comfort or delay for God's approval?
2. What does it practically look like to "look to your Maker first" in a moment of crisis?
3. Why do we often run to self-strength, self-planning, or distraction instead of repentance?
4. How can we ensure that we, as God's people, function as a true "sign on the mountain" to those fleeing destruction?
5. What would it look like for you personally to "rend your heart, not your garments"?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Adonai, open our eyes. We confess that we often walk in the Valley of Vision—seeing only the immediate and missing what You're saying. Forgive us for trusting in our strength, our plans, and our defenses before turning to You. Rend our hearts, Lord. Give us the gift of repentance. Restore our sight so we can be the sign on the mountain You've called us to be—reflecting Your truth, Your mercy, and Your righteousness. Make us a people who listen, who obey, and who walk in Your light. In Yeshua's name, amen.