



Isaiah 21-22

Tape #7251
Isaiah 21-22
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn to Isaiah chapter twenty one, as we continue our study through the word. In the twenty first chapter of Isaiah, he speaks of the destruction, first of all that is going to come upon Babylon, and then upon Edom, and then upon Arabia. This destruction will come from the Medo-Persian empire, and it will not come for another two hundred years. So he is prophesying of things that will take place some two hundred years in the future, when Babylon will fall to the Medo-Persian empire.

Later on as we get to the forty fifth chapter of Isaiah, he will give us very intricate details of the fall of Babylon, and even name for us at that point, the Medo-Persian general who will conquer Babylon. So...

The burden of the desert of the sea (21:1).

Babylon is described as "the burden of the desert of the sea", because it was where the Tigris and the Euphrates sort of came together. It was cut through with canals and sluices, and it was for a great part, marshland. So sort of a "desert of the sea". It's still a very hot area, but a lot of water.

And as the whirlwinds in the south pass through; [That is the area down in the Negev desert, where these whirlwinds toss the tumble weeds and all.] so it cometh from the desert, and from an awesome land. [So Isaiah describes that,] There was a very grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, the spoiler spoileth. So go up, O Elam: and besiege, O Media (21:1-2);

Now he uses the name Elam, because at this point of history, Persia was really for the most part, unknown. Elam was that area that was adjacent, and a part of Persia, and thus the people would understand Elam. But they didn't know anything about Persia, because as yet, it had not arisen to any kind of prominence. So we do know that Babylon did fall to the Persians, and the Medes who had combined together to form this strong empire. Thus he calls it here Elam, because at this point of history, Persia was not yet really any kind of a power, or a nation. So he's calling for Elam, or Persia to siege with Media.

and all of the sighing thereof have I made to cease (21:2).

Now he describes the effects of this vision upon him. It is interesting that it seems like some times revelations from the Lord cause physical distress to those who were receiving the revelation. For instance in, in Daniel, chapter ten, he talks about the visions that he had, and its effect upon him. He said, verse fifteen, "When He had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude like the sons of men touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and spake, and said unto him, that stood before me, O my Lord, by my vision, my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength." He was wiped out by it. "For how can the servant of this my Lord, talk with this my Lord? For as for me, immediately there remains no strength in me, neither was there any breath in me. And then he came to me again and touched me, as one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me." And he went on to talk to Daniel. But the effect of it was just really a great weakness, and his strength departing from him. This feeling of just being washed out, or wiped out.

We remember as John is recording some of the visions in the book of Revelation, he would fall on his face before the one who was, was proclaiming the vision. Paul the apostle, had a experience with God that left him it seems with sort of a permanent disability, as he writes to the Corinthians about it, he said, "There was a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, and whether in the body or out of the body, I don't know, but I was caught up into the third heaven, and there I saw these things that were so marvelous, heard these things that were so wonderful, it would be really a crime to try to describe them in human language. And because of the abundance of the revelations that were given to me, there was also given to me this thorn in the flesh. A minister of Satan, to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure." So the effect of the visions was a physical infirmity that inflicted Paul, it seems for the remainder of his life!

Now Isaiah begins to describe when he saw this vision, and that was dealing with the destruction of Babylon, he begins to describe the physical effects that it had upon him.

Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, like the pangs of a woman who is in travail: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted, for fearfulness affrighted me: and the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me (21:3-4).

So this vision of the destruction of Babylon, the things that were taking place caused Isaiah to have this physical reaction. Pain like a woman who is in travail, at the birth of a child. Heart is beating fast, and he is frightened, bowed down with the hearing of it, dismayed at the seeing of it.

So then he begins to describe the scene. It was a scene of banqueting.

Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, and drink: [So he describes that he sees this revelry, eating and drinking, banqueting, but in the midst of it, there's a cry that comes from the watchman, for] *the princes to anoint their shield (21:5).*

Now it seems that they used to sort of grease their shields before going into battle. Feeling that the, the arrows hitting the greased shield would ricochet a lot easier. So in the midst of this revelry, partying, eating and drinking, suddenly the cry comes for the princes to arise for battle.

Now we know from the book of Daniel that when Babylon fell, Belshazzar had ordered this great feast for a thousand of his lords, and they were eating and drinking, and while they were drunk, they called, Belshazzar called for the golden vessels that they had taken from the temple in Jerusalem to be brought, that they might drink their wine out of these golden vessels. They began to praise the gods of gold and silver when this handwriting came on the wall.

So Isaiah seems to be describing that scene, some two hundred years plus, before it ever took place. Actually Babylon did not fall until approximately two hundred and fifty years after, two hundred and sixty years after the writing here of Isaiah, chapter twenty one. Yet, the Lord shows him this vision, the destruction of Babylon, that it takes place in the midst of a partying, eating and drinking.

For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, and set a watchman, and let him declare what he sees. And so he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, and a couple of donkeys, and a couple of camels (21:5-6);

Now the Elamites used to use donkeys in battle. They would not pull chariots with them, but they would ride the donkeys. The Medes used the camels, again not to pull chariots, but they rode on the camels. So they were sort of their cavalry unit.

and he hearkened diligently with much heed: And he cried, A lion: My Lord (21:7-8),

Now a lion is probably the traditional cry of alarm for the shepherd who was watching over the flock when there was any danger, he would cry out, "A lion!" Because that was usually the most dangerous threat to the flock, and thus it's probably just the traditional cry of danger, "A lion my Lord!"

I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights: Behold, here comes a horse, a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all of the graven images of her gods he has broken unto the ground. O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared unto you (21:8-10).

So Isaiah declares that this had come from God, that which he heard, he has declared. Sort of like Paul the apostle said, "That which I have received from the Lord, I also deliver it unto you." So he speaks of this vision of the fall of Babylon.

Now he turns to Dumah, which is Edom, the area of mount Seir. You have heard of the Edomites, or Idumean, and thus the Dumah.

The burden of Dumah. [Or Idem, or Edom] He calleth to me out of Seir, [Mount Seir was the prevalent landscape mark of Edom.] Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? [The response] The watchman said, The morning is coming, but also the night: if you will inquire, inquire: return, and come (21:11-12).

After the fall of Babylon, the Medo-Persian troops came down, and they took the area of the Edomites, and thus, the cry, "Watchman, what of the night? The morning is coming, but there's darkness. There's, there's the darkness that is going to come." The night is going to actually precede, and follow the days that are coming upon Edom, are destruction. Then he goes on to Arabia.

The burden upon Arabia. In the forest [And that would be the bramble bushes in Arabia.] shall you

lodge (21:13),

There really are no forests in Arabia, as you've perhaps seen some of the pictures of our troops over in Arabia now, no forest there. Just sand, and bramble bushes. So, "In the bramble bushes in Arabia, shall you lodge."

O ye travelling companies of Deeding (21:13).

De-dan-im, of course the im is a plural. Dedan is the singular. Dedan is the area of Saudi Arabia. I point that out, for when we get to Ezekiel, chapter thirty eight, and we come to the Russian invasion of the Middle East, we find that Sheba, and Dedan, or, Arabia, are objecting to Russia's move into the Middle East. So here is the company of Dedanim. Now the im is a plural, so it is the people, the plural of Dedan.

The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water unto him (21:14)

Now Tema's there in the south in the Negev, and it would seem that the refugees were fleeing as the result of the invasion. As every war seems to create its refugees who are trying to escape from the battle, so these refugees seeking to escape out of Arabia, and thirsty in that desert land, the people from Tema brought water to them.

and provided bread to them that were fleeing. For they had fled from the swords, that were drawn swords, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of a hireling, [That is, exactly a year.] and all the glory of Kedar shall fail: And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it (21:14-17).

Chapter 22

Then, going into chapter twenty two...

The burden of the valley of vision (22:1).

Now the valley of vision is one of the valleys around Jerusalem. Probably a valley in which you get a good view of the city of Jerusalem. Thus called, "The valley of vision". You get the vision of Jerusalem. It could be the upper portion of the Kidron valley, from which you get an excellent view of Jerusalem.

What alieth thee now, that you are wholly gone up to the housetops (22:1)?

Now, as he looks at Jerusalem, as he sees Jerusalem, he sees the people there on their housetops. Now if you go today to Jerusalem, and you walk along the city wall, and it's one of our features on our tours, and it's one that always is a very interesting, and fun time. On our free day, I lead a tour on the wall of Jerusalem, and we walk from the Joppa gate, almost to the Herod gate, on top of the wall. It's very interesting because you get a different view of the old city of Jerusalem from the top of the wall. You look down into the back yards of the, of the places there, and you look on the rooftops.

Now the rooftops are flat, and they usually serve as the patios for the people. You will find on the rooftops garden furniture. You'll even find gardens. You'll see the clotheslines, and the ladies hanging their clothes up. You'll see the ladies mopping the rooftops, which is an interesting thing. You ladies think you have it bad? Over there they mop their roofs, and it's a place for the children to play. It's a place for their outdoor entertainment, their outdoor eating is done on the rooftop. So as the prophet is looking at Jerusalem, from this valley of vision, he sees the people on the rooftops, or the housetops.

And thou that are full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: for your slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in the battle (22:2).

Now the amazing thing to the prophet is that there's all of this partying, and all that is going on in the midst of troublous times. The city is under siege, and many of the people are gonna die as the result of this siege. It is thought historically that this is the time of the siege of Sennacherib, who had come with the Assyrian forces, and had surrounded the city of Jerusalem, and had cut off the supplies. The people felt that their doom was inevitable, and so they figured, "Well we might as well party till we die. We're gonna die, so let's just eat and drink, for tomorrow we're gonna die." And, thus they were there on their rooftops. There was a city a city of partying, a joyous city, and yet the people were not to be slain with the sword, but by the starvation as the result of the siege.

All of your rulers tried to flee together, but they were caught by the archers and bound: and all that are

found in thee are bound together, which tried to flee far away (22:3).

Now it would seem that many of the rulers of the city, when it was surrounded by the Assyrians, their, they were probably the politicians, they all tried to flee. They were caught however, and were bound together. So Isaiah, as he sees this is torn up by it.

Therefore I said, Look away from me: for I will weep bitterly, don't try to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people (22:4).

Isaiah saw it from a wholly different perspective. He saw it was a time of national calamity. It was a time when, yes it was true, their destruction was eminent, it would appear. It would appear there was no escaping. They were closed in. Here are the people in the rooftops partying, and having a great time, and Isaiah can see the, the coming destruction, and he's weeping bitterly. People say, "Oh that's alright, that's alright." He said, "Don't try to comfort me." He is grieving because of the spoiling that is going to take place.

For it is a day of trouble, a day of treading down, a day of perplexity by the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of the crying down to the mountains (22:5).

People fleeing to the mountains, for covering them. A day of trouble, day of perplexity.

And Elam [Persia] bear the quiver with the chariots of the men and horsemen, and Kir that had uncovered the shield. And it shall come to pass, that your choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen will set themselves in array at the gate. And he discovered the covering of Judah, that thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest (22:6-8).

Now the armoury, there in Jerusalem, built by Solomon with cedars from Lebanon, was called the house of the forest. Because the wood came out of the forests of Lebanon. They were looking to their own power, rather than looking to the Lord. He is, he is saying that these valleys around Jerusalem will soon be covered with the enemies, the tent to the enemies. The troops of the Assyrians will soon be arriving, and filling the valleys, surrounding the city of Jerusalem, cutting off the supplies. The people know that the, the people know that the Assyrian forces actually here, are on their way. Yet, they don't seem to be really concerned. War is eminent. It doesn't seem to bother them.

You have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: [The walls were in a state of disrepair.] you've gathered together the waters of the lower pool. [That is the pool of Siloam???.] You've numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses you've broken down to fortify the wall (22:9-10).

So he tells about their endeavors to defend the city. First of all, the fortifying of the walls, as they tore down their houses to do so. Now today, as you go to Jerusalem, in the old city of Jerusalem, in the Jewish quarter, they have been doing some fascinating archeological excavations within the last five years. In some of the excavations, they have come across the broad wall that is mentioned in Nehemiah. The wall that is referred to here, in Hezekiah's time, they, the wall of Nehemiah is built up to it, and you can see where the junction comes. But also next to this wall of Hezekiah's time, you can see the remains, or the foundations of the houses that were destroyed in order that they might take the rocks from those houses, to use them in the building of the wall.

So that which Isaiah is speaking about here, is something that you can see in Jerusalem today! Looking down at this excavation, you can see the foundations of these little houses that were destroyed, in order that they might build the wall.

It would seem that in the northern part of the city, there was a spring, and the waters of the spring came down through the Tyropian valley and emptied into the pool of Siloam. This spring, and the little stream that came from it, were open. So what they did was cover over the top, so when the Assyrians came, they would not know that the spring, and the stream was there. So they covered it, where it then came inside of the city, and they had the water within the city.

Also, they dug this tunnel through seventeen hundred feet of solid rock from the spring of Gihon, which is down in the Kidron valley, over to the pool of Siloam. Today, you can walk through this tunnel. It isn't easy, you have to walk through the water, and a lot of places you have to bend over, because the wall, it's only four feet high in some places. But you can actually walk through this tunnel. I've done it about five times, and every time after the first, I've always said, "Why am I here again?" But there's usually a group

who want to go through the tunnel, and I relent, and am talked into it. But it's fascinating once. After that it's a job. But you can actually go, and this was done at this time that Hezekiah is writing. This is when this tunnel was being dug, at that time of Isaiah, by Hezekiah's men. Isaiah is there at that time, as they are preparing for this Assyrian invasion.

You've made also the ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: [And that's on the upper side, as they brought through the Tyropian valley.] but you have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago (22:11).

Who was the one who put the spring there? "You haven't looked to God!" Now here's the whole complaint of Isaiah, well, not the whole, but the, the thrust of the complaint is, "Is that you are trusting in everything you can do to defend yourself. But you're not trusting in God." What a common mistake that is! How often we do the same thing! We put our trust in man, we put our trust in the arm of flesh, and we don't trust in the Lord. "It is better to put your trust in God, than your confidence in man." "Better to put your trust in the Lord, than your confidence in princes." Here they were taking the things that God had created, seeking to shield them from the view of the enemy and all, and, and working with God's creation, but not really aware of God, or conscious of God, or not really looking to God as their source of help, and their source of strength.

We think of the lyrics of that song, "The arm of flesh shall fail you, you dare not trust your own." We must learn to look to God, and lean upon the Lord for our strength. David said, "The Lord is my defense." The Lord will defend you! We need to remember that, and we need to allow the Lord to be our defense! I have found that whenever I seek to defend myself, the Lord will let me, and it's always disastrous! Ha, ha! But if I will just trust in the Lord, He will be my defense, He will be my shield, He's never let me down. Friends have let me down, oh let me tell you, no I won't! But the Lord has never let me down.

So the complaint of Isaiah was that the people were making all of these preparations from the physical standpoint, but they weren't really seeking after God in the time of national peril.

Now I think of our nation today, and the national peril that we face, and I look at how we are again looking at diplomacy, we're looking at the military build up in Saudi Arabia. We're looking to the military sort of to the armory, you might say, like they did in that day. They opened the armory there in the, the house of the forest in Jerusalem. They were looking to these things for their strength, rather than looking to God for their strength, and for their health. So in verse twelve...

And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, to mourning, to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth (22:12):

God was seeking that the people, He was seeking to bring the circumstances that would force the people to turn to Him. I do believe that God often times uses trials, difficult situations, to force us to Him. There was a book written several years ago called, "Crowded to Christ". When I read it I didn't like it, because he told how that often God uses adverse circumstances to force us to come to Jesus Christ. To crowd us to Christ. That's the idea of the book, how that circumstances often times sort of crowd us to Jesus Christ. Perhaps you've gone through those kind of circumstances that have forced you to your knees. The Lord wants us to call upon Him.

Now, I have found that if we will call upon Him, many times these experiences can be averted. Walking in close fellowship and communion with the Lord, He'll watch over you. He'll take care of you. Start getting independent, going your own way, the Lord will just pull on the reins a bit, "Wow, that hurts! You know, don't like that!"

You remember when David in Psalm thirty two was talking about his experience of trying to hide his sin with Bathsheba. "When I sought to cover it", he said, "the heavy hand of God was upon me, day and night. My moisture turned into the drought of summer." He describes how, how barren, spiritually barren his life had become. And he said, "Then I said, I will call upon the Lord. I will confess my sin." He said, "You forgave me my sin." Then the Lord spoke to David in Psalm thirty two, and He said, "David don't be like a mule whose mouth must be kept with a bridle, lest it step on you. I will guide you with my eye." So what the Lord was saying is, "David be sensitive to me, don't be stubborn, don't force to use painful processes to get you in the right path."

Now it is so important that you walk in the right path, God will use painful processes if necessary, but He does that reluctantly. God's not sadistic, He's not fiendish. He doesn't delight in bringing these hardships into your life! But if you're going in the wrong direction, if you are pursuing a dangerous path, the Lord loves you so much, He will not allow you to destroy yourself, and He will use, as necessary, the painful processes, in order to get you around to the right path.

With David it was a very painful process. It was actually the death of the child, and this dry spiritual experience. But the Lord said, "Don't be like a mule! Don't be stubborn David. I will guide you with my eye. I don't want to have to use the bit and the bridle to, to keep you in line."

So here is, the Lord was calling the people to prayer. He was calling them to mourning and weeping, repenting before God. The baldness was the vow of the Nazarite, the shaving of the head, to take the vow unto the Lord, of consecration. "Lord, we'll give our lives to you. We'll consecrate ourselves to you Lord." And that's what God was calling for, the people to really commit their lives to the Lord. God had allowed the Assyrians to come and, and them to go through this bitterness of this siege, in order that they might turn to God.

But behold there was joy, there was gladness, there was the slaying of the oxen, the killing of the sheep, there was the eating of flesh, and the drinking of wine; and there was the attitude, Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die (22:13).

Rather than in their calamity and distress, turning to God, they turned to the flesh. They said, "Well, we're gonna die anyhow." As we said, it's like being on the Titanic when you struck the iceberg, and the announcement comes over the ship, "Everybody to the ballroom. Wine and liquor's on the house! We're sinking friends, we're going down into the cold Atlantic, you're not gonna be around long. You might as well live it up while you have a chance. We're going under." That's the attitude they took. Rather than calling upon God, rather than seeking God, repenting and turning to God, they took a fatalistic attitude towards the whole situation. "We're gonna die, so we might as well just live it up." And the fatalistic attitude was fatal.

For it was revealed [Isaiah said] in my ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity will not be cleansed from you until you die, saith the Lord of hosts (22:14).

Because they did not turn to God, fatal.

Now at this point, the Lord gives him the message for this fellow Shebna. Now Shebna is not a Jewish name, and thus he was a foreigner, and there he was in the position of the treasurer in Jerusalem.

Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Go, and get the unto this treasurer, even to Shebna which is over the house, [That is, the house of the treasury] and say to him, [Why have, or] What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth a habitation for himself in a rock (22:15-16)?

Now the prominent families in Jerusalem would carve out these monuments for sepulchres for the family. They were sort of like the mausoleums today. Quite often the, the sepulchre carved right out of the rock, right in the cliff, would be quite ornate, as they are today down in the Kidron valley, as you drive along the wall, eastern wall of Jerusalem, looking down into the Kidron valley, you can see what is called, "The tomb of Absalom", and "The tomb of Zechariah". They are carved out of rock, and they were, are very interesting, and large, and ornate rock carvings. Sort of like our mount Rushmore kind of a thing. Carved right out of the rock, you see these tombs down there.

Now they, going into these sepulchres, they have several little niches, and when a person would die, they'd just put em' in the niche, and then seal up the niche. So the families, they were made for families, and so they would be the family burial place. The prominent families, the wealthy families all had their own sepulchres.

Now Shebna was not a Jew, he was a foreigner, and he probably did not have any real family there, and yet he was making for himself this very ornate sepulchre. He was hewing out this sepulchre for himself, there in Jerusalem. So Isaiah is rebuking him for this. He said...

Behold, the Lord will carry you away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. ["You won't be covered in that sepulchre, but the Lord will cover you."] For he will surely violently turn and toss you like a

ball into a large country: and there you're gonna die, and there the chariots of your glory shall be the shame of thy Lord's house (22:17-18).

So this fellow, the treasurer, a prominent man, built a sepulchre for himself, probably leading the people in this party time, as the destruction is coming. Easing the interest rates and all, so everybody has lots of money, and, and just you know, "So what! If they don't pay it back, we're gonna die anyhow, so let it go!" Riding around in his glorious chariots. So Isaiah rebukes him.

He will drive you from your station, [Your position] and from your state shall he pull thee down. It shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah (22:19-20):

He'll call His servant Eliakim, now Eliakim means "whom God appoints". The idea is that Shebna was not appointed by God. So God will appoint a man to take his place, this man Eliakim, whom God appoints.

Now when Sennacherib did finally arrive at Jerusalem with his troops, and the Rabshakeh came to the wall, and began to call up their demands for capitulation, it was Eliakim, this Eliakim, who already had replaced Shebna, who responded to the Rabshakeh from the Assyrian army.

Now at this point however, we have one of those interesting places, which there are many in the scriptures, where the prophecy moves away from the immediate, to the future fulfillment, so that you have a double fulfillment. In other words, it is speaking of things that will happen immediately, but these things that are happening immediately, are a foreshadowing of things that are gonna happen in the future.

As Paul, the apostle tells us in Colossians, chapter two, that, "The holy days, the new moon, the Sabbath day, these things were all a shadow of the things that were going to come." They were foreshadowing things of the future. The Passover feast, the slaying of the lamb, the blood of the lamb, the sparing of the first born in the, in the house, that was all a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who would be slain for our sins. Whose blood covering our lives, will free us from the curse of death. These things are all a shadow of the things to come. He said, "The substance is of Jesus". Throughout the whole Old Testament, you find so many, so many things that foreshadow Jesus Christ.

So they were dealing with a present, current situation, but it had it's future fulfillment in Christ. So they became the types of what Jesus would be. So in seminary we had a class "Types and Shadows", in which you studied all of these types of Christ in the old testament, and the foreshadowing of Christ in the old testament.

So here, Eliakim becomes a foreshadowing of the Messiah. Shebna, the foreshadowing of the Antichrist. His being put down in order that Eliakim, that one whom God appointed might rule. So as he begins to describe now Eliakim, we can see here that he is definitely a foreshadowing of the Messiah.

I will clothe him with your robe, I will strengthen him with your girdle, I will commit thy government into his hand: [Isaiah's already told us concerning Christ that, "the government will be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called, Wonderful, Counselor".] and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open (22:21-22).

Herein we find that the proof text, that this is indeed a foreshadowing of Christ, because when Christ is addressing Himself to the church of Philadelphia, in Revelation 3:7, He said to John and unto the angel of the church of Philadelphia, "These things saith He, who hath the key of David, who openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." So Jesus uses these very words to describe Himself in the book of Revelation, as He is addressing the church of Philadelphia. Then later on He said, "I have set before you an open door, which no man can shut." From a historic standpoint, as you look at the seven churches of Asia, as the seven periods of church history, the church of Philadelphia, is the Lord's true church that is holding to His word in the last days. We hopefully identify ourselves with the church of Philadelphia, to which the Lord said, "I have set before you an open door."

I'm amazed at how the Lord is opening doors in these days in which we live! Absolutely astounded at the opening of the doors that God is providing! A fellow had just returned from Russia, he's in the church here, he has a lot of business in Russia. He just returned from six weeks over there, and he was, he is in this area and he said that, "In this one city in Russia, there used to be this large church. They tore the church down, and put this huge statue of Lenin, where the church once stood." He said, "At the present time, they

are dismantling the statue of Lenin, and they're gonna rebuild the church on that spot." In several areas in Russia, they are now teaching the bible in the public schools.

It seems rather incongruous that there is greater religious liberty in Russia today, than there is in the United States. Now that's, that's rather sad. They have greater freedom of religion in Russia, than we do here in the United States, as far as the public schools are concerned. In one of the cities in Russia, they have the Baptist minister come in and teach the bible class at a public school. In the south, in the area of Armenia and all, the public schools now have the bible as a part of their curriculum. Open door, "I've set before you", the Lord said, "an open door."

So this definitely is a foreshadowing. Eliakim is a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, the key to the house of David.

And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; [Now he shall,] he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house (22:23).

Jesus, in writing to the church of Laodicea, verse twenty one of Revelation three, said, "To him that overcometh, will I grant that he might sit with me upon my throne, even as I have overcome and have sat down on my Father's throne." God has a place for Him, a place of glory and honor. Now we are told in Philippians, that, "He was in the form of God. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Yet He humbled Himself, came in the likeness of man, as a servant He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God has also highly exalted Him, He's given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. To the glory of God the Father."

Now Jesus in His prayer, in John seventeen, prayed that God would glorify Him, with the glory that He had with Him, and, and the Father of course, in another place Jesus said, "Father glorify thy name." And He said, "I have glorified, and I will glorify it again. But, I would that those were with me, might see me", He said, "In the glory that I have with Thee." In the beginning with God, thought it not robbery for something to be grasped to be equal with God. There He was, the center of glory in heaven. God is again going to give Him that position, that place of glory and honor in the heavenly realm. So here is the nail that is fastened in a sure place. "He shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house."

They will hang upon him the glory of his father's house, [As we were just referring to] and the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even all the vessels of flagons (22:24).

Now an interesting twist of the prophecy...

In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall (22:25);

This is no doubt, a reference to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The old testament prophets told the people that the Messiah was coming. That He was to have a place of glory and honor. He was to rule over the world. "Ask of me, and I will give you the heathen for thine inheritance. And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." We recognize that as a messianic psalm. He's gonna reign over the earth in righteousness and truth. "He will sit upon the throne of David to order it and to establish it, in righteousness and in justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." And yet, this glorious Messiah, this wonderful Lord who is to reign and to rule over the earth, is gonna be cut down, removed. The crucifixion.

Isaiah tells us more about the crucifixion in chapters fifty two, and fifty three. He tells us that "He is going to be cut off from the land of the living. He'll be numbered with the transgressors in His death. We did esteem Him as stricken, smitten of God. But He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities."

So this seeming contradiction concerning the Messiah. The nail was gonna be established in a solid place. The glory of the Lord's house would be hanging on it! But yet this nail was going to be cut down, it was to be removed, and fall.

And the burden that was on it shall be cut off (22:25):

That was the Jews, and the glory of the house of Israel that was to be upon the Messiah, will be cut off. So we find in the scriptures that Jesus indeed was cut off. He was crucified. Psalm twenty two, the messianic

psalm describes His death by crucifixion. Daniel in chapter nine, told the time that the Messiah would come, but then he said, "But the Messiah will be cut off." So Jesus was cut off. Daniel also then predicted that the Jews would be dispersed. That's what Isaiah is predicting here. "The glory of the house of Israel that was hanging on the nail, shall fall, and be cut off." And thus the Jews were cut off. For almost two thousand years they were cut off, as they were dispersed throughout the whole world.

Now miracle of all miracles! After the two thousand years of dispersion, according to the promise of God, He is bringing them back, and planting them in the land again! So we see this modern day miracle. If ever anybody needed any proof that the bible was the word of God, surely the Jew becomes the proof! The fact that these people maintained a national identity, for two thousand years, without a homeland. The fact that after two thousand years of dispersion, they gathered back, and became a nation again, according to the prophesies of the scriptures. Surely therein is a miracle that is unparalleled in the history of mankind! The maintaining of the national identity, to the extent that they could come back, and a nation that was dead for almost two thousand years, being reborn. Nowhere in history has there been any kind of a sequel to that! Yet here it is promised, and predicted, their fall.

Then the Lord sort of puts the finishing touch on it. He said...

for the Lord hath spoken it (22:25).

So what can you say? God has said it. Now this last verse, "in that day, saith the Lord of hosts", and then so you have this double confirmation that this is God's word. "The Lord hath spoken it."

As we go through Isaiah, several more times, we're gonna find this phrase, "the Lord hath spoken it", and you'll find that it is always used in reference to prophecy. As Isaiah is speaking about things yet future, he says, "And the Lord hath spoken it", which sort of affirms the fact, you can be sure it's going to happen. Now in this case, it's already happened. We can look, and see that it did take place. The nail was cut down and removed. And, the Jewish nation was destroyed, cut off, and remained that way for almost two thousand years. "The Lord hath spoken it." He did it.

So we'll move on into chapters twenty three and twenty four, as we continue our journey through the bible.

Shall we pray?

Father we thank You again for Your word. Lord help us to give ear to the instructions. To hearken to Your voice when You speak. And Lord, help us, that we would not be guilty as the children of Israel, of a flippant party attitude, when You're calling us to prayer, to fasting, to commitment. Lord, we see our nation today, and we see the dilemma, the perplexities, the problems. Lord, we see the social disorder. We see the gang warfare, we see the drug problems, we see the economic crisis, and chaos. We see our troops gathering for battle, and yet Lord, we also see the partying, the drunkenness, the indifference, when You're calling us Lord to mourning and weeping. Yet, Lord we're going on as though it were business as usual. Stir our hearts. Draw us Lord to Yourself. May there be a renewal of our commitment Lord to You. Help us Lord to be open and pliable that You will not have to use painful processes, to draw us to Yourself. But may we be open Lord to the voice of Your Spirit, that You would draw us into fellowship, and waiting on You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.