

#12

ISAIAH 24-25:

THE SONG OF
SALVATION



RECAP OF ISAIAH 1-23

AUTHOR: Isaiah (“Yahweh is salvation”) son of Amoz

AUDIENCE: the people of Judah during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah

DATE: ~740-686 BC

OUTLINE:

I. JUDGMENT: The Preservation of Zion (1-39)

- I. Introduction: *God's Lawsuit* (1)
- II. Prophecies Concerning Judah and Jerusalem (2-12)
- III. Prophecies Concerning the Nations (13-23)
- IV. Prophecies Concerning the Whole World (24-27)
- V. Prophecies Concerning the Rise & Fall of Jerusalem (28-39)
 - I. The Book of Woes (28-35)
 - II. Historical Interlude: *Hezekiah's Trust in Yahweh* (36-39)

II. SALVATION: The Restoration of Zion (40-66)

- I. Redemption: *the Announcement of Hope* (40-48)
- II. Salvation: *the Mission of the Servant* (49-55)
- III. Restoration: *the Arrival of the Kingdom* (56-66)



ISAIAH 24:1-6

CONTEXT: After introducing God's chief complaint against the people of Judah (ch. 1-5) and recalling his call into the ministry (ch.6), Isaiah has pronounced oracles of judgment against the people of Judah (ch.7-12), his chief audience, as well as against the nations surrounding them (ch.13-23). Now, Isaiah turns his attention to the whole world (ch.24-27).

24:1 Behold, the Lord will empty the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants.

2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor.

3 The earth shall be utterly empty and utterly plundered; for the Lord has spoken this word.

4 The earth mourns and withers; the world languishes and withers; the highest people of the earth languish.

5 The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.

This is a more generalized prophecy of what came before. Just as we have seen God's judgment fall upon the nations (ch.13-23), so Isaiah says we can expect to see the same thing come upon the entire world. God shows no favoritism or partiality—wealth, rank, and power mean nothing to Him.

We know the certainty of this coming destruction for *the Lord has spoken* (cf. 1:20; 21:17; 22:25; 25:8; 37:22; 38:7, 15; 40:5; 58:14).

There is debate whether *everlasting covenant* refers to the *Noahic Covenant* (Gen 9-10), which details certain fundamental moral principles applicable to the whole human race, or to the *Abrahamic Covenant* (Gen 12, 15, 17), wherein God promised to bless those who blessed Abraham and curse those who cursed him (Gen 12:3), and which demonstrated both salvation through faith and the call to obedience. Personally, it seems like the latter option makes the more contextual sense.

COLOR KEY

God's name Commands
God's actions Messianic
Judah's actions Repetition

24:1-23	Judgment of the World
24:1-13	<i>The Scope: Worldwide</i>
24:14-16	<i>The Purpose: Glory</i>
24:17-23	<i>The Scene: Devastation</i>
25:1-12	The Song of Salvation
25:1-5	<i>The Songs of Praise</i>
25:6	<i>The Banquet of the Yahweh</i>
25:7-8	<i>The Death of Death</i>
25:9	<i>The Joy of God's People</i>
25:10-12	<i>The Resolution of All</i>

ISAIAH 24:7-13

- 7 The wine **mourns**,
the vine **languishes**,
all the merry-hearted sigh.
- 8 **The mirth of the** tambourines **is stilled**,
the noise of the jubilant has ceased,
the mirth of the lyre **is stilled**.
- 9 No more do they drink wine with singing;
strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.
- 10 The wasted city is broken down;
every house is shut up so that none can enter.
- 11 There is an outcry in the streets for lack of wine;
all joy has grown dark;
the gladness of the earth is banished.
- 12 Desolation is left in the city;
the gates are battered into ruins. —————
- 13 For thus it shall be in the midst of **the earth**
among the nations,
as when an olive tree is beaten,
as at the gleaning when the grape harvest is done. —————

When God is done with it, the world will be left looking like a city after a siege.

As little fruit remains after a harvest, so too few people will remain when God is done judging the earth.

COLOR KEY

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Judah's actions	Repetition

24:1-23 **Judgment of the World**

24:1-13 *The Scope: Worldwide*

24:14-16 *The Purpose: Glory*

24:17-23 *The Scene: Devastation*

25:1-12 **The Song of Salvation**

25:1-5 *The Songs of Praise*

25:6 *The Banquet of the Yahweh*

25:7-8 *The Death of Death*

25:9 *The Joy of God's People*

25:10-12 *The Resolution of All*

ISAIAH 24:14-19

14 They lift up their voices, they sing for joy;
over the majesty of **the Lord** they shout from **the west**.

15 **Therefore in the east give glory to the Lord;**
in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the name of
the Lord, the God of Israel.

16 From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise,
of glory to the Righteous One.

But I say, "I waste away,
I waste away. Woe is me!
For **the traitors have betrayed,**
with betrayal the traitors have betrayed."

17 Terror and the pit and the snare
are upon you, O **inhabitant of the earth!**

18 He who flees at the sound of the terror
shall fall into the pit,
and he who climbs out of the pit
shall be caught in the snare.
For the windows of heaven are opened,
and the foundations of **the earth** tremble.

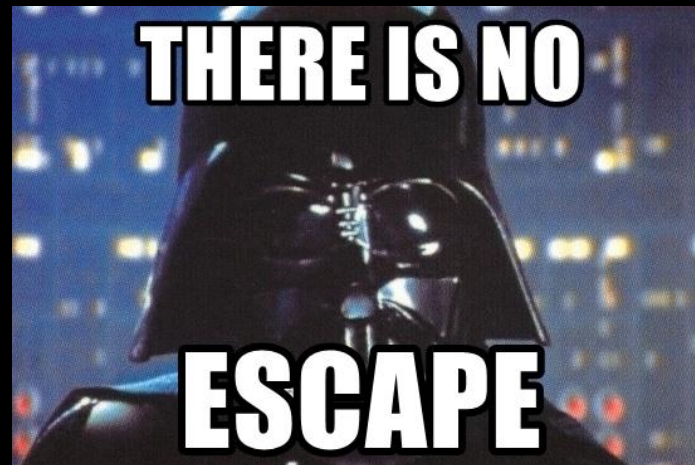
19 **The earth is** utterly broken,
the earth is split apart,
the earth is violently shaken.

ים־מִיָּם (*miyam*), lit. "the sea" (that is, the Mediterranean)

In the midst of this judgment, some of the "few [who] are left" (v.6), some of the remnant after the harvest (v.13), will raise their voices and praise God for preserving them, calling from **the sea** ("west") because that is where they fled during the destruction. It's evident that Isaiah views this as the proper response to God's judgment, and so he calls all people to glorify YHWH.

At the same time, Isaiah does not feel he can join in the jubilation, for he is burdened with seeing the destruction that must come before God's final victory arrives. The world will grow increasingly corrupt, meriting God's judgment all the more.

He who escapes one form of judgment will fall prey to another.



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ISAIAH 24:20-23

20 The earth staggers like a drunken man;
it sways like a hut;
its transgression lies heavy upon it,
and it falls, and will not rise again.

21 On that day the Lord will punish
the host of heaven, in heaven,
and the kings of the earth, on the earth.

22 They will be gathered together
as prisoners in a pit;
they will be shut up in a prison,
and after many days they will be punished.

23 Then the moon will be confounded
and the sun ashamed,
for the Lord of hosts reigns
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and his glory will be before his elders.

The judgment stretches beyond earth into heaven itself, with judgments being poured out on both divine and human figures alike. Both are pictured as being thrown into a deep, underground dungeon or prison (think Hades), where they will await their final judgment.

Just as the earth staggered (v.20), so too the heavenly bodies are left confounded and ashamed as God comes in glory. We continue to see how Isaiah's proclamation expands in scope: Judah → nations → earth → heavens & earth. In the words of Christ, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Mt 24:35).

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25:1-12 The Song of Salvation

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25:10-12 *The Resolution of All*

ISAIAH 25:1-6

25:1 O Lord, you are my God;

I will exalt you; I will praise your name,
for you have done wonderful things,
plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

2 For you have made the city a heap,
the fortified city a ruin;

the foreigners' palace is a city no more;
it will never be rebuilt.

3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;
cities of ruthless nations will fear you.

4 For you have been a stronghold to the poor,
a stronghold to the needy in his distress,
a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat;

for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall,
5 like heat in a dry place.

You subdue the noise of the foreigners;
as heat by the shade of a cloud,
so the song of the ruthless is put down.

6 On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

God is praised for His judgment. On one hand, the song can be seen as coming from Isaiah, who praises God for the hope of His future judgment. (Though Isaiah lived a life of hardship, he found confidence in the fact that God's plans were "formed of old," plans which were "faithful and sure.") On the other hand, the song can be seen as coming from the remnant remaining after the judgment (cf. 24:14), who praise God for having fulfilled that which He had always promised and delivering those whose faith was in Him. The theme of the song is simple: **YAHWEH IS WORTHY.**

THE PROUD WILL BE HUMBLD. God's power will be demonstrated throughout the world through His humbling of the most powerful nations. All who oppose Him will fall, and those who formerly exalted only themselves will exalt God.

THE HUMBLE WILL BE EXALTED. God's mercy will be evident through His preservation of the least amongst men. He will protect the poor and needy and will subdue their oppressors.

In this future kingdom, Isaiah foresees a banquet hosted by Yahweh Himself in Jerusalem ("on this mountain") for Jew & Gentile alike ("all peoples"). When Yahweh sits enthroned, He invites humans to join Him in the celebration, and they feast as royalty.

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ISAIAH 25:7-12

- 7 And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.
- 8 He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.
- 9 It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”
- 10 For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain, and Moab shall be trampled down in his place, as straw is trampled down in a dunghill.
- 11 And he will spread out his hands in the midst of it as a swimmer spreads his hands out to swim, but the Lord will lay low his pompous pride together with the skill of his hands.
- 12 And the high fortifications of his walls he will bring down, lay low, and cast to the ground, to the dust.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning*, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:3-4)

Isaiah foresees a day when, in God’s ultimate kingdom, the veil of spiritual ignorance is lifted and death is no more. Tears will be wiped away from every face and shame will be undone. Isaiah is confident in the reality of this future kingdom, “for the LORD has spoken.”

Moab was just one of Israel’s enemies, but here they seem to be representative of all of them. The fate that befalls Moab will befall all who oppose God’s purposes, plans, and people.

God will put an end to all evil.

STOP

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#13

ISAIAH 26-27:

THE SONGS OF THE
KINGDOM



ISAIAH 26:1-6

That is, the day of the LORD. Typically Isaiah employs this phrase (“in that day”) when speaking of the day of the LORD’s action (i.e., in judging a nation), but given the content of chs.24-25, contextually speaking this instance it seems to speak of the character of God’s future, eschatological kingdom.

26:1 **In that day** this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

“We have a strong city;
he sets up salvation
as walls and bulwarks.

2 **Open the gates,**
that the righteous nation that keeps faith
may enter in.

3 **You keep him in perfect peace**
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you.

4 **Trust in the Lord forever,**
for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.

5 For he has humbled
the inhabitants of the height,
the lofty city.

He lays it low, lays it low to the ground,
casts it to the dust.

6 The foot tramples it,
the feet of the poor,
the steps of the needy.”

THE CITY OF SALVATION. In that day, God’s righteous people are presented as dwelling safely and securely in Jerusalem, protected on all sides by the God who saved them.

Sandwiched in between the description of these two cities is a simple but extreme command: **Trust in Yahweh forever.** Communicating this single message to the people of Judah is the primary reason God gave Isaiah these visions/oracles to begin with.

THE CITY OF DESTRUCTION. In that day, the proud will be humbled and the wicked destroyed, and those who were once afflicted and oppressed will walk in victory atop their enemies.

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

26:1-21 Song of Judah

26:1-6	the Cities of God & Man
26:7-11	the Ways of the Just & Wicked
26:12-18	the Prayer of the Devout
26:19-21	the Promise of Resurrection

27:1-13 Song of the Protected Vineyard

27:1	the Death of the Serpent
27:2-5	the Keeper of the Vineyard
27:6	the Blossom of Israel
27:7-11	the Atonement of Jacob
27:12-13	the Return of God’s People

ISAIAH 26:7-13

7 The path of the righteous is level;
you make level the way of the righteous.

8 In the path of your judgments,

○ Lord, we wait for you;

your name and remembrance
are the desire of our soul.

9 My soul yearns for you in the night;
my spirit within me earnestly seeks you.

For when your judgments are in the earth,
the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

10 If favor is shown to the wicked,
he does not learn righteousness;

in the land of uprightness he deals corruptly
and does not see the majesty of the Lord.

11 ○ Lord, your hand is lifted up,
but they do not see it.

Let them see your zeal for your people, and be ashamed.

Let the fire for your adversaries consume them.

12 ○ Lord, you will ordain peace for us,
for you have indeed done for us all our works.

13 ○ Lord our God,
other lords besides you have ruled over us,
but your name alone we bring to remembrance.

THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS. This is the lifestyle and character of those who trust in Yahweh (that is, “the righteous”). Their path is a level one, for Yahweh goes before them. They (1) wait upon His promises, (2) desire and yearn to be near to Him, and (3) learn from His judgment.

THE WAY OF THE WICKED. In contrast, Isaiah discusses those who don’t trust in Yahweh. Their path is one of destruction, for otherwise they wouldn’t learn righteousness. They (1) live corruptly, (2) are blind to the glory of God, and (3) ignore the power of God.

By looking towards God’s **past** faithfulness (“you have indeed done for us...”), God’s people can be confident of His **future** faithfulness (“you will ordain...”), which allows them to be faithful to Him in the **present** (“your name alone we bring...”), despite present hardship.

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26:1-21 Song of Judah

26:1-6 the Cities of God & Man

26:7-11 the Ways of the Just & Wicked

26:12-18 the Prayer of the Devout

26:19-21 the Promise of Resurrection

27:1-13 Song of the Protected Vineyard

27:1 the Death of the Serpent

27:2-5 the Keeper of the Vineyard

27:6 the Blossom of Israel

27:7-11 the Atonement of Jacob

27:12-13 the Return of God’s People

ISAIAH 26:14-19

14 They are dead, they will not live;
they are shades, they will not arise;
to that end you have visited them with destruction
and wiped out all remembrance of them.

15 But you have increased the nation, O Lord,
you have increased the nation; you are glorified;
you have enlarged all the borders of the land.

16 O Lord, in distress they sought you;
they poured out a whispered prayer
when your discipline was upon them.

17 Like a pregnant woman
who writhes and cries out in her pangs
when she is near to giving birth,
so were we because of you, O Lord;

18 we were pregnant, we writhed,
but we have given birth to wind.

We have accomplished no deliverance in the earth,
and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen.

19 Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise.
You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy!
For your dew is a dew of light,
and the earth will give birth to the dead.

Their faith in God results firstly in confidence that God will destroy their enemies (v.14) and secondly that He will fulfill all the promises He had made to them (v.15). What God has promised shall surely come to pass.

As a pregnant woman cries out in pain, so Israel, in her tumultuous history, cries out. Their hard experiences drove them to cry out to God. Rather than doubting Him, they chose to depend upon Him. They rightly recognized that much of their difficulty arose as a form of discipline. For a time they tried to deliver themselves or rely on other worldly powers for deliverance, but in time they came to see that only Yahweh could truly deliver them (“We have accomplished no deliverance...”)

The OT doesn’t elaborate much in regard to the afterlife, but here is one clear example wherein it outright articulates the hope of future resurrection. Just as the faithful await the certain destruction of their enemies, they await the day when the deceased of Yahweh (“Your dead”) shall live once more.

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26:1-21	Song of Judah
26:1-6	the Cities of God & Man
26:7-11	the Ways of the Just & Wicked
26:12-18	the Prayer of the Devout
26:19-21	the Promise of Resurrection
27:1-13	Song of the Protected Vineyard
27:1	the Death of the Serpent
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27:12-13	the Return of God’s People

ISAIAH 26:20-27:4

While the faithful could be confident in the certain fulfillment of God's promises, they are called to be patient, for the time of fulfillment has not yet arrived. Before salvation and resurrection can come, Yahweh must judge the earth for sin. Before He can reign in righteousness, the wicked must be judged.

20 Come, my people, enter your chambers,
and shut your doors behind you;
hide yourselves for a little while
until the fury has passed by.

21 For behold, the Lord is coming out from his place
to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity,
and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it,
and will no more cover its slain.

27:1 In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong
sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the
twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.

2 In that day,
"A pleasant vineyard, sing of it!

3 I, the Lord, am its keeper;
every moment I water it.

Lest anyone punish it,
I keep it night and day;

4 I have no wrath.

Would that I had thorns and briers to battle!

I would march against them,
I would burn them up together.



In the ANE, Leviathan was a mythological primeval sea monster of chaos, taking the form of a many-headed sea serpent. In Ugaritic texts, Leviathan is subdued by Baal. Elsewhere in the OT, Yahweh, as the God of order, is presented as subduing Leviathan with His initial creative act (Job 3:8; 41:1; Ps 74:14; 104:26). In this instance alone does the struggle take place at the end, not the beginning, of time.

God's restored world is portrayed as a well-guarded and fruitful vineyard, in sharp contrast to the wild, unfruitful vineyard (Judah) of Isaiah's day (5:1-7). God's people will be delivered from their sinfulness, His wrath will be spent, and the world will be at such peace that any opposition belongs only to the imaginations of Yahweh, where He daydreams of saving His people again and again.

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ISAIAH 27:5-10

5 Or let them lay hold of my protection,
let them make peace with me,
let them make peace with me.”

In the end, even Yahweh’s enemies, should they repent, may achieve peace with Him.

6 In days to come Jacob shall take root,
Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots
and fill the whole world with fruit.

In the end, Israel will be who Yahweh had purposed them to be from the beginning: They shall reign alongside Him and fill the earth with fruit (of righteousness and justice; see Gen 18:19).

7 Has he struck them as he struck those who struck them?
Or have they been slain as their slayers were slain?

Yahweh has disciplined Jacob (Israel), but their discipline is as nothing compared to the judgment He will wage upon those who afflicted him.

8 Measure by measure, by exile you contended with them;
he removed them with his fierce breath in the day of the east wind.

In order to atone for their iniquity, Jacob will be sent by Yahweh into exile. Their pagan altars will be crushed to pieces and their foreign idols will be removed from among them, that at last they would return to Yahweh their God. Sure enough, this will be the effect of the exile. Post-exile, Israel’s greatest sins most often have to do with things other than idolatry. This is how Yahweh will draw His people back to Him.

9 Therefore by this the guilt of Jacob will be atoned for,
and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin:
when he makes all the stones of the altars
like chalkstones crushed to pieces,
no Asherim or incense altars will remain standing.

10 For the fortified city is solitary,
a habitation deserted and forsaken, like the wilderness;
there the calf grazes;
there it lies down and strips its branches.

Jerusalem will be left desolate and abandoned during this time of atonement.

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27:12-13	the Return of God’s People

ISAIAH 27:11-13

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

John 15:5-6

11 When its boughs are dry, they are broken; women come and make a fire of them. For this is a people without discernment; therefore **he who made them will not have compassion on them; he who formed them will show them no favor.**

The imagery of dried boughs are that of internal rottenness, something that must be broken off and thrown into the fire in order for the tree to remain healthy. The people of Jacob, in Isaiah's day, were "a people without discernment" (cf. 6:9). The time of exile would be a time of atonement and repentance, but in that final day of Yahweh, He would have no compassion for those who were still unrepentant, dried boughs. There will come a day when even God's patience and mercy must come to an end; His righteousness will prevail.

12 In that day from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt **the Lord will thresh out the grain**, and you will be gleaned one by one, O people of Israel. **13** And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship **the Lord** on the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

In that future day God will **(1) complete His judgment** over all the land of Israel (**Gen 15:18**, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,") by threshing them out one by one, and then He will **(2) regather all His dispersed people** back together to worship Him in Jerusalem.

STOP

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#14

ISAIAH 28:

WOE AGAINST
EPHRAIM



ISAIAH 28:1-6

This is the Hebrew word 'in (*hoy*), typically used in reference to disaster (i.e., "Woe")

Here Isaiah turns his attention to Samaria, the walled capital ("crown") of Ephraim (the northern kingdom, Israel). Samaria sat atop a hill overlooking a verdant valley leading to the Mediterranean coast, and Isaiah uses this setting to rebuke the inhabitants: Due to pride and drunkenness, their present luxury will not endure.

Isaiah warns Samaria that *Adonai* has someone planned for them, somebody to teach them a lesson. He uses the imagery of a strong and turbulent storm to foreshadow the arrival of Assyria, who would destroy Samaria in 722 BC.

When this "mighty and strong" one sent by God arrives, they will trample Samaria. The first-ripe figs, understandably, were devoured immediately; in the same way, proud, drunken Samaria was sure to be consumed quickly and thoroughly.

Yahweh's judgment would come upon Samaria in order to remove the fraudulent crown ("the proud crown of the drunkards") and replace it with the proper crown ("Yahweh of hosts"), that He would be worshiped by the remnant left over. While this was partially accomplished after the Assyrian invasion, the language employed seems to talk more idealistically of the Messianic age. Yahweh will be a strong arm of support even for those who fight in the city's most vulnerable area.

28:1 **Ah**, the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim, and the fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is on the head of the rich valley of those overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord has one who is mighty and strong; like a storm of hail, a destroying tempest, like a storm of mighty, overflowing waters, he casts down to the earth with his hand.

3 The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim will be trodden underfoot;

4 and the fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is on the head of the rich valley, will be like a first-ripe fig before the summer: when someone sees it, he swallows it as soon as it is in his hand.

5 In that day the Lord of hosts will be a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, to the remnant of his people,

6 and a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, and strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.

COLOR KEY

God's name Commands
God's actions Messianic
Judah's actions Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

28:1-33:24	Woes Against the Nations
28:1-29	Against Ephraim
29:1-24	Against Ariel
30:1-33	Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20	Against Going to Egypt
33:1-24	Against Assyria
34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 28:7-11

7 These also reel with wine
and stagger with strong drink;
the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink,
they are swallowed by wine,
they stagger with strong drink,
they reel in vision,
they stumble in giving judgment.
8 For all tables are full of filthy vomit,
with no space left.

9 “To whom will he teach knowledge,
and to whom will he explain the message?
Those who are weaned from the milk,
those taken from the breast?
10 For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
line upon line, line upon line,
here a little, there a little.”

11 For by people of strange lips
and with a foreign tongue
the Lord will speak to this people,

The idealistic portrait of the Messianic kingdom is far from being realized. *Drunkennes* had penetrated the people of Ephraim to their core, affecting even the religious leadership (priest & prophet) so that, despite their present luxury, the nation was collapsing from the inside. If their leaders filled their tables with vomit, what can they expect of the people who followed them? What good does it do to have a banquet table of you are simply going to fill it with vomit?

The drunken leaders of Ephraim mock Isaiah for his correction, for treating them as if they were infants. They grow tired of his constant badgering of them with religious principles and his attempts to correct them with basic truths of right and wrong, which sound to them like repetitive baby-talk. The Hebrew for v.10 reads, *Saw lasaw, saw lasaw, qaw laqaw, qaw laqaw, ze'er sham, ze'er sham*. Many scholars think this is intended to imitate the babbling of toddlers. The drunken leaders think that they are beyond these elementary principles, but in reality it is just what they need. Yet they refuse to listen.

Since the people refused to listen to their fellow Israelite (Isaiah), *Adonai* would speak to them through foreigners: He would get His message across through the Assyrian invasion. (In 1 Corinthians 14:20-25, Paul provides an additional interpretation: The gift of tongues was given to the church to help guide them from infancy into maturity.)

COLOR KEY

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34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 28:12-15

12 to whom he has said,
“This is rest;
give rest to the weary;
and this is repose”;
yet they would not hear.

13 And the word of the Lord will be to them
precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
line upon line, line upon line,
here a little, there a little,
that they may go, and fall backward,
and be broken, and snared, and taken.

14 Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers,
who rule this people in Jerusalem!

15 Because you have said, “We have made a covenant
with death,
and with Sheol we have an agreement,
when the overwhelming whip passes through
it will not come to us,
for we have made lies our refuge,
and in falsehood we have taken shelter”;

God offered the people a clear path to peace and refreshment—repentance—but they refused to listen.

As the people mocked Isaiah, so he mocks them back. Since they rejected the basic teachings of God, Yahweh’s word would continue to be such to them: Infant jabber that they could not understand. Rather than being a benefit to them, the faithful teaching of God’s word would condemn and incriminate them.

Isaiah uses the negative example of Ephraim as a warning for the leaders of Jerusalem (his primary audience), lest they do the same.

Isaiah mocks the leaders of Jerusalem for having trusted in foreign alliances rather than in God. They have made covenants with foreign powers which they think can save them from the “overwhelming whip” of foreign oppression, but the only things such covenants guarantee them are death and Sheol, for these powers are powerless as they. By taking refuge in foreign powers rather than in God, they take shelter in lies and falsehood.

COLOR KEY

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ISAIAH 28:16-20

16 therefore thus says the Lord God,
“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’
17 And I will make justice the line,
and righteousness the plumb line;
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
and waters will overwhelm the shelter.”
18 Then your covenant with death will be annulled,
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
when the overwhelming scourge passes through,
you will be beaten down by it.
19 As often as it passes through it will take you;
for morning by morning it will pass through,
by day and by night;
and it will be sheer terror to understand the message.
20 For the bed is too short to stretch oneself on,
and the covering too narrow to wrap oneself in.

While the leaders of Judah have placed their trust in foreign powers, Isaiah reassures them that it is God who has planned their deliverance. He is the One who established Jerusalem, and He is the One who will save it. Those in Jerusalem who trust in foreign powers are on a shaky foundation, but those who trust in Yahweh have a sure foundation.

While this passage isn't overtly Messianic, the words found therein are descriptive of the Messianic age and easily apply to how God describes Messiah elsewhere (i.e., Ps 118). In Romans 9-10 and 1 Peter 2, Paul and Peter quote this verse and apply it directly to Jesus Christ.

In the Messianic kingdom, the justice & righteousness of Messiah will stand in place of the lies & falsehood of the leaders of Isaiah's day. A plumb line was a weight attached to a string which was used to confirm a wall's straightness.

Jerusalem will learn in the same way as did Samaria: Through the discipline of God. The people they made a covenant with will not be able to save them from the "overwhelming scourge," but they will be beaten down instead.

Day by day, the inhabitants of Jerusalem will come to see how ill-equipped the foreign powers were to help them. As they are plundered and afflicted, those they trusted will be of no more comfort to them than a short bed (insufficient for comfort) or a narrow sheet (insufficient for warmth).

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 28:21-26

21 For the Lord will rise up as on Mount Perazim;
as in the Valley of Gibeon he will be roused;
to do his deed—strange is his deed!
and to work his work—alien is his work!

22 Now therefore do not scoff,
lest your bonds be made strong;
for I have heard a decree of destruction
from the Lord God of hosts against the whole land.

23 Give ear, and hear my voice;
give attention, and hear my speech.

24 Does he who plows for sowing plow continually?
Does he continually open and harrow his ground?

25 When he has leveled its surface,
does he not scatter dill, sow cumin,
and put in wheat in rows
and barley in its proper place,
and emmer as the border?

26 For he is rightly instructed;
his God teaches him.

This is a reference to two famous Israelite battles near Jerusalem: at **Perazim** against the Philistines during the reign of David (2 Samuel 5:17-21), and at **Gibeon** against the Canaanites during the time of Joshua (Jos 10:6-11). In those instances, God worked on behalf of Israel, but this time, His work is *alien* and *strange*: He works against His own people.

Isaiah warns His people not to scoff, as did the leaders of Ephraim, lest God make His decree even more severe. Isaiah had heard a decree of destruction that God intended to bring upon the whole land, and the only way to avoid it was through repentance.

Just as a farmer performs different tasks according to different seasons, so Isaiah tells the people that God performs different tasks according to different seasons. Sometimes, the people will be in need of mercy; sometimes, they will be in need of judgment. The farmer learns how to respond appropriately to the seasons by observing God's creation, which is reflective of God's character. Just as the farmer plows the ground (v.24), prepares the surface (v.25a), and lays the seed (v.25b), so God, too, has different ways of producing ripe fruit.

COLOR KEY

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ISAIAH 28:27-29

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

27 Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin,
but dill is beaten out with a stick,
and cumin with a rod.

28 Does one crush grain for bread?
No, he does not thresh it forever;
when he drives his cart wheel over it
with his horses, he does not crush it.

29 This also comes from the Lord of hosts;
he is wonderful in counsel
and excellent in wisdom.

The farmer learns, by practice, how to respond to God's physical guidance in creation, showing how excellent is His wisdom and wise His council (v.29). If the farmer so benefits from following God's physical guidance, why will Israel not submit to His spiritual guidance?

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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STOP

#15

ISAIAH 29:

WOE AGAINST
JUDAH



ISAIAH 29:1-3

Heb. הוי (hoy) – “Woe”

29:1 Ah, Ariel, Ariel,

the city where David encamped!

Add year to year;

let the feasts run their round.

2 Yet I will distress Ariel,

and there shall be moaning and lamentation,
and she shall be to me like an Ariel.

3 And I will encamp against you all around,
and will besiege you with towers
and I will raise siegeworks against you.

Lit. “hearth of God,” the place where God’s altar always burns. A reference to Jerusalem, “the City of David.”

The inhabitants of Jerusalem regularly held the feasts appointed by God (Passover, Weeks, Tabernacles, etc.), but they were meaningless to God. It wasn’t repetition or consistency that God wanted; he desired their hearts.

Because of Jerusalem’s unfaithfulness, God will make her like a “hearth of God,” putting her to the flame. The Assyrians would besiege Jerusalem in 701 BC, and the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem in 586 BC.

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
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Judah’s actions	Repetition

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

David Roberts' 'The Siege and Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans Under the Command of Titus, A.D. 70'



ISAIAH 29:4-8

4 And you will be brought low; from the earth you shall speak, and from the dust your speech will be bowed down; your voice shall come from the ground like the voice of a ghost, and from the dust your speech shall whisper.

5 But the multitude of your foreign foes shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the ruthless like passing chaff.

And in an instant, suddenly,

6 you will be visited by the Lord of hosts with thunder and with earthquake and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire.

7 And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, all that fight against her and her stronghold and distress her, shall be like a dream, a vision of the night.

8 As when a hungry man dreams, and behold, he is eating, and awakes with his hunger not satisfied, or as when a thirsty man dreams, and behold, he is drinking, and awakes faint, with his thirst not quenched, so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against Mount Zion.

Yahweh will humble Jerusalem to such a degree that their cries to Him will come like a ghost from the afterlife, like a medium spirit calling from another plain of existence.

If Yahweh comes with judgment to humble Jerusalem, He will humble Jerusalem's enemies still more. What will end up as but a bad dream for the people of Israel and Judah will be the realization of a worst nightmare for those who opposed them. Jerusalem's destruction came suddenly, but their salvation will come even more quickly, and the judgment of the past will fade like a bad dream after one has awoken, and Israel's enemies will be left disappointed.

We see this **short-term** in the repulsion of the Assyrians in 701 BC & the defeat of the Babylonians by the Persians in 539 BC; **long-term** in the eschatological judgments in the Book of Revelation; and **spiritually** in the death & resurrection of Jesus. Isaiah likely has the short-term fulfillments in mind.

COLOR KEY

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ISAIAH 29:9-14

9 Astonish yourselves and be astonished;
blind yourselves and be blind!

Be drunk, but not with wine;
stagger, but not with strong drink!

10 For the Lord has poured out upon you
a spirit of deep sleep,
and has closed your eyes (the prophets),
and covered your heads (the seers).

11 And the vision of all this has become to you like the words of a book
that is sealed. When men give it to one who can read, saying, "Read this,"
he says, "I cannot, for it is sealed." 12 And when they give the book to one
who cannot read, saying, "Read this," he says, "I cannot read."

13 And the Lord said:
"Because this people draw near with their mouth
and honor me with their lips,
while their hearts are far from me,
and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men,

14 therefore, behold, I will again
do wonderful things with this people,
with wonder upon wonder;
and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish,
and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden."

This judgment & deliverance were yet in the future. (Think Jer 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you...") In the present, Isaiah instructs the people to be astonished at their own blindness. Because of their unwillingness to listen to the true prophets and repent and trust in Yahweh rather than in foreign nations, Yahweh is impairing their judgment to prevent them from understanding. He is handing them over to their own sinful desires.

Paul employed v. 10 in Romans 11:8 to describe the state of the Israel as a result of their rejection of Christ. Because they have rejected their Messiah, God has put them in a temporary state of blindness.

Typically one's ability to comprehend a book depends on literacy. In this case, however, the literate and illiterate alike were incapable of understanding Isaiah, because due to their unrepentance, God had sealed His message off from them.

Ritual obedience is not enough to please God; service must flow from the heart. Jesus quoted this verse (Mt 15:7-9; Mk 7:6-7) to describe the Jews of his day, teaching that this is a constant struggle for the people of God. Rather than following God, the people of Isaiah's day (and Jesus', and ours) often equated human tradition to the Word of God.

God will show that there is a clear distinction between His wisdom and worldly wisdom. He will perform wonderful acts that show His to be the superior form of wisdom. Paul applied this verse to the Greek world of his day (1 Cor 1:19).

COLOR KEY

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ISAIAH 29:15-21

15 Ah, you who hide deep from **the Lord** your counsel,
whose deeds are in the dark,
and who say, “Who sees us? Who knows us?”

16 **You turn things upside down!**

Shall the potter be regarded as the clay,
that the thing made should say of its maker,
“He did not make me”;
or the thing formed say of him who formed it,
“He has no understanding”?

17 Is it not yet a very little while
until Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a forest?

18 In that day the deaf shall hear
the words of a book,

and out of their gloom and darkness
the eyes of the blind shall see.

19 The meek shall obtain fresh joy in **the Lord**,
and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.

20 For the ruthless shall come to nothing
and the scoffer cease,
and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off,

21 who by a word make a man out to be an offender,
and lay a snare for him who reproves in the gate,
and with an empty plea turn aside him who is in the right.

It is likely that the people feigned repentance and said that they would trust in Yahweh when, in truth, they still intended to seek help from foreign powers, and Isaiah points out that the only people they are fooling is themselves, in thinking that they can conceal something from Yahweh. In thinking that they can trick Yahweh, they trick only themselves, turning things upside down. *When will they learn that it is Yahweh who created them, not they who created Him? When will they learn that it is He who is God, and they who are not?* (Paul references verse 16 in Romans 9:20).

Despite all the wrong they are doing, Isaiah tells the people that, in a short time, God will radically reverse fortunes and restore Israel. The forest of Lebanon will be reduced to fields, while the field of Israel will become like mighty forests (v.17). This is the picture of reciprocal change: Pride will no longer stand in God’s way: the deaf shall hear and the blind will see (v.18; cf. vv. 11-12)—and so the lowly will experience joy (v.19) while the wicked will be laid to waste (vv.20-21). Those with political and judicial authority will find themselves subject to the one true Ruler of all things.

COLOR KEY

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 29:22-24

22 Therefore thus says the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

“Jacob shall no more be ashamed,
no more shall his face grow pale.

23 For when he sees his children,
the work of my hands, in his midst,
they will sanctify my name;
they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob
and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.

24 And those who go astray in spirit will come to
understanding,
and those who murmur will accept instruction.”

In that future day, when Yahweh fulfills His covenant to Abraham, Israel will be delivered from all their hardships and will, at long last, humble themselves and worship their Maker. Once Messiah establishes his kingdom, at long last the people of Israel will fulfill the purpose God gave them from the beginning.

STOP

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
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Judah's actions	Repetition

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#16

ISAIAH 30:

FOREIGN
ALLIANCES



ISAIAH 30:1-6

Heb. הוי (hoy) –
“Woe”

30:1 “Ah, stubborn children,” declares the Lord, “who carry out a plan, but not mine, and who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin;
2 who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my direction, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!

3 Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation.

4 For though his officials are at Zoan and his envoys reach Hanes,

5 everyone comes to shame through a people that cannot profit them, that brings neither help nor profit, but shame and disgrace.”

6 An oracle on the beasts of the Negeb.

Through a land of trouble and anguish, from where come the lioness and the lion, the adder and the flying fiery serpent, they carry their riches on the backs of donkeys, and their treasures on the humps of camels, to a people that cannot profit them.

Despite Isaiah’s urgings to trust in Yahweh rather than in foreign nations, the people of Judah went against God’s wishes and formed an alliance with Egypt for protection from Assyria. They did what seemed best to them without consulting God or his prophet for advice.

Because of their disobedience, Judah will share in Egypt’s shame when they are defeated by the Assyrians. Royal emissaries from Judah have reached the Egyptian cities of Zoan and Hanes, but their efforts are futile, for they seek help from a people who cannot help them.

Isaiah paints a portrait of the envoys from Judah. They travel as a rich caravan through a desert wasteland to purchase assistance from a people who cannot even help themselves.

DAVID’S STANDARD

⁶ Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.

⁷ Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

Psalm 20:6-7

COLOR KEY

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God’s actions Messianic
Judah’s actions Repetition

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 30:7-12

7 Egypt's help is worthless and empty;
therefore I have called her
"Rahab who sits still."

8 And now, go, write it before them on a tablet
and inscribe it in a book,
that it may be for the time to come
as a witness forever.

9 For they are a rebellious people,
lying children,
children unwilling to hear
the instruction of the Lord;
10 who say to the seers, "Do not see,"
and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right;
speak to us smooth things,
prophesy illusions,

11 leave the way, turn aside from the path,
let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."

12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel,
"Because you despise this word
and trust in oppression and perverseness
and rely on them,

Egypt has nothing to offer Judah. According to ANE mythologies, Rahab was a cosmic sea creature of chaos (cf. Leviathan in 27:1). Elsewhere Yahweh is pictured as defeating Rahab in battle (Job 26:12; Isa 51:9). The term is likewise used of Egypt in Ps. 87:4 and 89:10. The Hebrew term רַהַב (*rahab*) itself means "storm," hence why God calls Egypt *Rahab-Hem-Shebeth*—"the Storm who has Ceased."

Yahweh tells Isaiah to write this prophecy down, that when it comes to pass the Judeans will forever know how they rejected their God.

The people of Judah are like a lying child unwilling to admit they are wrong and unwilling to listen to the instruction of their parent. They were tired of being told to do something other than what they wanted to do. Rather, they wanted Isaiah to accommodate their actions and affirm them and tell them that everything was going to go great. They were tired of all his religious talk about the "Holy One" of Israel. They would have preferred a god made in their image. They cared more about affirmation than truth.

Though they might grow weary of hearing about the Holy One of Israel, the Holy One of Israel was not done speaking. Because they hate God's word and love their own counsel, they will face great calamity.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
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Judah's actions	Repetition

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34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 30:13-17

13 therefore this iniquity shall be to you
like a breach in a high wall, bulging out and about to collapse,
whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant;
14 and its breaking is like that of a potter's vessel
that is smashed so ruthlessly
that among its fragments not a shard is found
with which to take fire from the hearth,
or to dip up water out of the cistern.”

15 For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel,
“In returning and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”
But you were unwilling, 16 and you said,
“No! We will flee upon horses”;
therefore you shall flee away;
and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”;
therefore your pursuers shall be swift.

17 A thousand shall flee at the threat of one;
at the threat of five you shall flee,
till you are left
like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,
like a signal on a hill.

Their disaster will be like that of a bulging defense wall that suddenly collapses, or like a potter's vessel whose pieces are entirely useless. If they refuse to respond to His word, they will simply have to respond to His wrath.

If only the people of Judah would repent and trust in Yahweh and His covenant, He would come quickly to their aid. Instead, they have chosen to rely on military action. As a result, He will enable their enemies to overtake them.

“One man of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the LORD your God who fights for you, just as he promised you.” (Josh 23:10)
(My how the tables have turned, eh?)

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

28:1-33:24	Woes Against the Nations
28:1-29	Against Ephraim
29:1-24	Against Ariel
30:1-33	Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20	Against Going to Egypt
33:1-24	Against Assyria
34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 30:18-26

18 Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Yahweh is not harsh on Judah because He wants to be. Rather, He is a God whose default leans towards mercy. He disciplines them to drive them to repentance, that He may be gracious to them and come to their aid. Since they do not wait for Him, He must wait for them.

19 For a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you. 20 And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. 21 And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. 22 Then you will defile your carved idols overlaid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, "Be gone!"

When the people repent, God will come to their aid. He will deliver Jerusalem and open their blinded eyes, and at long last they will destroy their idols and devote themselves to the one true God.

23 And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your livestock will graze in large pastures, 24 and the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. 25 And on every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. 26 Moreover, the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the Lord binds up the brokenness of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow.

The word for "unclean things" here refers to menstrual cloths. The idols, once treasured by the people, will be treated as a disgusting piece of trash.

In that day, Yahweh will bless His people with agricultural productivity & plenty. In His future kingdom, nature will finally be restored.

COLOR KEY

God's name Commands
God's actions Messianic
Judah's actions Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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30:1-33	Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20	Against Going to Egypt
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34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 30:27-33

Valley of Hinnom
(a.k.a. Gehenna, Topheth)



27 Behold, the name of the Lord comes from afar, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke; his lips are full of fury, and his tongue is like a devouring fire; 28 his breath is like an overflowing stream that reaches up to the neck; to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction, and to place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads astray.

29 You shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept, and gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel. 30 And the Lord will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and storm and hailstones. 31 The Assyrians will be terror-stricken at the voice of the Lord, when he strikes with his rod. 32 And every stroke of the appointed staff that the Lord lays on them will be to the sound of tambourines and lyres. Battling with brandished arm, he will fight with them. 33 For a burning place has long been prepared; indeed, for the king it is made ready, its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it.

Not only will God restore His people, but He will destroy their enemies. Isaiah foresees Yahweh arising like a great storm and mighty flood to wipe out the Assyrians, who in this instance can likewise be seen as representative of all those opposed to God's kingdom.

As God performs His judgment, Isaiah sees the people of Judah holding a feast to God, dancing and singing and praising Him in His victory. Meanwhile the Assyrians (and, further, all of Yahweh's enemies) will face the wrath and destruction from God.

Heb. *Topheth*. This was the place in Hinnom Valley outside Jerusalem where the Molek cult practiced child sacrifice. Isaiah sees God repurposing it as a place to destroy Israel's enemies.

Eventually this location, known as Gehenna, became a place of refuse with constantly burning fires, which then became symbolic of hell, the destination of the wicked.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

28:1-33:24	Woes Against the Nations
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34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

STOP

#17

ISAIAH 31-32:

**SO YOU WANNA GO
BACK TO EGYPT?**



ISAIAH 31:1-4

Heb. 'וֵי (hoy) –“Woe”

31:1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord!

2 And yet he is wise and brings disaster; he does not call back his words, but will arise against the house of the evildoers and against the helpers of those who work iniquity.

3 The Egyptians are man, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out his hand, the helper will stumble, and he who is helped will fall, and they will all perish together.

4 For thus the Lord said to me, “As a lion or a young lion growls over his prey, and when a band of shepherds is called out against him he is not terrified by their shouting or daunted at their noise, so the Lord of hosts will come down to fight on Mount Zion and on its hill.

From a purely militaristic standpoint, Egypt was a fantastic place to look for help. They had a good military with many horses and chariots, and the land was flat and ideal for chariot-work. The issue is not that Judah was acting foolish from a worldly perspective, but that they were trusting in Pharaoh’s might over that of the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah sarcastically mocks the counselors who encourage Judah to seek help from Egypt, reminding them that Yahweh also happens to be fairly wise, and unlike them, he doesn’t call back His word. The Egyptians may be strong, but they are not Yahweh. They might be powerful, but should God decide to stretch out His hand, there is nothing they can do to stop Him.

Unlike Egypt, Yahweh, being sovereign in His power, has nothing to fear. Should Judah trust in Him, He will descend down and, like a young lion before a gathering of shepherds, will fearlessly pounce into the fight and declare the victory. Trusting in Egypt seems good but guarantees defeat; trusting in Yahweh guarantees victory.

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

28:1-33:24	Woes Against the Nations
28:1-29	Against Ephraim
29:1-24	Against Ariel
30:1-33	Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20	Against Going to Egypt
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34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 31:5-32:2

5 Like birds hovering, so the Lord of hosts will protect Jerusalem; he will protect and deliver it; he will spare and rescue it.”

6 Turn to him from whom people have deeply revolted, O children of Israel. 7 For in that day everyone shall cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which your hands have sinfully made for you.

8 “And the Assyrian shall fall by a sword, not of man; and a sword, not of man, shall devour him; and he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be put to forced labor.

9 His rock shall pass away in terror, and his officers desert the standard in panic,” declares the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

32:1 Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule in justice.

2 Each will be like a hiding place from the wind, a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land.

Not only will Yahweh jump into the fight like a lion protecting its kill, but He will offer His complete protection as a bird protecting its young.

Isaiah calls the people to cease their rebellion and place their trust in God, because whether they like it or not, **the day will come** when they will realize how futile their idols were in helping them. The only one who can save them is Yahweh.

Assyria will fall to supernatural means (see 37:36-37), and will ultimately be destroyed by a coalition of nations headed by the Chaldeans (Babylonians) and the Medes (Persians).

In a broader sense, Assyria represents all Israel’s enemies. Future foreign oppressors will likewise be destroyed by God’s judgment.

In place of Assyria and all the foreign enemies of Israel, **in that day** Yahweh will establish a kingdom led by a righteous king and His holy people, leaders who will actually protect the people and see to their well-being rather than abusing their power and taking advantage of them.

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 32:3-9

- 3 Then the eyes of those who see will not be closed, and the ears of those who hear will give attention.
- 4 The heart of the hasty will understand and know, and the tongue of the stammerers will hasten to speak distinctly.
- 5 The fool will no more be called noble, nor the scoundrel said to be honorable.
- 6 For the fool speaks folly, and his heart is busy with iniquity, to practice ungodliness, to utter error concerning the Lord, to leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied, and to deprive the thirsty of drink.
- 7 As for the scoundrel—his devices are evil; he plans wicked schemes to ruin the poor with lying words, even when the plea of the needy is right.
- 8 But he who is noble plans noble things, and on noble things he stands.
- 9 Rise up, you women who are at ease, hear my voice; you complacent daughters, give ear to my speech.

God described the people of Isaiah's day in this manner: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive." Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed" (6:9-10). They were spiritually blind and deaf. When the righteous king arrives on the scene, this will be entirely reversed. The people of God will finally receive His word and begin to value the things which God values.

This describes the character of *the nobility* in Isaiah's day (v.5).

This describes the character of *the honorable* in Isaiah's day (v.5).

True nobility and honor is found in caring for the least of people. Where the government of Isaiah's day takes advantage of the lesser, such will not be the case in God's future kingdom.

Although God has promised to be with them (Immanuel) and give them these blessings, this is no excuse for complacency. Isaiah calls the people to repentance, starting with the women.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 32:10-14

10 In little more than a year
you will shudder, **you complacent** women;
for the grape harvest fails,
the fruit harvest will not come.

11 Tremble, **you women who are at ease**,
shudder, **you complacent ones**;
strip, and make yourselves bare,
and tie sackcloth around your waist.

12 Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields,
for the fruitful vine,

13 for the soil of my people
growing up in thorns and briers,
yes, for all the joyous houses
in the exultant city.

14 For the palace is forsaken,
the populous city deserted;
the hill and the watchtower
will become dens forever,
a joy of wild donkeys,
a pasture of flocks;

Though Yahweh planned to bless Israel in the long term, in the short term they faced the threat of Assyrian invasion. In a little over a year (probably speaking of the Assyrian invasion of 701 BC; cf. ch. 36), the Assyrians would march in and disrupt their entire way of life, spoiling even their agricultural production.

Isaiah instructs the women to begin mourning because of the great destruction Yahweh will allow the Assyrians to cause throughout Judah. Their fields, their crops (“vine”), their soil, and even their houses will be destroyed by the invading army. The land would become desolate.

Not only will Judah be destroyed and deserted by the incoming forces, but so too would Jerusalem, signifying that God has abandoned His temple and thus removed his hand of protection from the people. Sure enough, the Assyrians would lay siege to Jerusalem in 701 BC, while the Babylonians would finally destroy it in 586 BC, as would the Romans, once again, in AD 70.

COLOR KEY

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Judah's actions	Repetition

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 32:15-20

- 15 until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.
- 16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.
- 17 And the effect of righteousness will be peace,
and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.
- 18 My people will abide in a peaceful habitation,
in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.
- 19 And it will hail when the forest falls down,
and the city will be utterly laid low.
- 20 Happy are you who sow beside all waters,
who let the feet of the ox and the donkey range free.

Jerusalem's destruction will prepare them for the outpouring of God's Spirit by allowing them to return to Him and set their hope on the arrival of His future eternal kingdom. (Sure enough, the destruction of Jerusalem and resultant exile will result in the people returning to Yahweh and setting their hope on the arrival of Messiah.) When the Holy Spirit arrives, what was barren will become desolate. In that future kingdom, all will finally dwell in peace & security.

Unfortunately, this kingdom would be preceded by Jerusalem's destruction. (Interestingly, Jerusalem was destroyed both before and after Christ's First Advent, and we await its future restoration.) Jerusalem would be humbled before it could be exalted.

Happy are the people who dwell in that *future* kingdom (abounding in agricultural prosperity)!

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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STOP

#18

ISAIAH 33:

A KING WILL REIGN IN
RIGHTEOUSNESS



ISAIAH 33:1-6

Heb. 'in (*hoy*) –“Woe”

33:1 **Ah**, you destroyer,
 who yourself have not been destroyed,
 you traitor,
 whom none has betrayed!
When you have ceased to **destroy**,
 you will be **destroyed**;
 and **when you have** finished **betraying**,
 they will **betray** you.

Isaiah speaks first and foremost to Israel's primary enemy, Assyria, but also long-term to anyone who opposes Israel. Assyria dominated the ANE for 250 years, so "destroyer" is an appropriate title in describing them, but Isaiah foresees a day when Assyria (and all Israel's enemies) will receive their comeuppance: As they've destroyed, so they'll be destroyed; as they've betrayed, so they'll be betrayed.

2 **O Lord**, be gracious to us; **we wait for you**.
 Be our arm every morning,
 our salvation in the time of trouble.

3 **At the tumultuous noise** peoples flee;
 when **you lift yourself up**, nations are scattered,

4 and your spoil is gathered as the caterpillar gathers;
 as locusts leap, it is leapt upon.

5 **The Lord** is exalted, for **he dwells on high**;
he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness,

6 and he will be the stability of your times,
abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge;
the fear of the Lord is Zion's treasure.

Isaiah, speaking on behalf of his people, prayed for God's grace as they awaited the destruction He would bring upon their enemies. He asks for God to sustain them and come to their aid, knowing that when God finally decides to take action, He will send their enemies running, leaving Israel to gather the spoil they leave behind.

Isaiah anticipates the future kingdom, where Yahweh will make stable that which, in Isaiah's day, was extremely shaky.

This is the phrase **yirat Yahweh**, a significant term to OT theology which only occurs in Isaiah 3 times: 11:2,3, and 33:6. In ch. 11, it was a quality belonging to the Messiah; here, it is shared by His people.

- 33:1-9 **Judgment & Grace**
- 33:1 Destruction upon Assyria
- 33:2-6 Grace upon Zion
- 33:7-9 the LORD's Judgment
- 33:10-24 **the Fire of the LORD**
- 33:10-16 Sinners & Saints
- 33:17-24 Zion Delivered

COLOR KEY

- God's name
- God's actions
- Judah's actions
- Commands
- Messianic
- Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

- 28:1-33:24 **Woes Against the Nations**
- 28:1-29 Against Ephraim
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- 30:1-33 Against Egyptian Alliances
- 31:1-32:20 Against Going to Egypt
- 33:1-24 Against Assyria
- 34:1-35:10 **The Final Judgment**
- 34:1-17 Judgment of the Nations
- 35:1-10 the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 33:7-12

7 Behold, their heroes cry in the streets;
the envoys of peace weep bitterly.

8 The highways lie waste;
the traveler ceases.

Covenants are broken;
cities are despised;
there is no regard for man.

9 The land mourns and languishes;
Lebanon is confounded and withers away;
Sharon is like a desert,
and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves.

10 “Now I will arise,” says the Lord,
“now I will lift myself up;
now I will be exalted.

11 You conceive chaff; you give birth to stubble;
your breath is a fire that will consume you.

12 And the peoples will be as if burned to lime,
like thorns cut down, that are burned in the fire.”

Isaiah details Yahweh’s present judgment on the people of Judah via the Assyrian invasion (701 BC): All human efforts (“heroes... envoys... covenants...”) for salvation prove themselves futile. What was once lush and green is reduced to a desert wasteland. (Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan, and Carmel are each fertile areas surrounded by deserts.)

As Assyria reaches the height of its power and the people of Judah realize how futile their worldly efforts were, Yahweh will finally take action in order to save them. All of the Assyrian’s plans will amount to nothing—they will conceive chaff and stubble—and they will be destroyed thoroughly (“as if burned to lime”) and quickly (“like thorns...burned in the fire”).

Again, all of this must be interpreted both *short-term* (in reference to Assyria) and *long-term* (in reference to Israel’s enemies at large, specifically those prior to the establishment of Yahweh’s eternal kingdom).

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

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ISAIAH 33:13-19

13 Hear, you who are far off, what I have done;
and you who are near, acknowledge my might.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;
trembling has seized the godless:

“Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire?
Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?”

15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly,
who despises the gain of oppressions,
who shakes his hands, lest they hold a bribe,
who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed
and shuts his eyes from looking on evil,
16 he will dwell on the heights;
his place of defense will be the fortresses of rocks;
his bread will be given him; his water will be sure.

17 Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty;
they will see a land that stretches afar.

18 Your heart will muse on the terror:
“Where is he who counted, where is he who weighed the tribute?
Where is he who counted the towers?”

19 You will see no more the insolent people,
the people of an obscure speech that you cannot comprehend,
stammering in a tongue that you cannot understand.

When Yahweh acts on behalf of His people, nations near and far will be forced to acknowledge His might.

Not only will the nations tremble at Yahweh’s might, but so to will those who were merely giving Him lip service. At long last they will be forced to recognize that only the genuinely righteous will enjoy the presence of God and dwell with Him in peace and security in His eternal kingdom.

PSALM 15

1 O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?
Who shall dwell on your holy hill?
2 He who walks blamelessly and does what is right
and speaks truth in his heart;
3 who does not slander with his tongue
and does no evil to his neighbor,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;
4 in whose eyes a vile person is despised,
but who honors those who fear the Lord;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
5 who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things shall never be moved.

The righteous (vv.15-16) will behold the Messiah in His radiant glory & will dwell with Him in His kingdom.

They will look back on their greatest hardship and will be able to laugh about it, seeing that those who oppressed them are no longer anywhere to be found.

COLOR KEY

God’s name Commands
God’s actions Messianic
Judah’s actions Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 33:20-24

20 Behold Zion, the city of our appointed feasts!

Your eyes will see Jerusalem,
an untroubled habitation, an immovable tent,
whose stakes will never be plucked up,
nor will any of its cords be broken.

21 But there the Lord in majesty will be for us

a place of broad rivers and streams,
where no galley with oars can go,
nor majestic ship can pass.

22 For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver;
the Lord is our king; he will save us.

23 Your cords hang loose;
they cannot hold the mast firm in its place
or keep the sail spread out.

Then prey and spoil in abundance will be divided;
even the lame will take the prey.

24 And no inhabitant will say, "I am sick";
the people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.

Isaiah foresees the day when God's people will return to a restored Jerusalem, where God's presence will permanently dwell amidst His people. Jerusalem will be unshakeable, with God producing abundance within ("a place of broad rivers and streams") and shielding it from any attack ("where no galley...nor majestic ship can pass").

It is YHWH, not the surrounding nations, who is the Judge.

It is YHWH, not the surrounding nations, who is their Lawgiver.

It is YHWH, not the surrounding nations, who is their King.

It is YHWH, not the surround nations, who will save them.

On her own, Jerusalem cannot defend herself—she is like a ship trying to sail with loose cords, unable to direct the sail. Still, Yahweh will give them the victory, and the weakened Israel will triumph over their enemies, with even the least among them enjoying the spoil. In that day, the people will be restored both physically and spiritually: They will dwell with Yahweh in full health, forgiven of their sins which kept them from Him to begin with.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

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STOP

#19

ISAIAH 34-35:

THE HIGHWAY
OF HOLINESS



ISAIAH 34:1-6A

34:1 Draw near, O nations, to hear,
and give attention, O peoples!

Let the earth hear, and all that fills it;
the world, and all that comes from it.

2 For the Lord is enraged against all the nations,
and furious against all their host;
he has devoted them to destruction,
has given them over for slaughter.

3 Their slain shall be cast out,
and the stench of their corpses shall rise;
the mountains shall flow with their blood.

4 All the host of heaven shall rot away,
and the skies roll up like a scroll.

All their host shall fall,
as leaves fall from the vine,
like leaves falling from the fig tree.

5 For my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens;
behold, it descends for judgment upon Edom,
upon the people I have devoted to destruction.

6 The Lord has a sword; it is sated with blood;
it is gorged with fat,
with the blood of lambs and goats,
with the fat of the kidneys of rams.

In light of Yahweh's plans on behalf of His people (see previous chs.), Isaiah invites all nations to listen and hear what He has planned for the whole world.

Isaiah foresees a day of future judgment upon the entire earth. The destruction is gruesome and severe.

It is not merely the earth that will be affected by this judgment, but all creation (the heavens included) will bend their knee to Yahweh's mighty hand. (**Rev 6:14**: "The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up..."). As God initiated creation by speaking forth light, so He reverses His initial creative act by bringing about darkness. The heavens and all their host will fall down in submission to Yahweh.

His sword having drunk its fill through His victory over the heavenly forces, Yahweh will turn His attention to Israel's enemies and bring them into judgment as well. (In this instance Edom, a traditional enemy of Israel, is representative of all Israel's enemies.)

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

28:1-33:24	Woes Against the Nations
28:1-29	Against Ephraim
29:1-24	Against Ariel
30:1-33	Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20	Against Going to Egypt
33:1-24	Against Assyria
34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 34:6B-12

Since the surrounding nations did not respond properly to the God of Israel or submit to His law, they will have to pay the sacrificial penalty for their sins with their own lives. They will be the sacrifice.

For **the Lord** has a sacrifice in **Bozrah**,
a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

7 Wild oxen shall fall with them,
and young steers with the mighty bulls.
Their land shall drink its fill of blood,
and their soil shall be gorged with fat.

8 For **the Lord** has a day of vengeance,
a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

9 And the streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch,
and her soil into sulfur;
her land shall become burning pitch.

10 Night and day it shall not be quenched;
its smoke shall go up forever.

From generation to generation it shall lie waste;
none shall pass through it forever and ever.

11 But the hawk and the porcupine shall possess it,
the owl and the raven shall dwell in it.

He shall stretch the line of confusion over it,
and the plumb line of emptiness.

12 Its nobles—there is no one there to call it a kingdom,
and all its princes shall be nothing.

Bozrah was the capital of Edom.

Edom, representative of Israel's enemies, will go up in smoke as surely as did Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. Gen 19:24, 28), and Yahweh will leave them entirely desolate.

Lines & plumb lines are used for measurement. The entire region would be measured by the confusion experience by the people and the emptiness experienced by the land.



Concerning the final Babylon:

“And **the smoke of their torment goes up forever** and ever, and they have no rest, **day or night**, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.” (Rev 14:11)

COLOR KEY

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The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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33:1-24	Against Assyria
34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 34:13-17

13 Thorns shall grow over its strongholds,
nettles and thistles in its fortresses.

It shall be the haunt of jackals,
an abode for ostriches.

14 And wild animals shall meet with hyenas;
the wild goat shall cry to his fellow;
indeed, there the night bird settles
and finds for herself a resting place.

15 There the owl nests and lays
and hatches and gathers her young in her shadow;
indeed, there the hawks are gathered,
each one with her mate.

16 **Seek and read from the book of the Lord:**
Not one of these shall be missing;
none shall be without her mate.

For the mouth of the Lord has commanded,
and his Spirit has gathered them.

17 **He has cast the lot for them;**
his hand has portioned it out to them with the line;
they shall possess it forever;
from generation to generation they shall dwell in it.

All the animals here represent desolation. Yahweh's judgment will be so severe that the land will only be populated by wild animals.

As surely as He had promised the land of Canaan to the descendants of Abraham, so too by His prophet Yahweh has promised the land of Edom to the wild animals. (Note that the words of the prophet are taken as equivalent to the words of the mouth of Yahweh.)

Concerning the final Babylon:

"And he called out with a mighty voice, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for *every unclean bird*, a haunt for *every unclean and detestable beast*.'" (Rev 18:2)

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

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29:1-24	Against Ariel
30:1-33	Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20	Against Going to Egypt
33:1-24	Against Assyria
34:1-35:10	The Final Judgment
34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 35:1-6

35:1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;
2 it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

3 Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
4 Say to those who have an anxious heart,
“Be strong; fear not!
Behold, your God
will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.
He will come and save you.”

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
6 then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

Isaiah foresees a day of immense prosperity. As Yahweh judges Israel’s enemies and makes them desolate (ch. 34), so He begins to usher in the Messianic kingdom, a drastic transformation characterized by immense luxury. Lebanon, Carmel, and Sharon were known for their fertility, yet even they would rejoice at this newfound growth. Whereas “we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now” (Rom 8:22), in that day creation will celebrate as it is delivered from the curse of sin.



Isaiah commands the people to take heart, for God has a plan for them. While exile awaits them due to their rebellion, eventually they will return to the land and God will have His vengeance upon their enemies. Similarly, the author of Hebrews alludes to this passage in order to encourage persecuted Christians (Heb 12:12).

In that day, the curse of sin will be entirely undone—what was broken will be mended. Not only will the land be restored, but so too will the people, a radical reversal of the spiritual condition of Isaiah’s day (cf. 29:18; 32:3).

Over time, this passage became associated with signs of the Messiah’s arrival, hence why Jesus told the disciples of John the Baptist, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: **the blind receive their sight, the lame walk**, lepers are cleansed, and **the deaf hear**, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them” (Lk 7:22). The Dead Sea Scroll 4Q521 bears a striking resemblance to this, showing the expectations of the Messianic age.

COLOR KEY

God’s name Commands
God’s actions Messianic
Judah’s actions Repetition

The Book of Woes (28:1-35:10)

28:1-33:24 **Woes Against the Nations**
28:1-29 Against Ephraim
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30:1-33 Against Egyptian Alliances
31:1-32:20 Against Going to Egypt
33:1-24 Against Assyria
34:1-35:10 **The Final Judgment**
34:1-17 Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10 the Highway of Holiness

ISAIAH 35:6B-10

7 the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

8 And a highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;
the unclean shall not pass over it.
It shall belong to those who walk on the way;
even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.

9 No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

What was being un-created by God's judgment is now being re-created by His grace, in fulfillment of His promises. There will no longer be scarcity, but creation itself will be loosed from the bondage of sin.

In the Messianic kingdom, God's restored people will journey to worship him both easily ("highway") and safely ("no lion...ravenous beast")—nothing will obstruct them from worship Yahweh, and even the most foolish amongst them will not go astray.

This "Way of Holiness" refers to both the physical and spiritual highways that will lead God's people back to Jerusalem, to the throne of the Messiah. (Keep this imagery in mind for ch. 40.)

From the Heb. גָּאֹל (*gaal*), "to redeem." This is the only place it occurs in Isa 1-39, but it occurs 23 times in Isa 40-66.

God will free His people and, like in the 1st Exodus, will bring them back to the Promised Land. Sorrow and sighing shall be forever exchanged for gladness and joy, and His people will dwell with Him forever.



COLOR KEY

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34:1-17	Judgment of the Nations
35:1-10	the Highway of Holiness

#20

ISAIAH 36:1-37:20:

**HEZEKIAH'S
FAITH**



ISAIAH 1-39

- I. JUDGMENT: The Preservation of Zion (1-39)
 - I. Introduction: *God's Lawsuit* (1)
 - II. Prophecies Concerning Judah and Jerusalem (2-12)
 - III. Prophecies Concerning the Nations (13-23)
 - IV. Prophecies Concerning the Whole World (24-27)
 - V. Prophecies Concerning the Rise & Fall of Jerusalem (28-39)
 - I. The Book of Woes (28-35)
 - II. Historical Interlude: *Hezekiah's Trust in Yahweh* (36-39)



I. Introduction (Isaiah 1-6)

Begins with Isaiah confronting Ahaz (ch.7) in 735 BC, telling him to trust in God rather than in Assyria. Immanuel prophecy given.

II. Body (7-35)

- I. Against Judah (7-12)
- II. Against the Nations (13-23)
- III. Against the World (24-27)
- IV. Book of Woes (28-35)

Yahweh proclaims His sovereignty over not only Judah, but the entire world. He declares His judgment against the wicked, yet promises an eternal, righteous kingdom to those who trust in Him. In light of the growing Assyrian opposition, the people of Judah are warned to trust in Yahweh rather than in Egypt.

III. Conclusion (36-39)

Begins with Assyria confronting Hezekiah (ch.36) in 701 BC, telling him that God cannot save them from Assyria.

ISAIAH 36:1-10

That is, 701 BC. This means that Hezekiah began to reign in 715 BC, though he must have served as co-regent with his father Ahaz from 729-716 BC, since 2 Kg 18 has him begin his reign in 729 BC. He reigned until 686 BC.

36:1 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. **2** And the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field. **3** And there came out to him Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

4 And the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours? **5** Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? In whom do you now trust, that you have rebelled against me? **6** Behold, you are trusting in Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. **7** But if you say to me, 'We trust in the Lord our God,' is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'? **8** Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. **9** How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? **10** Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The Lord said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'"

Sennacherib (705-681 BC) devastated all Judah, leaving only Jerusalem free.

Lit. "chief cupbearer," a high-ranking official who is here serving as official spokesman. He came from Lachish, 25 mi SW of Jerusalem.

This is the same place Isaiah confronted Ahaz over 30 years earlier (in ch.7) to discourage him from trusting in foreign powers. Will Hezekiah learn from his father's mistake?

This is a nice bookend to this section (ch. 1-39) of Isaiah. Isaiah 7 began with Isaiah confronting Ahaz about Assyria; this section begins with Assyria confronting Hezekiah.

Rabshakeh states that (1) Egypt cannot help Jerusalem and (2) Yahweh had called the Assyrians to destroy Judah. Much of what he says reflects Isaiah's own words to the people as well (19:14-16; 30:7; 31:3).

He mistakenly thought Hezekiah had torn down altars to Yahweh, when really those were altars to pagan gods—worship of Yahweh was reserved for the temple.

It is likely that he was speaking from pride when he suggested Yahweh had sent them to destroy Judah, but those who had heard Isaiah's words knew that, from one perspective, this was technically true.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib's Threat
37:1-38	Hezekiah's Trust
37:1-7	Hezekiah's First Prayer
37:8-20	Hezekiah's Second Prayer
37:21-38	Yahweh's Answer
38:1-22	Hezekiah's Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 36:11-20

11 Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” **12** But the Rabshakeh said, “Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?”

13 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “Hear the words of **the great king, the king of Assyria!** **14 Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you,** for he will not be able to deliver you. **15 Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord** by saying, “**The Lord will surely deliver us.** This city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” **16 Do not listen to Hezekiah.** For **thus says the king** of Assyria: Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then **each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern,** **17 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.** **18 Beware lest Hezekiah mislead you by saying, “The Lord will deliver us.”** Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? **19 Where** are the gods of **Hamath and Arpad?** Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? **20** Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that **the Lord** should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?”

Hezekiah’s representatives didn’t want the people to overhear Rabshakeh’s words and think that God truly was on Assyria’s side, hence why they request him to speak in Aramaic, the language of diplomacy. However, Rabshakeh seemed to enjoy destroying their morale, so he continued speaking in Hebrew.



Rabshakeh promised that the great king of Assyria would abundantly provide for them, but that the lowly king Hezekiah could not provide for them, nor could their God. He suggests that Yahweh is no more powerful than any of the other gods, so they shouldn’t trust Hezekiah when he suggests they trust in Him.

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

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37:21-38	Yahweh’s Answer
38:1-22	Hezekiah’s Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah’s Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah’s Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah’s Error

ISAIAH 36:21-37:7

21 But they were silent and answered him not a word, for the king's command was, "Do not answer him." 22 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

37:1 As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. 2 And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. 3 They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. 4 It may be that the Lord your God will hear the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the Lord your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.'"

5 When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, 6 Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the young men of the king of Assyria have reviled me. 7 Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.'"

Having anticipated Assyria's ultimatum, Hezekiah had apparently instructed his advisors not to respond. They return to him and offer their report in a state of grief and mourning.

Hezekiah responds properly by mournfully going to the "house of prayer" (56:7)—that is, the temple—to pray and seek forgiveness for sin.

As a woman incapable of delivering her child, Hezekiah admits that he is incapable of delivering Jerusalem and Judah from their distress. If they are to survive, they are utterly dependent upon Yahweh.

Yahweh gives Hezekiah the same advice He gave his father: *Do not be afraid* (7:4). He promises that Sennacherib will return home and be killed back in Assyria.

The Assyrians would be to Hezekiah just as Syria and Israel had been to Ahaz: All talk, no action. Thus Judah would know that God was with them: *Immanuel*

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
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Historical Interlude (36-39)

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38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 37:8-20

8 The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. 9 Now the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, “He has set out to fight against you.” And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10 “Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11 Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?’”

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. 15 And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: 16 “O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 17 Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 18 Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, 19 and have cast their gods into the fire. For they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. 20 So now, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the Lord.”

Libnah and Lachish were cities SW of Jerusalem.

With Egyptians advancing from the South — the thing Assyria feared most deeply and which the people of Judah had come to rely upon — messengers from Assyria were once again sent to Judah to try to speed up the call to surrender.

Hezekiah does not depend on Egypt; rather, he depends upon God. Upon receiving Assyria's renewed call to surrender, he once more goes into the temple and prays that Yahweh would come to their aid, revealing His glory to all the nations by doing what their gods could not.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

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38:1-22	Hezekiah's Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error



#21

ISAIAH 37:21-38:

**IMMANUEL,
GOD WITH US**



ISAIAH 37:21-25

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “**Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel:** Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, **22** this is the word that **the Lord has spoken concerning him:**

“She despises you, she scorns you—
the virgin daughter of Zion;
she wags her head behind you—
the daughter of Jerusalem.

23 “Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and lifted your eyes to the heights?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

24 By your servants you have mocked the Lord,
and you have said, ‘With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,
to the far recesses of Lebanon,
to cut down its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses,
to come to its remotest height,
its most fruitful forest.

25 I dug wells
and drank waters,
to dry up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.’

Jerusalem is portrayed as a helpless virgin who gets the last laugh after the unwelcome advances of her would-be rapist. Assyria would have their way with Jerusalem, but Yahweh won’t allow it.

Sennacherib’s boasts had not gone unnoticed. Yahweh heard them and he was not happy. Both he and his servants had boasted about the unstoppable nature of their forces, and here Yahweh warns them that they have no idea who they are dealing with. Assyria might boast about conquering all the lands along the way, but their boasting would come to an end right now. In Yahweh, Assyria had finally met their match.

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
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Judah’s actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

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38:1-22	Hezekiah’s Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah’s Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah’s Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah’s Error

ISAIAH 37:26-29

26 **“Have you not heard**
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should make fortified cities
crash into heaps of ruins,
27 while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded,
and have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted before it is grown.

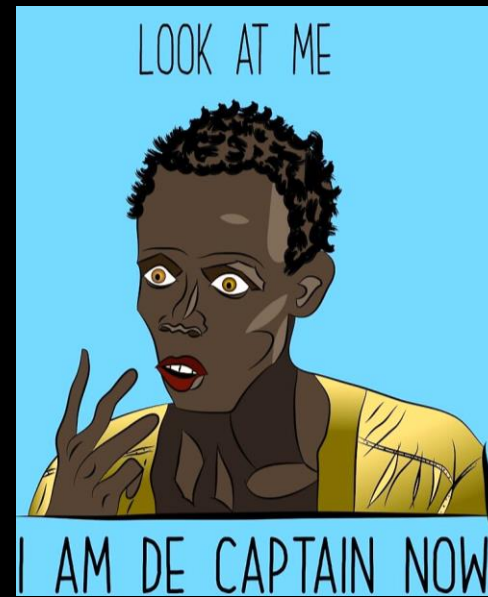
28 **“I know your sitting down**
and your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.
29 Because you have raged against me
and your complacency has come to my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth,
and I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.’

Yahweh uses this phrase to mock Sennacherib, as if he had somehow missed the groundbreaking news that Yahweh is the Supreme One enthroned over all things. He will implement this same language in ch. 40, but He will be speaking to Israel, reminding them of His eternal dominion and power.

Sennacherib had boasted in his own power, yet God arrives on the scene and essentially says, “Oh, did you think you were the one defeating all those other nations on your own? How cute! You weren’t conquering them on your own— I’ve been the One *allowing* you to cause all this destruction. I thought you knew.” The mockery is meant to embarrass the Assyrian king: He had been nothing but a puppet accomplishing Yahweh’s discipline.

Sennacherib had defiantly mocked Yahweh and boasted in his own strength, but now Yahweh arrives on the scene and makes it clear that He has heard every last insult. Yahweh knew everything about His enemy...which seals their fate.

Just as Assyria had enslaved the people they had conquered, so to Yahweh vows to conquer Assyria and give them a taste of their own medicine, and He will send them running back to their homeland.



COLOR KEY

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Historical Interlude (36-39)

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38:1-22	Hezekiah's Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 37:30-35

30 “And **this shall be the sign for you**: this year you shall eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that. Then in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. 31 And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. 32 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of **the Lord** of hosts will do this.

33 “**Therefore thus says the Lord** concerning the king of **Assyria**: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. 34 By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, **declares the Lord**. 35 For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”

Just as Isaiah had given Ahaz a sign showing that God was with His people (7:14), so too Hezekiah is promised a sign. Though the Assyrian invasion had prevented proper agricultural practice, God promises that the people will have more than enough in the coming years, demonstrating that it is He who saved His remnant.

When Isaiah had first confronted Ahaz, he had brought his son Shear-jasub (“a remnant shall [re]turn”) with him (7:3). God’s word proved true.

Assyria will prove powerless against Judah. For the sake of **His own glory** and for the sake of **His promise to David** (2 Sa 7), God would turn Assyria away and would defend His people. (Notice that He does not do this for the people’s sake, for they are *deserving* of judgment.)

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib’s Threat
37:1-38	Hezekiah’s Trust
37:1-7	Hezekiah’s First Prayer
37:8-20	Hezekiah’s Second Prayer
37:21-38	Yahweh’s Answer
38:1-22	Hezekiah’s Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah’s Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah’s Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah’s Error

ISAIAH 37:36-38

36 And the angel of the Lord went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. 37 Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home and lived at Nineveh. 38 And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword. And after they escaped into the land of Ararat, Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Sennacherib's Annals record his campaign against and deportation of Israel, and even mentions his conquering 46 cities in Judah, including smaller towns. It states that he laid siege to Jerusalem, but that he left after Hezekiah paid him off.

5th century historian Herodotus records that while Assyria attacked Egypt, "During the night a horde of field mice gnawed quivers and their bows and the handles of shields, with the result that many were killed, fleeing unarmed the next day" (2.141).

God supernaturally intervenes and wipes out the Assyrians overnight.

Just as God promised, Sennacherib left and went back home. Twenty years later, on October 20, 681 BC, two of his sons, Arda-Mulissu (Adrammelech) and Nabu-shar-usur (Sharezer), killed Sennacherib in a Ninevite temple in an attempt to seize the throne. However, given the negative press that came from murdering the leader of one of the world's strongest empires, they didn't receive the throne. Esarhaddon, another of his sons, reigned in his place (681-669 BC).



COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
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Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib's Threat
37:1-38	Hezekiah's Trust
37:1-7	Hezekiah's First Prayer
37:8-20	Hezekiah's Second Prayer
37:21-38	Yahweh's Answer
38:1-22	Hezekiah's Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

Because of Hezekiah's faithfulness, Judah is spared the same fate as Israel. God, indeed, is with them.

STOP

#22

ISAIAH 38-39:

**HEZEKIAH'S
FOLLY**



ISAIAH 38:1-10

38:1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And **Isaiah the prophet** the son of Amoz **came to him, and said to him**, “**Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die, you shall not recover.**” **2** Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to **the Lord**, **3** and said, “Please, **O Lord**, remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 Then **the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: 5** “**Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord**, the God of David your father: **I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your life. 6** I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and will defend this city.

7 “**This shall be the sign to you from the Lord**, that **the Lord will do this thing that he has promised: 8** Behold, **I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps.**” So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined.

9 A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness:

10 I said, In the middle of my days
I must depart;
I am consigned to the gates of Sheol
for the rest of my years.

Hezekiah recounts his former grief at having to die at such a young age (he was only 39 at the time).

Not only did God grant Hezekiah the gift of extended life, but He also let him know how much longer he had.

Sure enough, Hezekiah would die 15 years later, in 687 BC, when he was 54 years old.

Though God didn't need to, He gave another sign to Hezekiah (cf. 37:30). Just as He had granted him extra time in life, so He made the shadow turn back ten degrees on the sundial—essentially re-winding time.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib's Threat
37:1-38	Hezekiah's Trust
37:1-7	Hezekiah's First Prayer
37:8-20	Hezekiah's Second Prayer
37:21-38	Yahweh's Answer
38:1-22	Hezekiah's Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 38:11-15

11 I said, I shall not see **the Lord**,
the Lord in the land of the living;
I shall look on man no more
among the inhabitants of the world.

12 My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me
like a shepherd's tent;
like a weaver I have rolled up my life;
he cuts me off from the loom;

from day to night you bring me to an end;

13 I calmed myself until morning;
like a lion **he breaks all my bones;**
from day to night you bring me to an end.

14 Like a swallow or a crane I chirp;
I moan like a dove.
My eyes are weary with looking upward.
O Lord, I am oppressed; be my pledge of safety!

15 What shall I say? **For he has spoken to me,**
and he himself has done it.

I walk slowly all my years
because of the bitterness of my soul.

In an OT context, there wasn't a lot of clarity on what exactly awaited people in the afterlife, hence Hezekiah's deep and impending sorrow. Sheol was a land of uncertainty. Rather than viewing death as a means of entering the presence of Yahweh, Hezekiah seemed to fear that it would take him away from His presence. As Hamlet, he ponders "the dread of something after death..."

Hezekiah utilizes many metaphors to summarize the fleetingness of life.
As a shepherd must pack up his tent and move on, so too he must do so in his death...

As a weaver devotes great amounts of time to designing an intricate web of interconnected patterns, so he must now roll it up and move on, because Yahweh had cut him from the loom...

As a sick man faces the uncertainty of living until the next day or night, so too he felt Yahweh bringing him to his end...

As one suffers severely while being torn apart by a lion, so too he was in agonizing pain as he drew near to death...

He moans and groans in all forms and fashions, going from day to day yearning for deliverance...

...and then the deliverance comes. He finds himself at a loss of words that Yahweh would deal so kindly with him as to heal him, and pledges to walk slowly/carefully all his years in response to the kindness God has shown him.

COLOR KEY

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God's actions	Messianic
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Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib's Threat
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39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 38:16-19

16 **O Lord**, by these things men live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit.
Oh restore me to health and make me live!

17 Behold, it was for my welfare
that I had great bitterness;
but in love **you have delivered my life
from the pit of destruction,
for you have cast all my sins
behind your back.**

18 For Sheol does not thank you;
death does not praise you;
those who go down to the pit do not hope
for your faithfulness.

19 The living, the living, he thanks you,
as I do this day;
the father makes known to the children
your faithfulness.

Hezekiah recognized that he was permitted to suffer in order that he might experience the piece that followed it afterward.

Not only this, but he recognized that God's mercy had provided him not only with further opportunity for living, but further opportunity for praising. Sheol and death could not praise God, but he could, and so he does.

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
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Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib's Threat
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37:8-20	Hezekiah's Second Prayer
37:21-38	Yahweh's Answer
38:1-22	Hezekiah's Illness
38:1-8	Isaiah's Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah's Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 38:20-39:4

20 The Lord will save me,
and we will play my music on stringed instruments
all the days of our lives,
at the house of the Lord.

21 Now Isaiah had said, “Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the boil, that he may recover.” 22 Hezekiah also had said, “What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?”

39:1 At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. 2 And Hezekiah welcomed them gladly. And he showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his whole armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. 3 Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?” Hezekiah said, “They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon.” 4 He said, “What have they seen in your house?” Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that is in my house. There is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them.”

This gesture of kindness on the part of the Babylonians was more than simply a courtesy call: It was likely an attempt to get Hezekiah to side with them against the Assyrians. Hezekiah, flattered by the gesture, gladly welcomes them without consulting either Yahweh or Isaiah. In an attempt to impress them and earn their favor, he shows them all their wealth. Hezekiah may have trusted in Yahweh, but he still had that lingering desire to impress people...even ungodly people.

Isaiah confronts Hezekiah to ask about what he's done. Hezekiah doesn't seem to realize the folly of his actions.

Now for the big plot twist...Just as we thought the book was reaching its resolution, Isaiah throws us a curveball.

***You thought Assyria was bad?
*Babylon has entered the chat.****

COLOR KEY

God's name	Commands
God's actions	Messianic
Judah's actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

36:1-22	Sennacherib's Threat
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39:1-8	Hezekiah's Error

ISAIAH 39:5-8

5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of **the Lord** of hosts: 6 Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, **says the Lord**. 7 And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” 8 Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of **the Lord** that you have spoken is good.” For he thought, “There will be peace and security in my days.”

Hezekiah’s actions were foolish both politically and theologically. Politically, he had been trying to impress them with all he had, when in reality, he had simply showed them all that there was to steal. Theologically, though he trusted in Yahweh, at the same time he was concerned with exalting himself before men, which is an acknowledgment of their power.

For both of these reasons, Isaiah says that Babylon will return to Judah—not to please, but to plunder. They will steal all that Hezekiah showed them, and then still more. The people will go into exile after all—not at the hands of Assyria, but at the hands of Babylon.

Yahweh had given Hezekiah 15 extra years, but one is left to wonder how much better off his life may have ended had he not been given those 15 years. The self-centered mindset of this once-godly king serves as the shocking and depressing conclusion to the first half of Isaiah’s book.

*Because of Hezekiah’s faith, Judah had been spared from Assyria.
Because of Hezekiah’s folly, Judah would not be spared from Babylon.
The people will go into exile.*

STOP

COLOR KEY

God’s name	Commands
God’s actions	Messianic
Judah’s actions	Repetition

Historical Interlude (36-39)

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38:1-8	Isaiah’s Sign
38:9-22	Hezekiah’s Deliverance
39:1-8	Hezekiah’s Error

appendix 1

Isaiah 36-39

vs.

2 Kings 18-20



ISAIAH 36:1-3

36:1 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. **2** And the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field. **3** And there came out to him Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

2 KINGS 18:13-18

18:13 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. **14** And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; withdraw from me. Whatever you impose on me I will bear." And the king of Assyria required of Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. **15** And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house. **16** At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord and from the doorposts that Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria. **17** And the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rab-saris, and the Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they arrived, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway to the Washer's Field. **18** And when they called for the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

ISAIAH 36:4-10

4 And the Rabshakeh said to them, “Say to Hezekiah, ‘Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours? 5 Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? In whom do you now trust, that you have rebelled against me? 6 Behold, you are trusting in Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. 7 But if you say to me, “We trust in the Lord our God,” is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, “You shall worship before this altar”? 8 Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. 9 How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 10 Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The Lord said to me, “Go up against this land and destroy it.””

2 KINGS 18:19-25

19 And the Rabshakeh said to them, “Say to Hezekiah, ‘Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours? 20 Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? In whom do you now trust, that you have rebelled against me? 21 Behold, you are trusting **now** in Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. 22 But if you say to me, “We trust in the Lord our God,” is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, “You shall worship before this altar **in Jerusalem**”? 23 Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. 24 How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 25 Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, “Go up against this land and destroy it.””

ISAIAH 36:11-17

11 Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” **12** But the Rabshakeh said, “Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?”

13 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! **14** Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you. **15** Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord by saying, “The Lord will surely deliver us. This city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” **16** Do not listen to Hezekiah. For thus says the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern, **17** until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards...

2 KINGS 18:26-32A

26 Then Eliakim **the son of Hilkiah, and** Shebna, and Joah, said to the Rabshakeh, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” **27** But the Rabshakeh said **to them**, “Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and to drink their own urine?”

28 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! **29** Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you **out of my hand**. **30** Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord by saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, **and** this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’ **31** Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern, **32** until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, **a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live, and not die....**

ISAIAH 36:18-22

18 Beware lest Hezekiah mislead you by saying, “The Lord will deliver us.” Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? **19** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? **20** Who among all the gods of **these** lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?”

21 But **they** were silent and answered him not a word, for the king's command was, “Do not answer him.” **22** Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

2 KINGS 18:32B-37

..And do not listen to Hezekiah **when he** misleads you by saying, “The Lord will deliver us.” **33** Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? **34** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, **Hena, and Ivvah?** Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? **35** Who among all the gods of **the** lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?”

36 But **the people** were silent and answered him not a word, for the king's command was, “Do not answer him.” **37** Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

ISAIAH 37:1-5

37:1 As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. **2** And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. **3** They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, ‘This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. **4** It may be that the Lord your God will hear the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the Lord your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.’”

5 When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, **6** Isaiah said to them, “Say to your master, ‘Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the young men of the king of Assyria have reviled me. **7** Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.’”

2 KINGS 19:1-7

19:1 As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. **2** And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. **3** They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. **4** It may be that the Lord your God heard all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the Lord your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.”

5 When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, **6** Isaiah said to them, “Say to your master, ‘Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. **7** Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.’”

ISAIAH 37:8-13

8 The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. 9 Now the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, “He has set out to fight against you.” **And when he heard it**, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10 “Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11 Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?’”

2 KINGS 19:8-13

8 The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he heard that the king had left Lachish. 9 Now the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, “**Behold**, he has set out to fight against you.” **So** he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying, 10 “Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11 Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?’”

ISAIAH 37:8-20

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. 15 And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: 16 “O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 17 Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 18 Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, 19 and have cast their gods into the fire. For they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. 20 So now, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the Lord.”

2 KINGS 19:14-19

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord and spread it before the Lord. 15 And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord and said: “O Lord, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 16 Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 17 Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands 18 and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. 19 So now, O Lord our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O Lord, are God alone.”

ISAIAH 37:21-24

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: **Because you have prayed to me concerning** Sennacherib king of Assyria, **22** this is the word that the Lord has spoken concerning him:

“She despises you, she scorns you—
the virgin daughter of Zion;
she wags her head behind you—
the daughter of Jerusalem.

23 “Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and lifted your eyes to the heights?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

24 By your servants you have mocked the Lord,
and you have said, With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,
to the far recesses of Lebanon,
to cut down its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses,
to come to its remotest height,
its most fruitful forest.

2 KINGS 19:20-23

20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: **Your prayer to me about** Sennacherib king of Assyria **I have heard.** **21** This is the word that the Lord has spoken concerning him:

“She despises you, she scorns you—
the virgin daughter of Zion;
she wags her head behind you—
the daughter of Jerusalem.

22 “Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and lifted your eyes to the heights?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

23 By your messengers you have mocked the Lord,
and you have said, ‘With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,
to the far recesses of Lebanon;
I felled its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses;
I entered its farthest lodging place,
its most fruitful forest.

ISAIAH 37:25-27

25 I dug wells
and drank waters,
to dry up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.

26 “Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should make fortified cities
crash into heaps of ruins,
27 while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded,
and have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted before it is grown.

2 KINGS 19:24-26

24 I dug wells
and drank foreign waters,
and I dried up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.’

25 “Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should turn fortified cities
into heaps of ruins,
26 while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded,
and have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted before it is grown.

ISAIAH 37:28-32

28 “I know your sitting down
and your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.

29 Because you have raged against me
and your complacency has come to my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth,
and I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.’

30 “And this shall be the sign for you: this year
you shall eat what grows of itself, and in the second
year what springs **from that**. Then in the third year
sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their
fruit. 31 And the surviving remnant of the house of
Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit
upward. 32 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant,
and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal
of the Lord of hosts will do this.

2 KINGS 19:27-31

27 “**But** I know your sitting down
and your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.

28 Because you have raged against me
and your complacency has come into my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth,
and I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.

29 “And this shall be the sign for you: this year
eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what
springs **of the same**. Then in the third year sow and
reap and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. 30 And
the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall
again take root downward and bear fruit upward. 31
For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of
Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the Lord
will do this.

ISAIAH 37:33-38

33 “Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. **34** By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the Lord. **35** For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”

36 And the angel of the Lord went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. **37** Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and **returned** home and lived at Nineveh. **38** And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword. And after they escaped into the land of Ararat, Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 19:32-37

32 “Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. **33** By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the Lord. **34** For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”

35 And **that night** the angel of the Lord went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. **36** Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and **went** home and lived at Nineveh. **37** And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword and escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

ISAIAH 38:1-6,9

38:1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die, you shall not recover.” **2** Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, **3 and said**, “Please, O Lord, remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 Then the word of the Lord came to **Isaiah: 5** “Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your life. **6** I will deliver you and this city **out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and will defend this city.**

[...]

9 A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness:

2 KINGS 20:1-6

20:1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.’” **2** Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, **saying, 3** “Now, O Lord, please remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 And before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the Lord came to **him: 5** “Turn back, and say to Hezekiah **the leader of my people**, Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will **heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord, 6** and I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city **for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.**”

ISAIAH 38:10-15

2 KINGS

10 I said, In the middle of my days
I must depart;

I am consigned to the gates of Sheol
for the rest of my years.

11 I said, I shall not see the Lord,
the Lord in the land of the living;

I shall look on man no more
among the inhabitants of the world.

12 My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me
like a shepherd's tent;

like a weaver I have rolled up my life;
he cuts me off from the loom;

from day to night you bring me to an end;

13 I calmed myself until morning;
like a lion he breaks all my bones;

from day to night you bring me to an end.

14 Like a swallow or a crane I chirp;
I moan like a dove.

My eyes are weary with looking upward.

O Lord, I am oppressed; be my pledge of safety!

15 What shall I say? For he has spoken to me,
and he himself has done it.

I walk slowly all my years
because of the bitterness of my soul.

ISAIAH 38:9-15

2 KINGS

16 O Lord, by these things men live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit.
Oh restore me to health and make me live!

17 Behold, it was for my welfare
that I had great bitterness;
but in love you have delivered my life
from the pit of destruction,
for you have cast all my sins
behind your back.

18 For Sheol does not thank you;
death does not praise you;
those who go down to the pit do not hope
for your faithfulness.

19 The living, the living, he thanks you,
as I do this day;
the father makes known to the children
your faithfulness.

20 The Lord will save me,
and we will play my music on stringed instruments
all the days of our lives,
at the house of the Lord.

ISAIAH 38:7-8,21-22

2 KINGS 20:7-11

7 “This shall be the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he has promised:
8 Behold, I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps.” So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined.

[38:9-20]

21 Now Isaiah had said, “Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the boil, that he may recover.”
22 Hezekiah also had said, “What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?”

7 And Isaiah said, “Bring a cake of figs. And let them take and lay it on the boil, that he may recover.”

8 And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord on the third day?” 9

And Isaiah said, “This shall be the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he has promised: shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?” 10 And Hezekiah answered, “It is an easy thing for the shadow to lengthen ten steps. Rather let the shadow go back ten steps.” 11 And Isaiah the prophet called to the Lord, and he brought the shadow back ten steps, by which it had gone down on the steps of Ahaz.

ISAIAH 39:1-4

39:1 At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that **he** had been sick **and had recovered**. **2** And Hezekiah welcomed them **gladly**. And he showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his **whole** armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. **3** Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?” Hezekiah said, “They have come **to me** from a far country, from Babylon.” **4** He said, “What have they seen in your house?” Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that is in my house. There is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them.”

2 KINGS 20:12-15

12 At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that **Hezekiah** had been sick. **13** And Hezekiah welcomed them, and he showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. **14** Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?” **And** Hezekiah said, “They have come from a far country, from Babylon.” **15** He said, “What have they seen in your house?” **And** Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them.”

ISAIAH 39:5-8

5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: 6 Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. 7 And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” 8 Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.” For he thought, “There will be peace and security in my days.”

2 KINGS 20:16-21

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord: 17 Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. 18 And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” 19 Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.” For he thought, “Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?”

20 The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah and all his might and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and Manasseh his son reigned in his place.



appendix 2

Isaiah 36-39

vs.

2 Chronicles 32



ISAIAH 36:1

36:1 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them.

2 CHRON 32:1-8

32:1 After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. **2** And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, **3** he planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. **4** A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that flowed through the land, saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?” **5** He set to work resolutely and built up all the wall that was broken down and raised towers upon it, and outside it he built another wall, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David. He also made weapons and shields in abundance. **6** And he set combat commanders over the people and gathered them together to him in the square at the gate of the city and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, **7** “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him, for there are more with us than with him. **8** With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people took confidence from the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

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ISAIAH 36:2-10

2 And the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field. 3 And there came out to him Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

4 And the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours? 5 Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? In whom do you now trust, that you have rebelled against me? 6 Behold, you are trusting in Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. 7 But if you say to me, "We trust in the Lord our God," is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, "You shall worship before this altar"? 8 Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. 9 How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 10 Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The Lord said to me, "Go up against this land and destroy it."'"

2 CHRON 32:9-14

9 After this, Sennacherib king of Assyria, who was besieging Lachish with all his forces, sent his servants to Jerusalem to Hezekiah king of Judah and to all the people of Judah who were in Jerusalem, saying, 10 "Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria, 'On what are you trusting, that you endure the siege in Jerusalem? 11 Is not Hezekiah misleading you, that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, "The Lord our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria"? 12 Has not this same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, "Before one altar you shall worship, and on it you shall burn your sacrifices"? 13 Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all able to deliver their lands out of my hand? 14 Who among all the gods of those nations that my fathers devoted to destruction was able to deliver his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand?"

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ISAIAH 36:11-20

11 Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” **12** But the Rabshakeh said, “Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?”

13 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! **14** Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you. **15** Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord by saying, “The Lord will surely deliver us. This city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” **16** Do not listen to Hezekiah. For thus says the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern, **17** until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. **18** Beware lest Hezekiah mislead you by saying, “The Lord will deliver us.” Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? **19** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? **20** Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?”

2 CHRON 32:15

15 Now, therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you out of my hand!”

16 And his servants said still more against the Lord God and against his servant Hezekiah. **17** And he wrote letters to cast contempt on the Lord, the God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, “Like the gods of the nations of the lands who have not delivered their people from my hands, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver his people from my hand.” **18** And they shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, in order that they might take the city. **19** And they spoke of the God of Jerusalem as they spoke of the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of men's hands.

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ISAIAH 36:21-37:38

[36:21-22]

37:1 As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. **2** And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz.

[37:3-35]

36 And the angel of the Lord went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. **37** Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home and lived at Nineveh. **38** And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword. And after they escaped into the land of Ararat, Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRON 32:20-23

20 Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed because of this and cried to heaven. **21** And the Lord sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword. **22** So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the hand of all his enemies, and he provided for them on every side. **23** And many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward.

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ISAIAH 38:1-9

38:1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die, you shall not recover.” **2** Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, **3** and said, “Please, O Lord, remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: **5** “Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your life. **6** I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and will defend this city.

7 “This shall be the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he has promised: **8** Behold, I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps.” So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined.

[38:9-22]

2 CHRON 32:24

24 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death, and he prayed to the Lord, and he answered him and gave him a sign.

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ISAIAH 39

39:1 At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. **2** And Hezekiah welcomed them gladly. And he showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his whole armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. **3** Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?” Hezekiah said, “They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon.” **4** He said, “What have they seen in your house?” Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that is in my house. There is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them.”

5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: **6** Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. **7** And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” **8** Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.” For he thought, “There will be peace and security in my days.”

2 CHRON 32:25-26

25 But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem. **26** But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

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ISAIAH 39

2 CHRON 32:27-33

27 And Hezekiah had very great riches and honor, and he made for himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for shields, and for all kinds of costly vessels; 28 storehouses also for the yield of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds. 29 He likewise provided cities for himself, and flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him very great possessions. 30 This same Hezekiah closed the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. 31 And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.

32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his good deeds, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 33 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the upper part of the tombs of the sons of David, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

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