

Session 5 The Forerunner Message in Isaiah 13-14

I. BABYLON: A TYPE OF THE FINAL DAY-OF-THE-LORD JUDGMENT

- A. Isaiah prophesied the total and final destruction of Babylon and her king (Isa. 13-14). Ask the Lord why He wants us to know this information, and why He wants us to tell others about it. By asking this, we put ourselves in a conversation with Him that positions us to grow in understanding.
- B. A type of the day-of-the-Lord judgments are seen in God's historical judgments on Babylon which includes the times when the Assyrian King Sennacherib defeated Babylon in 689 BC and when the Persian King Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC. However, the total and final destruction of the land (13:1-16) and its people (13:19-20) did not happen under Assyrian King Sennacherib or Persian King Cyrus.
1. Over a 1500-year period, the Middle East was dominated by one main empire. First, Assyria was the dominant empire in the Middle East (911-612 BC) during Isaiah's ministry (740-700 BC).
 2. The Babylonian Empire (606-539 BC) conquered and ruled over much of the same geographic area as the Assyrians, though not exactly the same. Babylon was replaced by the Persian Empire (539-331 BC). The Persians were defeated and replaced by the Greek Empire (331-146 BC) who also ruled over much of the same geographic area. The Romans defeated the Greeks. The Roman Empire had two divisions—its western (146 BC-AD 476) and eastern (AD 330-1453) divisions.
- C. ***Historical overview:*** Babylon replaced the Assyrian Empire as the dominant empire in the Middle East (626-539 BC), about a century after Isaiah's ministry (around 740-700 BC).
- D. Outline for Isaiah 13-14
- 13:1-16 The day-of-the-Lord judgments
 - 13:17-22 The total and final destruction of Babylon
 - 14:1-2 The end-time restoration of Israel
 - 14:3-23 A proverb against the king of Babylon
 - 14:24-27 God's judgment of Assyria
 - 14:28-32 God's judgment of Philistia.
- E. Various views of commentators on the context of the judgment on Babylon described in Isaiah 13 include the time when Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III defeated Babylon in 729 BC; when Assyria King Sargon II invaded Babylon in 710 BC; when Sennacherib defeated Babylon in 689 BC; and when Persian King Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC

- F. **Day-of-the-Lord:** This is also referred to as “*that day*” or “*the great day*.” It is mentioned nearly 100 times in the Scripture. It is “His day” because He displays His power in an unusual measure *for His people and against His enemies*. God’s normal mode of leadership over the earth is to patiently restrain His greater judgments against sin (2 Pet. 3:9; Eccl. 8:11). God rarely intervenes into the affairs of the nations to pour out His Spirit in an historic way or to confront rebellion openly on a large scale. In day-of-the-Lord seasons, He manifests His zeal in visiting His people with unusual blessing or in calling nations to account for rebellion against Him.
- G. There are two expressions of the day-of-the-Lord in history—on a global or on a local scale. In the Old Testament, there were a few times where God’s judgments were released in an unusual intensity on a local scale. The prophets referred to each as a “day-of-the-Lord.” These local and lesser day-of-the-Lord typify the global and final day-of-the-Lord which involves worldwide revival and judgments. In the book of Joel, the “lesser days,” included a locust plague or a military invasion (Joel 1-2). They foreshadowed a global and final day-of-the-Lord at the end of the age (Joel 2:31).
1. **Global and final day:** This occurs only once—in the end times related to Jesus’ return.
 2. **Local and lesser day:** This has occurred various times through history.
- H. Isaiah prophesied a global end-time shaking (13:1-16) that will be connected with God’s end-time judgment of the city of Babylon, which was foreshadowed God’s judgment on Babylon as seen in ancient history (13:17-22).

II. THE DAY-OF-THE-LORD JUDGMENTS (ISA. 13:1-23)

- A. Isaiah prophesied of the final day-of-the-Lord judgments on Babylon in 13:1-23. Two other biblical oracles highlight the final day-of-the-Lord judgments on Babylon (Jer. 50-51; Rev. 16-18). Jeremiah prophesied about 100 years after Isaiah and John about 800 years after Isaiah. We can gain a greater picture of Babylon’s end-time judgment by comparing these three passages.
- B. The final day of the Lord affects the whole world (13:11), resulting in the death of many people (13:12; Rev. 6:8; 9:15) and includes the shaking the heaven and earth (13:10, 13; 24:18; 34:4; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 30-31; 3:15-16; Zech. 14:6-7; Hag. 2:6-7; Mt. 24:19; Rev. 6:12; 16:18).
- ⁶Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand!... ⁹He will destroy its sinners...¹⁰For the stars of heaven...will not give their light; the sun will be darkened...¹¹“I will punish the world for its evil...¹²I will make a mortal more rare than gold...¹³I will shake the heavens and the earth...” (Isa. 13:6-13)*
- C. The apostle John connected the judgment described here (13:1-16) to what will happen across the earth in the Great Tribulation (Rev 6-19). The military forces that will fight and the nations who are defeated are not identified in Isaiah 13:1-16 since there is partial fulfillment of this in history. The emphasis in Isaiah 13 is the global, final day of the Lord as seen in the Great Tribulation.
- D. We need the Spirit’s help to grasp and steward information about the day-of-the-Lord judgments. We need more than human resolve and dedication to carry these truths in our heart and mind. The Spirit will teach the Church about “things to come” and will guard our mind and heart (emotions).

⁷...the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds...
(Phil. 4:7)

- E. Some biblical passages on the day of the Lord include a historical destruction of a nation in the near future (Israel and Judah), while giving a picture of a distant and final day (13:1-23; 24:1-23).
1. Amos 5:20-21 predicted a day-of-the-Lord judgment on Israel—it occurred when Assyria attacked the northern Kingdom of Israel in 721 BC.
 2. Zephaniah 1:14-18 described a day-of-the-Lord judgment for Judah—it occurred when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC.
 3. The final day of the Lord will take place when the Jesus returns and defeats all of His enemies and sets up His glorious millennial kingdom on the earth (Rev. 19:11-20:6). The final day of the Lord is also the theme of Isaiah 24-27.
- F. The Lord will summon various armies (even evil ones) as instruments of His judgment (13:2-3). He describes the noise that occurs when a multitude of soldiers arrive to the battle scene (13:4-5). Although human armies attack the nation under judgment, it is God judging His enemies (13:9).
- ¹The burden against Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. ²“Lift up a banner on the high mountain, raise your voice to them; wave your hand...” ³I have commanded My sanctified ones; I have also called My mighty ones for My anger... ⁴The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like that of many people! A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together! The LORD of hosts musters the army for battle. ⁵They come from a far country, from the end of heaven—the LORD and His weapons of indignation, to destroy the whole land. (Isa. 13:1-5)
1. **Burden against Babylon:** Babylon will be judged in context to global end-time judgments.
 2. **Banner:** Raising a flag on a high mountain speaks of gaining visibility to rally many others.
 3. **My sanctified ones:** This does not refer to the character of the armies, but to their call to be used by the Lord as His instrument of judgment. The Assyrian king was God’s vessel (Isa. 10:5). It is an offensive doctrine to many that God chooses wicked nations as “His instrument” to punish other wicked nations. He uses them as a puppet in His hand to accomplish His purposes.
⁵“Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation.”
(Isa. 10:5)
 4. **Kingdoms of nations:** Ten kings in alliance with the Antichrist will destroy Harlot Babylon. The Lord will bring nations together (13:4) as a collective force to judge other nations. The ultimate gathering of evil nations as God’s weapon is seen in the 10-nation coalition that will serve the Antichrist (Rev. 17:16-17). These 10 end-time nations will be from the Middle East, North and East Africa, and various nations near to Russia. They will be the mightiest military force in history. They will hate and burn the great city of Babylon

¹⁶The ten horns [kings] which you saw on the beast [Antichrist], these will hate the harlot [Babylon], make her desolate...and burn her with fire. ¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose...to give their kingdom to the beast [Antichrist]...¹⁸And the woman [Babylon]...is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. (Rev. 17:16-18)

- G. The people will experience melting hearts, terror, anguish, pain, shock, and feeling numb with limp hands, with sense of helplessness and lacking strength to act in response (13:6-8). Isaiah is describing the response of unbelievers to God's judgments during the final 3½ years before Jesus returns. Jesus said that men's hearts would fail them because of fear during this time (Lk. 21:26). Jesus and Jeremiah also compared the response of people to God's judgments to birth pains (Jer. 30:6; Mt. 24:8).

⁶Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty... ⁷All hands will be limp, every man's heart will melt, ⁸and they will be afraid. Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them; they will be in pain as a woman in childbirth... (Isa. 13:6-8)

1. The message of God's global end-time judgments in 13:1-16 is repeated over and over in the prophets. Such passages are hard to grasp; they are surreal and burdensome. The body of Christ must become more familiar such biblical passages. The Lord is going to confront wickedness and oppression in an open way in all the nations. We must understand the negative elements of the future, not just the positive ones.
2. The only way to rightly interpret this passage is by being anchored in an eternal perspective. Next, meditating on such passages help us to settle if we really trust Jesus' leadership. Can we trust a King who judges with such zeal? Do we believe He is doing this for love and without contradicting love? The Church must wrestle through this. By praying over such passages, we give ourselves the opportunity to realign our heart little by little to His word to gain a deeper trust in His leadership even in the midst of severe judgments.
3. If the body of Christ has no grid for Jesus judging nations, then they will be more vulnerable to fear and offense towards Him when judgment begin to escalate. Thus, the body of Christ must wrestle with these passages and not continue to ignore them.
4. The Lord will hold the nations accountable for resisting His leadership and His word. The Lord will not continue to be silent—that is, to patiently restrain His judgments against wickedness.

¹³The LORD...shall stir up His zeal like a man of war...He shall prevail against His enemies. ¹⁴"I have held My peace a long time, I have been still [silent] and restrained Myself. Now I will...¹⁵lay waste the mountains and hills [release My judgment] ..." (Isa. 42:13-15)

5. The people who trust His leadership and His promises and who seek to have an eternal perspective will be purified and learn righteousness and wisdom in times of persecution and judgment (Isa. 26:8; Dan. 11:33-35; 12:10).

⁹*For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants...will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9)*

³⁵*And some of those of understanding shall fall [die as martyrs], to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. (Dan. 11:35)*

6. The Lord will use the least severe means to reach the greatest number of people at the deepest levels of love. Jesus' leadership is perfect. His judgments are not too severe, nor too lenient. If they were less intense, they would not accomplish His purposes of removing all that hinders love, waking up the nations to righteousness, and driving wickedness off the planet.
7. The Scripture describes God's end-time judgments so often because He wants His people to think on it; it's not a peripheral theme. As we read such passages often, they emboldened us to stand with the Lord and His zeal to confront wickedness in the culture.
- H. The global nature of the day-of-the-Lord judgments (13:9-13): These verses picture the horrors of war occurring in the 3½ years before Jesus returns. Isaiah described judgment on several billion people who will be in the Antichrist's empire and embrace the wickedness and rebellion associated with it.

⁹*Behold, the day of the LORD comes...with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.* ¹⁰*For the stars of heaven...will not give their light; the sun will be darkened...* ¹¹*"I will punish the world for its evil...I will halt the arrogance of the proud...* ¹²*I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold...* ¹³*I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of her place...in the day of His fierce anger...* (Isa. 13:9-13)

1. *Make a mortal rare:* There might be hundreds of millions of people alive after the Great Tribulation, but compared to 7 billion it is a small percentage, leaving only a few (Isa. 24:6). Isaiah also described this day-of-the-Lord judgment against the Antichrist's empire (24:1-6).

¹*Behold, the LORD makes the earth empty...distorts its surface and scatters...* ³*The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered...* ⁵*The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws...* ⁶*Therefore the curse has devoured the earth... therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.* (Isa. 24:1-6)

⁴*...And it [red horse] was granted...to take peace from the earth...* ⁸*A pale horse...and power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword...* (Rev. 6:4-8)

¹⁵*So the four angels...were released to kill a third of mankind.* (Rev. 9:15)

²¹*...there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world...*

²²*And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved...* (Mt. 24:21-22)

2. *I will punish evil and halt arrogance:* The people in the Antichrist's empire will be deeply committed to do evil that is rooted in their arrogance which thinks God's authority does not matter. Billions of people will transgress the laws of God and stand against His Word (Isa. 24:5).

3. ***I will shake the heavens***: The Lord will shake the heavens, including weather patterns, and He will shake the earth with earthquakes, hurricanes, and natural disasters.
- I. Isaiah applied day-of-the-Lord principles to the judgment of Babylon in ancient times and at the end of the age (13:17-22). The Medes were united to the Persians in conquering Babylon (539 BC). Isaiah described a judgment on the city of Babylon that results in it “never being inhabited” (13:20).
¹⁷“Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them [Babylon]...¹⁹And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms...will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation...” (Isa. 13:17-20)
- J. Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied that the city of Babylon would be totally and permanently desolate and without inhabitants (Isa. 13:19-20; Jer. 50:3-4, 13, 23-24, 45-46; 51:29, 37, 41, 49, 64). This was not completely fulfilled in history as it will be in the generation that the Lord returns.
³...which shall make [Babylon] her land desolate, and no one shall dwell therein...⁴In those days ...The children of Israel...with continual weeping they shall come, and seek the LORD their God. (Jer. 50:3-4)
³⁷Babylon shall become a heap...without an inhabitant...⁴¹How Babylon has become desolate among the nations!...⁴⁹at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall. (Jer. 51:37-49)
- K. When the Persians conquered the city of Babylon in 539 BC, they did not totally destroy the city as Jeremiah and Isaiah had prophesied. This lack of fulfillment is used by critics to claim that Bible prophecy is not accurate. Babylon grew weaker slowly through the centuries. About 200 years after Babylon was conquered, Alexander the Great selected it to be his capital city. There is strong historical evidence of people living in Babylon even 1,000 years after Christ. The site of ancient Babylon is known today. People live there today—Hillah, has a population of over 5,000 people.
- L. John described the city of Babylon in the end times (Rev. 17-18). Babylon will be rebuilt similar to Jerusalem. Zechariah 5 provides insights into the rebuilt city of Babylon in the end times.

III. THE END-TIME RESTORATION OF ISRAEL (ISA. 14:1-2)

- A. Isaiah described the end-time salvation of Israel along with their evangelistic zeal to win Gentiles to serve the God of Israel (14:1-3). This speaks of Israel’s end-time restoration, describing something far more glorious than the return of the Jewish people from Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 536 BC (as seen in Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah).
¹For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers [Gentiles] will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. ²Then...the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the LORD... (Isa. 14:1-2)
1. ***Mercy***: The judgments of God (13:1-22) do not diminish the promises of God (14:1-2).
2. ***Choose***: The Lord will choose Israel, or reaffirm His sovereign choice of Israel, at that time.

3. **Cling:** Many Gentiles will love Jesus in the Millennium, but some will also cling to or embrace the Jewish people and desire to live in the land of Israel.
- B. **Servants and maids:** There will not be a vindictive or oppressive attitude in Israelis toward Gentiles. Jesus will be reigning in Jerusalem, and the city will be filled with the glory of God and mature love.
- C. **Gratitude:** Some Gentiles who “cling to Israel” will desperately want to live in the land. The land mass in Israel is limited, so there will be limited space after all the Jewish people on the earth move to the land. They may be invited to move to Israel on the condition that they will serve God’s purpose for Israel. It is possible that the “litmus test” is that they gladly accept menial tasks.

IV. A PROVERB AGAINST THE KING OF BABYLON (ISA. 14:3-23)

- A. Isaiah described the judgment of the king of Babylon (14:4-23). This was fulfilled in part in ancient history, but its ultimate fulfillment will be at the end of the age in the demise of the Antichrist.
³ ***...in the day the LORD gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve, that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: “How the oppressor has ceased, the golden city ceased!”*** (Isa. 14:3-4)
¹⁸ ***And the woman [harlot Babylon]...is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”*** (Rev. 17:18)
- B. After Israel is restored to the Lord and resting in the land, then she will take up “this proverb against the king of Babylon” (14:3-4). A taunt mocking the king of Babylon. The king of Babylon had died and the oppressor has ceased and the golden city of Rev 17-18 will cease to exist.
- C. The setting for this lament depends on which king is described and whether the lament refers to an ancient or future king of Babylon, or both. No king of the Babylon nor Assyrian kings in Isaiah’s day fits this description. Commentators do not agree on the historical figure who fulfills the details of this passage. Each paragraph includes words that people will say about this king (14:8b, 10-11, 13-14, 16, 22-23).
- D. Isaiah described the death of the king of Babylon (14:4-8). The ancient king(s) of Babylon was a type of the Antichrist, and the Antichrist will be king over Babylon in the end times. At the time when Israel is saved (14:1), the Antichrist will be exposed as the oppressor of the nations (14:4), as the one who struck them continually (14:6), and who ruled them in anger—the whole earth will rest and sing after his demise (14:7) and after the golden city of Babylon has ceased (14:4; Rev. 17-18).
⁴ ***...say: “How the oppressor has ceased, the golden city ceased! ⁵The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked... ⁶he who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he who ruled the nations in anger... ⁷The whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing.*** (Isa. 14:4-7)

V. ISAIAH PROPHECIES THE FATE OF THE ANTICHRIST (ISA. 14:9-20)

- A. The king of Babylon (Isa. 14:9-20) is a personification/type of the Antichrist and Satan. Ezekiel's prophecy of the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28) has parallels to 14:9-20. The story of Satan and the Antichrist is told through these kings with very limited fulfillment related to ancient kings.
- B. There is astonishment in hell when the Antichrist descends there under God's judgment (14:9-11). The purpose of this proverb or taunt against the king of Babylon (Antichrist) is to show the Israelite audience the foolishness of trusting such a king who is destined for judgment and weakness.

⁹Hell from beneath is excited about you, to meet you at your coming; it stirs up the dead for you, all the chief ones of the earth...all the kings of the nations. ¹⁰They all shall speak and say to you: "Have you also become as weak as we?...¹¹Your pomp is brought down to Sheol [hell], and the sound of your stringed instruments; the maggot is spread under you, and worms cover you." (Isa. 14:9-11)

1. ***To meet you:*** The spirits of former kings of the earth and all the chief leaders of the earth express their excitement about meeting the Antichrist in hell after he is judged by Jesus.
 2. ***Become as weak as we are:*** The Antichrist's reputation as being mighty was based ruling with Satan's power resting on him, but in hell he will be seen as weak and pathetic just as the other kings who died and were stripped of their power and prestige.
 3. ***Your pomp is brought down:*** The Antichrist will have great military victories surpassing any than any other military leader in history. However, the body of Christ must not be intimidated nor enthralled by the temporary power and seeming invincibility of the Antichrist (Rev. 13:4)
⁴So they worshiped the dragon [Satan] who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (Rev. 13:4)
 4. Isaiah's point is that no one should honor this man who has power for only 3½ years
- C. This fallen king is identified as Lucifer. This is a double reference to Satan's fall reflected in the Antichrist's fall. The Latin Vulgate used the word *Lucifer* to translate "the daystar." Lucifer is applied to Satan since Jesus described him as falling from heaven like lightning (Lk 10:18; Rev. 12:8-9).

¹²How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! ¹³For you have said in your heart: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God [angles]; I will sit on the mount of the congregation..."¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High." (Isa. 14:12-14)

1. The daystar is a title for Jesus—the bright and morning star (Rev. 22:16).
¹⁶"I, Jesus...am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." (Rev. 22:16)

2. Paul referenced Isaiah 14:12-14 describing that Antichrist as one who “exalts himself above all that is related to God, who “sits as God,” and “shows himself to be God.” (2 Thes. 2:3-4)
³...the man of sin [Antichrist] is revealed...⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God...so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thes. 2:3-4)
- D. The humiliation of the Antichrist includes not receiving any honor after his death (14:15-21). The scene of this proverb returns to earth where the unburied corpse of the king is dishonored. Isaiah gives insight into “hell’s perspective” of the Antichrist.
- ¹⁵Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol... ¹⁶Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: “Is this the man who made the earth tremble...¹⁷who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities...?” ¹⁸All the kings of the nations...sleep in glory, everyone in his own house [elaborate memorial tombs];¹⁹but you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch...²⁰You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land and slain your people. (Isa. 14:15-20)
1. **In burial:** Kings throughout history who have won great military battles are often honored with elaborate tombs to memorialize their many victories won for benefit of their nation. However, the Antichrist will have no such memorial tomb to honor him.
 2. **Destroyed your land:** History will consider him a reproach much like Germany sees Hitler.
 3. Ezekiel prophesied of the king of Tyre with several significant similarities to Isaiah 14:9-20.
²Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre... “Because your heart is lifted up, and you say, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods’...¹²You were the seal of perfection...¹³You were in Eden, the garden of God... The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.¹⁴You were the anointed cherub...you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.” (Ezek. 28:2-14)
¹⁵You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you...¹⁶You became filled with violence...therefore I cast you...out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub...¹⁷Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty ...I cast you to the ground....¹⁸I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you.¹⁹All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no more forever. (Ezek. 28:15-19)
- E. God’s judgment of the brood of evil leaders who served under this oppressive king (14:20-23): This had a partial fulfillment in ancient history with its ultimate fulfillment related to the Antichrist.
- ²⁰...because you have destroyed your land and slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named. ²¹Prepare slaughter for his children because of the iniquity of their fathers, lest they rise up and possess the land, and fill the face of the world with cities. ²²“For I will rise up against them,” says the LORD of hosts, “And cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, and offspring and posterity,” says the LORD. ²³“...I will sweep it with the broom of destruction...” (Isa. 14:20-23)

¹⁹And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies...to make war against Him...
²⁰Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet...These two were cast alive into the lake of fire...²¹The rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from...Him...
(Rev. 19:19-21)

VI. GOD'S JUDGMENT ON ASSYRIA (14:24-27)

- A. The Lord swore that He would destroy the mighty Assyrian empire in the land of Israel (14:24-25). Judah was in a military alliance with Babylon against Assyria (Isa. 39:1-8).

²⁴The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, "...as I have purposed...²⁵I will break the Assyrian in My land and on My mountains tread him underfoot. Then his yoke shall be removed from them, and his burden removed from their shoulders. ²⁶This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations." (Isa. 14:24-26)

- B. ***I will break the Assyrian***: This judgment on the Assyrian was partially fulfilled in 701 BC, when Sennacherib's army was destroyed by the angel of Lord who killed 185,000 soldiers (Isa. 37:36). The fall of the Assyrian Empire occurred almost 100 years later during the reign of Josiah in 612 BC. The ultimate fulfillment of this will occur when Jesus defeats "the end-time Assyria"—the Antichrist.

1. There are parallels in this prophecy (14:25) and Isaiah's earlier prophecy about defeating Assyrians in chapter 10:24, 27.
2. Isaiah's point was that that the Lord would save Judah, not a military alliance with Babylon.
3. If Isaiah delivered the prophecies in 13:1-14:27 before Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem in 701 BC, the information about the judgment of Babylon (13:17-22), the salvation of Israel (14:1-2) and judgment of Assyria (14:24-27) was to convince the leaders in Jerusalem to refuse to look to Babylon (39:1-8) for protection instead of the Lord.

- C. ***My land***: The Antichrist will establish a palace near Jerusalem (Dan. 11:45). The "glorious holy mountain" speaks of the temple site in Jerusalem. The seas on the sides of Jerusalem are the Mediterranean Sea (west) and the Dead Sea (east). The Antichrist will come to his end or will be defeated (Dan. 11:45). Jesus will destroy him (2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 16:16; 19:20).

⁴⁵And he [Antichrist] shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas [Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea] and the glorious holy mountain [temple site in Jerusalem] yet, he shall come to his end, and no one will help him. (Dan. 11:45)

1. The Antichrist's armies will be destroyed on the mountains of Israel (Ezek. 39:4, 17).
⁴You [the Antichrist] shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops...
⁷So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel...Then the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. (Ezek. 39:4-7)
2. Jesus will destroy the Antichrist's armies surrounding Jerusalem (Zech. 14:1-5).

¹*Behold, the day of the LORD is coming...*² *“For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem...”*³ *Then the LORD will...fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle.*⁴ *...His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... [it] shall be split...*⁵ *“Then you shall flee through My mountain valley”...the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. (Zech. 14:1-5)*

- D. **The whole earth:** The judgment of the Assyrian army represented what the Lord would do to the whole world in the day-of-the-Lord judgments (14:26; cf. 13:1-16).

VII. GOD’S JUDGMENT OF PHILISTIA (14:28-32)

- A. Isaiah’s purpose here was to convince the new king Hezekiah not to join the Philistines in revolting against Assyria, but instead to trust in the Lord for protection. This prophetic word came to Isaiah in the year that King Ahaz died—in 715 BC (14:28). King Ahaz’s son Hezekiah reigned in his place. It is possible that Isaiah spoke this word in Hezekiah’s royal court while a few Philistine ambassadors were there to present their proposal of an alliance with them against Assyria — “all you of Philistia” (14:31) and “messengers” (14:32).

²⁸*This is the burden which came in the year that King Ahaz died [715 BC].*²⁹*“Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia, because the rod that struck you is broken; for out of the serpent’s roots will come forth a viper, and its offspring will be a fiery flying serpent.*³⁰*The firstborn of the poor will feed, and the needy will lie down in safety; I will kill your roots with famine...” (Isa. 14:28-30)*

- B. **Do not rejoice:** The Philistines were rejoicing because “the rod that struck them” was broken. Isaiah had earlier referred to the Assyrian king and his army as “the rod of the Lord” (10:9). “The rod” is associated with an Assyrian king who died in proximity to the death of King Ahaz. The best option is to see “the broken rod” as being associated with the death of King Shalmaneser V in 722 BC followed by several years of instability and infighting within the royal court related to the succession to the throne of his younger brother Sargon II (722-705 BC). This turmoil in the Assyrian court occurred in proximity to Ahaz’s death in 715 BC and the beginning of a Philistine revolt against Assyria. Thus, the time of this prophecy coincides with the Philistine plan to revolt against Assyria (Isa. 20:16).
- C. **Out of the serpent’s roots:** Isaiah warned them that other kings would emerge from Assyria (14:29) who will cause even more trouble than the “broken rod”— King Shalmaneser V. The Assyrian King Sargon invaded Philistia in 712 BC, and his son King Sennacherib attacked Philistia again in 701 BC.
1. Isaiah warned them that though the serpent was gone, the trouble would continue. In fact, its offspring will be more dangerous. Assyria became more aggressive and dangerous to Philistia under the attacks of King Sargon (the viper) and King Sennacherib (the flying serpent).
 2. The “root” or source refers to the lineage of a family. The deceased Assyrian king was both a rod and a “serpent” who was replaced by a poisonous viper, and his son was even more dangerous, being compared to a “fiery flying serpent.”

- D. ***Firstborn of the poor:*** The poorest Philistine people are referred to here as the “firstborn of the poor” (expressing the superlative). Only these poorest people would survive the coming military attack from Assyria. Most of the Philistines were killed by starvation or in battle (14:30).
1. The only people left after the fall of Philistia were the poorest of the poor. The poor who represented the “root” or the lineage of the Philistines nation died of famine (14:30).
 2. The evil, viperous Assyrian kings (14:29) killed or exiled the prominent and wealthy Philistines.
- E. Isaiah promised doom on the Philistines and protection for Judah (14:31-32).
- ³¹***Wail, O gate! Cry, O city! All you of Philistia are dissolved; for smoke will come from the north [caused by the approaching Assyrian army]...*** ³²***What will they answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD has founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall take refuge in it. (Isa. 14:31-32)***
1. ***The north:*** Philistia’s destruction came from the Assyrians who approached from the north.
 2. ***Wail:*** Isaiah called the Philistines to wail as they witnessed or received news of cities burning just north of Philistia. Some Philistines saw the Assyrian army approach, burning city after city
 3. ***Messengers:*** Political envoys or messengers from Philistia were seeking an alliance with Judea to stand against the Assyrian army. They wanted Judah to make a commitment to them. Since the Philistines were to be judged by God through the Assyrian army, Isaiah’ message to the Philistine envoys was that the God who founded Zion was Zion’s only sure protection.
 4. Isaiah was urging Hezekiah and his court in Judah to trust in God rather than in an alliance with Philistia (14:32). Isaiah gave a series of prophetic oracles against the nations to whom Judah might be tempted to look for help against the seemingly invincible Assyrian Empire (Isa. 14-23). Isaiah warned Judah that those neighboring nations were also under a sentence of God’s judgment, so their deliverance must only come from the Lord.
- F. Isaiah asked the royal court in Judah a rhetorical question. What should the leaders of Judah say to the envoys from Philistia who want Judah to join their coalition against Assyria?
- G. Isaiah emphasized to King Hezekiah and the royal court of Judah that God promised to “found” His kingdom in Zion (2:1-5; 4:2-6; 9:1-7; cf. Ps 46:6-10; 48:5-8; 74:2-10), so it only makes sense to trust the Lord protect them instead of Philistia. The poor in spirit seek refuge in Zion, the place where God dwells. The poor of Judah who trust in the God of Israel are contrasted to the armies of Philistia.