

The Book of the Prophet ISAIAH

Chapter 24

Theme: God would judge Judah by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, leaving a remnant, and then deliver it.

Outline:

- 1-3 Judah Destroyed and Taken Captive
- 4-6 Sins Against the Laws and Covenant
- 7-12 Cursed to Desolation for Their Sins
- 13-15 A Remnant Shall Praise Their God
- 16-20 Sure Judgment for Their Treachery
- 21-23 A Glorious Return After Judgment

Preparatory Reading: Isaiah 13; Jeremiah 40-41; Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28.

Related Links:

- A. *Exposition of Isaiah 1* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/isaiah-1.pdf>.
- B. *Exposition of Isaiah 2* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/isaiah-2.pdf>.
- C. *Exposition of Isaiah 5* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/isaiah-5.pdf>.
- D. *Exposition of Isaiah 7* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/isaiah-7.pdf>.
- E. *Exposition of Isaiah 13* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/isaiah-13.pdf>.
- F. *Importance of Context (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/two-step-bible-study-rule-2.pdf>.
- G. *Importance of Context (outline)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/slaves-to-context.pdf>.
- H. *Interpreting Bible Prophecies (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/prophecy-interpretation.pdf>.
- I. *Babylon – History and Prophecies (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/babylon.pdf>.

Introduction:

- A. Chapters 13-23 foretold various national judgments by Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and others.
- B. We choose to understand the four chapters (24-27) as tied together in one overarching prophetic vision.
 - 1. Chapter 23 is entirely about Tyre, though it does end with Tyre's resources coming to Mount Zion.
 - 2. Chapter 28 begins with and names Ephraim (the ten tribes of Israel), which indicates a new vision.
 - 3. The four chapters move from judgment (24) to deliverance (25) to praise (26) to fruitfulness (27).
 - 4. Each chapter has references to praise in Zion for the God of Zion, which identifies Judah as object.
 - 5. It hardly matters if one long vision or not, for the real value of this chapter is the obvious lessons.
- C. We understand these chapters as God's judgment on Judah by Nebuchadnezzar and then deliverance.
 - 1. The inhabitants would be scattered abroad from the territory being considered, which fits (Is 24:1).
 - 2. The inhabitants of the territory had a priest recognized by Isaiah, which fits Judah, not all (Is 24:2).
 - 3. The inhabitants include special mention of usury, which was a prohibition of Moses' law (Is 24:2).
 - 4. The land being considered would be emptied of inhabitants and also spoiled, which fits (Is 24:3).
 - 5. The people of the land, ordinarily haughty, would mourn and languish, like Lamentations (Is 24:4).
 - 6. The inhabitants were guilty of breaking laws, the ordinance, and the everlasting covenant (Is 24:5).
 - 7. This cannot be justly said of any other nation or any other event, for they always sinned (Is 24:5).
 - 8. The earth desolate of inhabitants was due to a curse, which is Judah by Moses, not others (Is 24:6).
 - 9. The terrible curse God had told Israel was to rip them out of their land, as Babylon did (Is 24:6).
 - 10. The city broken down excludes Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, thus Nebuchadnezzar (Is 24:10).

11. The judgment would cause a small, scattered remnant to praise God, only Jews fit (Is 24:6,13-16).
 12. If the isles of the sea were a place a refuge, then the judgment was limited in scope (Is 24:14-16).
 13. Pagans were always treacherous; Nebuchadnezzar was fair; this treachery is Jeremiah (Is 24:16).
 14. God chasing the criminals from one trouble to another is His promised chastening (Is 24:17-18).
 15. The extreme, complete, and universal terms must be severely limited or never fulfilled (Is 24:19).
 16. The high ones that are on high have to be Jerusalem's priests; pagan priests do not fit (Is 24:21).
 17. The chapter starts to close with ecclesiastical and civil rulers shut up in prison – Babylon (Is 24:22).
 18. The chapter concludes with a restoration of former blessings by a visit from the LORD (Is 24:22).
 19. The restoration of the people by the visit of God would be His ancients in His Jerusalem (Is 24:23).
 20. The wonderful positive events that follow for praise are all fulfilled in Babylon's fall (Is 25:1-5).
 21. The wonderful promises of prosperity after recovery including Messiah are for Judah (Is 25:6-9).
 22. The following, related shout of praise to God is specifically declared to be by Judah (Is 26:1-4).
 23. The following description of deliverance from their chastening fits those of Judah (Is 26:12-16).
 24. The promise is that the vineyard of God and those of Jacob will take root and blossom (Is 27:2-6).
 25. The judgment of Jacob was only chastening, unlike God's judgment of their enemies (Is 27:7-9).
 26. The culmination of the prophecy is gathering dispersed, outcast Jews to Jerusalem (Is 27:12-13).
 27. Similitudes, of which there are many, are a language tool of the prophets (Hosea 12:10; Rev 1:1).
 28. With this contextual emphasis on Judah and Jerusalem, we must limit universal terms accordingly.
 29. A study of Jeremiah, especially chapters 30-45, will give actual history to fulfill these prophecies.
 30. Study of Kings and Chronicles related to the final days of Judah and then its recovery also fit well.
- D. We are not moved by those who choose an interpretation by the universal terms *earth*, *land*, or *world*.
1. The use of *earth*, *land*, and *world* are easy terms for the country, nation, people, and cities of Judah.
 2. A child should know that these words cannot mean the whole globe, so we look for another sense.
 3. If you force a literal or common meaning on these words for all the earth, it must include Alaska.
 4. If you force a literal or common meaning on these words for all the earth, it must be Christ's return.
 5. But since Isaiah 13 has already used these terms for merely localized Babylon, we also limit them.
 6. By reading in order and learning, the use of terms in this chapter have already been limited for us.
 7. Isaiah 13 is taking of Babylon by the Medes, yet *earth* and also *heavens* are used (Is 13:13,10,5).
 8. Isaiah 13 is taking of Babylon by Medes, yet God said He would destroy the *whole land* (Is 13:5,9).
 9. Isaiah 13 is taking of Babylon by the Medes, yet God said He would punish the *world* (Is 13:11).
 10. How extensive was all the world taxed (Luke 2:1)? Or Jesus believed and taught (Jn 12:19; 18:20)?
 11. We ourselves use such expressions – the *whole world* is nuts ... the *earth* has gone crazy ... the weight of the *world* is on his shoulders ... the *earth* is waiting with bated breath, etc.
 12. The thoroughness and severity of *earth* or *world* is fitting to emphasize the widespread desolation.
 13. The universal terms also fit our Lord's limited concern for only His nation in the world (Am 3:2).
 14. As context determines the limited sense of these words elsewhere in the Bible, the many examples of which are beyond the scope of these notes, so we let context set their limited sense here.
- E. Therefore, with this assumption and premise before us, we will interpret the next verses accordingly.
1. Once context is identified, verses and their words are forced to fit; meaning of words is by context.
 2. Words by sound or sense from a dictionary are distracting, especially by the prophets in the Bible.
 3. If we do not make this assumption, the verses become too general without a framework for sense.
 4. However, even if we are slightly wrong, Judah is definitely involved and the lessons are the same.

1 Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

- A. *Behold!* Give God your attention, for He will do a great work in the earth by scattering.
1. He purposed to empty out Judah and Jerusalem and scatter the inhabitants of them.
 2. The breadth would include all from priest to pauper and none would escape by class.
 3. His judgment would turn their world upside down and chase from trouble to trouble.
- B. The *earth* here is a comprehensive expression for Judah (compare Is 13:13 to Is 14:26).
1. This is why certain chapters, like Isaiah 13, are valuable to learn prophetic language.
 2. The *land* used shortly (Is 24:3) is another broad expression for a nation (Is 13:5,9).
 3. The *world* used shortly (Is 24:4) is another broad expression (compare Isaiah 13:11).
 4. The thoroughness and severity of *earth* or *world* is appropriate for great desolation.
 5. The breadth of *earth* or *world* may hint toward all the Gentile *nations* later (Is 25:7).
- C. God intended to punish Judah by fully destroying it and dispersing its people far away.
1. Israel of the ten tribes had already been scattered by Shalmaneser and the Assyrians.
 2. Nebuchadnezzar made several raids from Daniel's capture to their final overthrow.
 3. Some of the Jews had fled to Egypt due to fear of Babylonians. Jeremiah even went.
 4. The 70-year captivity of Jews in Babylon is a major Bible event in Israel's history.
- D. When God judges, He can turn things upside down – cause great confusion and disorder.

2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, 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 taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

- A. God's judgment does not favor or protect the rich or poor, the high or low, or any class.
1. This repetitive of *as...so* comparisons means there was no differences made at all.
 2. There are six comparisons in this verse describing opposite sides of six relationships.
 3. When sin infects a whole nation, there is no pity shown by the Just Judge of sinners.
 4. Men may make differences out of respect of persons, but not our God (I Peter 1:17).
 5. The singular is used throughout as a collective noun for all such men (except *people*).
- B. Here we have reference to a priest (collective for all), thus we assume this to be Judah.
- C. They were not to charge each other usury (De 23:19), but God would judge both parties.

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

- A. Consider the word *land*, which was special to the Jews – for it was their promised land.
1. With specific boundaries, it had been promised to Abraham and His seed forever.

- 2. But it was a conditional promise that would end for disobedience (Lev 26; Deut 28).
- B. Judah was reduced to broken down walls, Jerusalem into rubble, and the farms ruined.
 - 1. Raids by the Assyrians and then the Babylonians had accomplished this desolation.
 - 2. Isaiah had detailed this spoiling of Judah (Is 3:6-8; 5:9-13,25; 6:11; 7:17-25; etc.).
- C. The only real or valuable truth in the universe is that by ... *the LORD hath spoken it.*

***** *Sins Against the Laws and Covenant – Verses 4-6* *****

4 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

- A. The use of *earth*, *world*, and *earth* are terms for the country, nations, and cities of Judah.
 - 1. A child should know what these words cannot mean, so we look for another sense.
 - 2. If you force a literal or common meaning on these words, it must include Alabama.
 - 3. If you force a literal or common meaning on these words, it must be Christ’s return.
 - 4. But since Isaiah 13 has already used these terms for merely Babylon, we limit them.
 - 5. See the introductory notes to this chapter and also the notes for the first verse above.
- B. People mourn, languish, and fade away, so it is mainly the people of the earth and world.
 - 1. By including the third clause in your reading, the other two would also be of people.
 - 2. Envision the Jews as very prosperous and blooming, but now languishing and fading.
 - 3. God turned their world upside down, from joy and success to grief and desolation.
 - 4. There is also the mourning, languishing, and fading of productivity. See next verse.
- C. It did not matter how highly any thought of himself, God made the proud to languish.

5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

- A. The promised land! The blessed and favored country of Judah was defiled by their sins.
 - 1. The dirt, grass, and trees had not changed in chemical composition or potential yield.
 - 2. But national guilt had ruined the land so that God would not bless those living there.
 - 3. He can and would hinder productivity (Lev 26:4-5,19-20; Hag 1:6-11; Mal 3:8-12).
 - 4. This is like God’s word against the Canaanites – the land would vomit them out.
 - 5. This is like God’s word against Cain for Abel – his blood cried from the ground.
 - 6. Child sacrifice does not literally pollute the ground, but the people on it (Ps 106:38).
- B. Since the sinful nation had polluted their earth and land, they must be thrown out of it.
 - 1. Keep the promised land in mind. For their sins had defiled God’s covenant about it.
 - 2. He would have kept them there forever, but their sins violated the conditional terms.
- C. They were guilty of three aspects of disobedience to God that saved them from Egypt.
 - 1. They transgressed the laws of Moses – sin is the transgression of the law (I Jn 3:4).

2. They changed the ordinance, collective for ordinances, of statutes for their good.
 3. If ordinance is kept singular, was it circumcision? Sabbath? worship? So collective.
 4. They broke the everlasting covenant with Abraham and Moses for that very land.
 5. The land was given forever, but conditional for obedience (Gen 13:15; II Chr 20:7).
- D. Canaan was not unconditional ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/dispensationalism.php>.
- E. There is an unconditional everlasting covenant – heaven by Jesus Christ’s life and work.

6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

- A. There was no new curse on other nations for new sins on their part – this is about Judah.
1. The context is confirmed verse after verse, for nothing new had occurred in the earth.
 2. This is how we read any book but especially the Bible to always submit to context.
- B. God fulfilled His promise to curse the land for disobedience (Lev 26:14; Deut 28:15).
1. This precise promise, threat, and warning had been declared to Israel (Deut 4:27).
 2. The application of it to Judah and Babylon burning Jerusalem is perfect appropriate.
 3. The earth itself was not cursed, but rather the people living on the earth were cursed.
- C. Only a few were left, since most were burned in wrath, and those left were very desolate.
- D. Nebuchadnezzar did burn the houses of Jerusalem and any fools in them (II Kgs 25:9).
- E. Be Sure Your Sin Will Find You Out ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/be-sure-your-sin4.pdf>.

***** *Cursed to Desolation for Their Sins – Verses 7-12* *****

7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

- A. The figure of speech here applies sad human emotion to things intended to cheer men.
1. New wine can never mourn and never has – this is metonymy as elsewhere (Pr 20:1).
 2. The usual effect of new wine, wine in general, and merriment are altered to sighing.
 3. Due to a terrible vintage or rather to no men left to drink it, vineyards were a waste.
 4. The merryhearted do not truly sigh, but those once merryhearted now sighed instead.
 5. By comparing this verse to the next one, the problem is with the users not the wine.
- B. New wine is alcoholic but the current vintage (Acts 2:13; Hos 4:11; Joel 1:5; Matt 9:17).
- C. God’s curse on men for disobedience includes replacing their joy with grief and sorrow.
- D. No matter how troubled you may be, sin can bring God’s judgment to make it far worse.

8 *The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.*

- A. **Tabret.** A small percussion instrument like the tambourine that was held in the hand.
- B. The problem is with the users, not the instruments; the change was in men's outlook.
- C. God can, and He did here, take away all their joy and replace it with grief and pain.

9 *They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.*

- A. Wine and music usually go together well (Eccl 10:19), but not with Chaldeans coming.
- B. Those that formerly drank wine for pleasure would find it totally devoid of usual effect.

10 *The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.*

- A. This must be Jerusalem by the context – see the introductive and notes for the first verse.
 - 1. Context should always be the master to control possible interpretations of the words.
 - 2. Once context is established, which we did above, then we make the words fit context.
 - 3. For more about submission to context ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/slaves-to-context.pdf>.
- B. How was Jerusalem the city of confusion? Turned upside down by God's judging army.
 - 1. This prophecy is introduced in its first verse with a description of confusion (Is 24:1).
 - 2. Isaiah had already described their great perplexity in a recent prophecy (Is 22:1-5).
- C. The city of Jerusalem was broken down by king Nebuchadnezzar (II Kgs 25:1-4,9-10).
- D. Like leaving your house for a long absence or a storm, you would lock it up very tightly.
 - 1. If you see a terrified family inside a locked house, they were burned (II Kgs 25:9).
 - 2. If you see a terrified family fleeing to the mountains, they would lock up the house.

11 *There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.*

- A. As Solomon had taught, wine is useful in such a strait (Pr 31:6-7), but not useful here.
- B. Note with appreciation and respect the opposite use of a wine figure here (Is 24:7-9).
- C. God took these party animals and took every comfort and joy from them (Is 22:12-14).

12 *In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.*

- A. Inside or outside a walled city was a huge difference in reality and in inhabitants' minds.
- B. But it did not matter in this case – the Chaldeans had destroyed both gates and the city.
- C. Thus far you may read the prophetic warning of God's judgment on the sinners of Judah.

13 When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

- A. Thus far has been God's judgment on Judah and Jerusalem, but now a remnant foretold.
- B. As Isaiah had illustrated before, gleaning is an example of a small remnant (Is 17:5-6).
- C. Farmers are diligent to gather 100% of a harvest for full yield, ignoring immaterial loss.
- D. Only a very few would survive the Chaldean invasion (Is 24:6), Jeremiah among them.

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

- A. This small remnant of escapees of the ravages and rapes of the Chaldeans would praise.
 - 1. The majesty of the LORD is revealed differently – in this case by merciful salvation.
 - 2. They would not lift up their voice to beg help or deliverance – they were delivered.
- B. Those that escaped the judgment in Judah would have fled to any sea or maritime coast.
- C. There is a time to lift up your voice and cry aloud with fervent intensity and volume.

15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

- A. Isaiah by God directs all those that escaped death and captivity to praise the LORD.
 - 1. Since God purposed to save a remnant, then those that were among it should praise.
 - 2. Though everything was burning in Judah and/or around them, they must glorify Him.
 - 3. They had passed through or been saved from the furnace of affliction, so to worship.
 - 4. God had and will appeal to this fact of salvation by Isaiah (Isaiah 1:25-26; 48:9-11).
- B. A great place to escape would be isles of the Mediterranean, of which there were many.
- C. God's promises are true, even in great trouble; God's salvation is glorious after trouble.
 - 1. When chastened or punished for your own or others' sins, He abideth faithful always.
 - 2. Once chastening has ended or God has provided a refuge, praise should go upward.

16 From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the

treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

- A. Continuance from the previous section is Isaiah's inspired knowledge of remnant praise.
 - 1. The uttermost part of the earth does not need to be Alaska or the Amazon rainforest.
 - 2. It is for lands and isles outside Canaan or the land of Judah to which a remnant fled.
- B. The songs were *glory to the righteous* – for God would keep His word to restore some.
 - 1. The righteous were the faithful and obedient to be restored to the city of Jerusalem.
 - 2. Solomon had prayed that any repenting and praying to Jerusalem to be restored to it.
 - 3. There were righteous men e.g. Daniel, Mordecai, Ezra, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, etc.
 - 4. Songs should still go up when in exile in any sense, for God's promises are still true.
 - 5. The songs going up were about God's promises of future glory for regathered Jews.
- C. However, the prophet Isaiah with the desolation of Jerusalem in view could only mourn.
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar's arrival to ruin Judah was about a hundred years away to Isaiah.
 - 2. While he heard future songs from the remnant that escaped, he was not part of them.
 - 3. He could only painfully see what was coming between him and them – the suffering.
 - 4. All fatness and joy of Isaiah were removed by his detailed view of Jerusalem's ruin.
 - 5. He rued the terrible situation in Judah and Jerusalem by very treacherous dealers.
- D. Who were the treacherous dealers using treachery in an extraordinary way or measure?
 - 1. They could be the Chaldeans using subterfuge to sack Jerusalem, but this was usual.
 - 2. The Chaldeans by most or all of what we read were God's servants and quite direct.
 - 3. Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuzaradan were incredibly fair – there was no treachery.
 - 4. No doubt there is such an application – Belshazzar (Is 21:2) or Sennacherib (Is 33:1).
 - 5. However, if it is Nebuchadnezzar here, then neither of these two apply as well then.
 - 6. Others were treacherous against God and their people – incredible treachery indeed.
 - 7. True treachery requires intimate personal trust violated, like marriage (Mal 2:10-16).
 - 8. The rulers of Jerusalem were incredibly treacherous against their own dear citizens.
 - 9. The book and experiences of Jeremiah detail exceptional treachery by Jewish rulers.
 - 10. Ishmael's treachery against Gedaliah is terrible treachery (Jeremiah chaps. 40-41).
 - 11. This is a better application with many details (Isaiah 48:8; Jer 3:1-2,6-11,20; 5:11; 12:1,6; 32:1-3; 36:20-24; 37:15; 38:6; Ezek 16:15-59; 23:11; Hosea 3:1; 5:7; 6:7).
 - 12. Would it hurt Isaiah to see Jeremiah and the saved remnant dealt with treacherously?

17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

- A. The inhabitant of the earth is not those living in Madagascar, but rather those of Judah.
- B. They would be subject to several symbols of danger – fearful reports, the pit, the snare.
- C. God loves to list the various ways He can and will punish (Jeremiah 15;2; 24:10; 43:11).

18 And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

- A. No matter what the Jews of Judah did to escape, the majority would be taken and killed.
 - 1. The *noise of the fear* is a report or rumor of the coming army or an imminent danger.
 - 2. Trying to escape the report of the approaching army would lead to danger of a pit.
 - 3. Climbing out of the pit to escape danger would lead an escapee to fall into a snare.
 - 4. There is no remedy when once God turns to be the enemy of His people (Ps 29:1).
- B. Almighty God in heaven thundered judgment on Judah causing foundations to shake.
 - 1. The windows of heaven had been literally opened to drown the earth (Genesis 7:11).
 - 2. The windows of heaven here were symbolically opened to drop down destruction.

19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

- A. We know the earth is Judah by context, so every expression is about her total desolation.
- B. What a declaration of destruction in triplicate! Let every sinner take refuge in Christ!
- C. The great Day of Judgment will be far worse than Judah's gentle spanking by Babylon.

20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

- A. Now a picture of a staggering drunkard to describe the confusion and calamity of Judah.
- B. Then a picture of a cottage or hut being destroyed to show the easy and totality of ruin.
- C. It is not the transgression upon Judah, but by metonymy the judgment for transgression.
- D. Jerusalem would be down for the count – 70 yrs – and would not rise again until Cyrus.
 - 1. But it says *not rise again*? Yes, but it also said in context about a joyful remnant.
 - 2. But it says *not rise again*? Yes, and it will shortly say in context about restoration.
 - 3. It would not rise again in this context of punishment, which was eventually lifted.
 - 4. Judah would not be able to resist the heavy judgment or rise unexpectedly from it.
 - 5. There would be no recovery or regathering in Judah until God finished His judgment.
 - 6. God had a plan for 70 years to compensate for Sabbath desecration, and it was kept.
 - 7. Recall, the promised land was given to Abraham and Israel *forever* ... conditionally.
 - 8. Recall, the covenant of circumcision was given to Abram *forever* ... until the N.T.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

- A. We chose the context before starting this chapter to be Nebuchadnezzar crushing Judah.
1. We are not moved by *earth* and the kings of the *earth*, for they are Jerusalem's rulers.
 2. We have explained above and consistently followed the Spirit's usage of *earth* here.
 3. But there is also a further sense of the *earth* as terrestrial as inferior to the celestial.
- B. Therefore, what is the host of *high ones on high* and the *kings of the earth on the earth*?
1. The high ones are those rulers of Jerusalem other than the civil rulers – the priests.
 2. The high ones on high are those leaders and rulers of Judah dealing in the celestial.
 3. The kings of the earth upon the earth are the civil rulers of Judah and their princes.
 4. Think! Religious leaders and rulers are heaven's authority and civil rulers earthly.
 5. There is here an emphasis on the *earth* as terrestrial and as inferior to the celestial.
- C. Did it happen? Read the record of the kings and rulers in Jeremiah and other books.
1. It began early with Hezekiah's son Manasseh being taken captive (II Chr 33:11-13).
 2. Follow the next kings – Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.
 3. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and priestly authority and functions ended.
 4. Like the rest of the population, most of them were killed and thus fulfilled prophecy.
 5. Ezra and Nehemiah would later have difficulty even identifying legitimate priests.

22 And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.

- A. This combination of the rulers of Judah – both ecclesiastical and civil – would be taken.
- B. What prison? Babylonian captivity! For how many days? Seventy years of captivity!
- C. Who visited them? God visited them through His chosen servant Cyrus the Persian.

23 Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

- A. After recovery from Babylon – God blessed Judah to far exceed Solomon's Jerusalem.
1. The moon and sun are symbols for rulers, two classes of those judged (Is 24:21-22).
 2. If you need or desire, take the moon and sun in any other symbolic way, it still works.
 3. How would the moon be confounded and sun ashamed? By a much brighter Light!
 4. We use nearly the same language when we say, *He is able to put you in the shade*.
 5. Who is this Sun? It is the LORD of hosts reigning in Judah by Messiah the Prince.
 6. Who are the ancients? The priests, apostles, prophets, and pastors ... known as elders.
 7. There is no generation or leaders of Israel that came close to exceeding David, etc.

8. It was the Son of David reigning on Mount Zion that transcended all those before.
- B. To fully appreciate this short prophecy of Christ's kingdom, see Haggai (Hag 1:1-9).
- C. To appreciate this short prophecy of Christ's kingdom, see Malachi (Mal 3:1-4; 4:1-3).
- D. What a *glorious* end to a terrible prophecy! What a *glorious* opening to the next chapter!