

Isaiah

“The Evangelical Prophet”

I. God’s Denunciation of Judah (1:1-12:6)

- A. The Condemnation of Judah (1:1-2:1-4)
- B. The Cleansing Judgments to Come (2:5-5:30)
- C. The Calling of Isaiah (6:1-13)
- D. The Coming of Messiah (7:1-12:6)

II. God’s Denunciations against other Nations (13:1-23:18)

A. The Judgment against Babylon (13:1-22)

1. A “*Divinely*” appointed Army Mobilized (13:1-5)

13 The *oracle* concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

²Lift up a *standard* on the bare hill,
Raise your *voice* to them,
Wave the *hand* that they may enter the *doors* of the *nobles*.

³I have commanded *My consecrated ones*,
I have even called *My mighty warriors*,
My proudly exulting ones, to execute *My anger*.

⁴A sound of *tumult* on the mountains,
Like that of *many people*!

A sound of the *uproar of kingdoms*,
Of *nations* gathered together!
The LORD of hosts is *mustering* the army for battle.

⁵They are *coming* from a far country,
From the *farthest horizons*,
The LORD and His instruments of *indignation*,
To *destroy* the whole land.

2. A “*Day*” of Destruction Declared (13:6-13)

⁶Wail, for the day of the LORD is near!
It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

⁷ Therefore **all hands** will *fall limp*, and every man's **heart** will *melt*.

⁸ They will be **terrified**, **pains** and **anguish** will *take hold* of *them*;
They will writhe like a **woman in labor**,
They will look at one another in **astonishment**, their **faces aflame**.

⁹ Behold, the **day of the LORD** is coming,
Cruel, with **fury** and **burning anger**,
To make the land a **desolation**;
And **He** will **exterminate** its **sinner**s from it.

¹⁰ For the **stars of heaven** and their **constellations** will **not**
flash forth **their light**; the **sun** will be **dark** when it **rises**
and the **moon** will **not** shed its **light**.

¹¹ Thus I will **punish** the **world** for its **evil** and the **wicked**
for their **iniquity**; I will also put an **end** to the **arrogance** of the **proud**
and **abase** the **haughtiness** of the **ruthless**.

¹² I will make **mortal man** **scarcer** than **pure gold**
and **mankind** than the **gold of Ophir**.

¹³ Therefore I will make the **heavens tremble**,
and the **earth** will be **shaken** from **its place**
at the **fury of the LORD of hosts** in the **day** of His **burning anger**.

3. A *Dispersion*, along with **Death** Described (13:14-16)

¹⁴ And it will be that *like* a **hunted gazelle**,
or like **sheep** with **none** to **gather them**,
They will each **turn** to **his own people**,
and each **one flee** to **his own land**.

¹⁵ Anyone who is **found** will be **thrust through**,
anyone who is **captured** will **fall by the sword**.

¹⁶ Their **little ones** also will be **dashed to pieces** before their eyes;
their **houses** will be **plundered** and their **wives ravished**.

4. The *Destroying Army* Revealed (13:17-18)

¹⁷ Behold, I am going to **stir up the Medes against them**,
Who will **not value silver** or take **pleasure in gold**.

¹⁸ And *their bows* will **mow down** the **young men**,
They will **not even** have **compassion** on the **fruit of the womb**,
Nor will their **eye pity children**.

5. A *Devastating Aftermath* (13:19-22)

¹⁹ And **Babylon**, the *beauty of kingdoms*, the *glory* of the **Chaldeans' pride**, will be as when **God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah**.

²⁰ It will **never** be inhabited or lived in from **generation to generation**;
Nor will the **Arab** pitch *his tent* there,
Nor will **shepherds** make *their flocks lie down* there.

²¹ But **desert creatures** will lie down there,
and their houses will be full of **owls**;
Ostriches also will live there, and **shaggy goats** will frolic there.

²² **Hyenas** will howl in their fortified **towers**
and **jackals** in their luxurious **palaces**.
Her *fateful time* also will **soon come**
and her **days** will *not* be prolonged.

Some Initial Observations—Isaiah 13

1. In *Isaiah* chapter 13, we **once again** have the **sovereign God** declaring **how He** is going to **use another nation**, the **Medes**, to administer **His divine justice** upon *another nation—Babylon*. God even *calls* their invading **armies**, “**My consecrated ones,..My mighty warriors**,” because they are carrying out **His righteous purposes**, and are “**His instruments of indignation** (13:1-5).”
2. In **chapter 13, Isaiah** declares the **judgment and destruction** of the nation of **Babylon**. However, please note that at the *time* of **Isaiah's vision** of this, **Assyria** was still the **main world power**, and **Babylon** would not even emerge as a **threatening nation** until **decades** later. As it is with **divine prophetic revelation**, **Isaiah** was declaring a **future yet to happen**. Only an **all-knowing Creator** can do that with such **accuracy**. It **assures us**, as *believers*, that we can **confidently trust** in the **scriptures** as being the **inspired word of God**, and that we have a “**sure word of prophecy**.” (I Peter 1:19)
3. In **chapter 13, Isaiah** is indeed pointing to the **destruction of future Babylonian empire** by a **future Medo-Persian empire**. However, as **Isaiah** is describing this **judgment of Babylon** in the *near future*, he also declares this **destruction** as that which will happen **on** the “**day of the Lord**.” This “**day**” is usually a reference to the **devastating judgments** of the **last days** during the **return of the Lord**. This indicates that there is yet a “**future**” **Babylon** that will be in **existence** during the time of the **Lord's return**.
The invasion by the **Medo-Persian empire** in the *near future* serves as a “**type**” of **judgment** to come, on a **Babylon**, that will emerge in the **last days**. (Revelation chapters 17 and 18).

Biblical *Babylon* – A Summary of its place in History and Prophecy

- A. *Babylon* is mentioned **287 times** in the **Scriptures**, *more* than any other city except **Jerusalem**.
- B. *Babylon* was a **literal city** on the **Euphrates river**. Genesis 11:1-10 tells us that it was at *Babylon* where, soon after the **flood**, **mankind** formally **organized** in the **rebellion against God**. In this sense, *Babylon* “Was the **seat** of the **civilization** that expressed **organized hostility** to God.” (Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation*).
- C. Later, *Babylon* was also the **capital** of the worldwide **empire** that cruelly conquered **Judah** in 586 B.C. “*Babylon*, to them (the **Jews**), was the essence of **all evil**, the embodiment of **cruelty**, the **foe of God’s people**, and the lasting **type** of **sin, carnality, lust and greed**.” (Tenney)
- D. “When **Cyrus** (king of **Medo-Persia**) conquered *Babylon* (539 B.C.), he did *not* devastate the city. The **walls** were left standing until 518 B.C., and general **desolation** did not set in until the **third century B.C.** *Babylon* gradually fell into **decay**, and the **prophecy of Isaiah** was **fulfilled** (13:20). *Babylon* became completely **depopulated** by the time of the **Muslim** conquest in the **seventh century A.D.**, and to *this day* it lies **deserted**.” (Wolf)
- E. To those familiar with the Old Testament, the name *Babylon* is associated with **organized idolatry**, **blasphemy** and the **persecution of God’s people**.

In the New Testament, the **world’s system** of the **last days** is characterized both *religiously* and *commercially* as Babylon (Revelation 17 and 18).

Therefore, *Babylon* is a “Suitable **representation**...of the **idolatrous, pagan world-system** in **opposition to God**.” (Martin)

(Above excerpts and quotes taken from, The Enduring Word Bible Commentary by David Guzik – ewm@enduringword.com)

* Noted Messianic scholar **Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum** holds the view that the **prophetic judgments** of *Isaiah* chapter 13 refer to the *future Babylon* of the **last days**

He believes that the **city of Babylon** will be **rebuilt** and become the **economic capital** of the **world**. (The Book of Isaiah, Fruchtenbaum, pgs. 175-176)

Closing Comments

