

This week we will look at the burdens or judgments on the Persian Gulf Area (The Wilderness of the Sea), Edom, Arabia, and Tyre. The Assyrian threat is the setting for these oracles with the Babylonian threat closely following behind.

**Day 1 – The Burden Against the Persian Gulf Region (The Wilderness of the Sea) –
Isaiah 21:1-10, Isaiah 39**

In Isaiah 39, Hezekiah showed what he had in treasure and possessions to those who were called the Babylonians. He showed it all to them; there was nothing among Hezekiah's treasuries that had not been shown to them. Please read Isaiah 39 before you read Isaiah 21:1-10.

Who were these Babylonians at this time? Where were they from? (Isaiah 39:1)

Now, read Isaiah 21:1-10. These Babylonians were probably from around the Persian Gulf region. At the time of this passage of Scripture, the king of this area was Merodach-Baladan of Chaldean decent. He rebelled against Assyria and captured Babylon and was crowned king. The Israelites made an alliance with this Babylonian king for protection against the Assyrians. When Isaiah saw in his prophecy that Assyria would regain Babylon and Merodach-Baladan would be overthrown as king and the way opened up for Assyria to conquer the Middle East, Isaiah was terrified. Later on, in history, as you know from chapters 13 and 14, the Israelites were taken into captivity to Babylon at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. When the last Babylonian king in this line of kings was overthrown by the Medo-Persians, Israel would have been overjoyed, for this meant their 70 years of servitude to Babylon were over. Because Isaiah displayed terror instead of joy over this defeat in Isaiah 21:1-10, we must assume this passage is speaking of the earlier battle when the Assyrians overthrew Merodach-Baladan and his kingdom, and not the latter battle when the Medo-Persians defeated the Babylonian Empire. The Jews were supposed to learn the same lesson from this burden as they should have learned from the previous burdens: they were to trust the LORD alone and believe in what He had revealed to them through His prophet, Isaiah.ⁱ Please read Isaiah 2:22 and record this verse here:

What did Isaiah tell Hezekiah about his blunder in showing the Babylonians all that was in his house in Isaiah 39:6-7?

Was Isaiah referring to Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon or Merodach-baladan's Babylon as the nation who would take the inhabitants of Jerusalem captive and plunder all of King Hezekiah's treasure?

Isaiah Part 2: Deliverance and Comfort for the Faithful Isaiah 21, 22, 23, 37, 39
Week 5, Judgment on the Nations, Persian Gulf Area, Edom, Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre

Back to the Isaiah 21 text about Isaiah's current day. Please work on your double-spaced worksheet for Isaiah 21:1-10. Mark the word "oracle" as before. Mark the players in this passage in a way that you know they are the ones involved. I marked these with an empty box around the word(s): "the treacherous one," "the destroyer," "Elam," "Media," "troop of riders, horsemen in pairs," "Babylon," "the guardsman, Isaiah," "my threshed people and my afflicted of the threshing floor," and the "God of Israel, the LORD of Hosts." There are quite a few players aren't there?

What did Isaiah see in the vision concerning the Assyrian kingdom ("the treacherous one," the "destroyer")? (Isaiah 21:2, 6-9).

What was Isaiah saying to God's people?

When would God's victory over the Assyrians occur and to whom would Assyria be coming against in this decisive battle recorded in Isaiah 37?

What do you suppose was the error that brought this horrific burden upon Merodach-baladan's Babylon?

Day 2 – The Burden Against Edom – Isaiah 21:11-12

Take a look at the map referred to in Isaiah Part 2 week 1. Where is Edom located?

What does Edom mean? Use your Bible dictionary or your Strong's Concordance to discover this?

What does Esau mean?

Who was Esau according to Genesis 25:21-34? Also see Malachi 1:2-4.

This is a very short oracle, but there is much to read between the lines. Mark "oracle" as before and the players as before. Seir is another name for Edom. The Seir Mountains were given to Esau and his descendants as part of their inheritance. See Joshua 24:4. Dumah is another word that refers to the land of Edom. Dumah is not mentioned here in the text of chapter 21, but it is used in the KJV of this text for Edom. It means silence or stillness and the watchman (Isaiah) in this short oracle does not see any activity on his

time of duty. Edom is looking for some hope that Assyrian aggression would be halted, but there is none. In other words, there is no hope for Edom.ⁱⁱ

Who is the watchman in this passage?

What did Isaiah mean, when he said to Edom, “Morning comes but also night?” What do you know about the next world ruler after the Assyrians? (For those of you who are thinking, oh my gosh! What does she want here? I will tell you that this is very difficult to glean from this passage.) Could the Assyrian defeat be the “morning” but the future Babylonian conquest be the “night” that was coming?

Isaiah as the watchman continues the plea, “if you would inquire, inquire; come back again.” What do you think this might mean? What do you know about God that might make these words understandable?

Did Edom return to the LORD? Did they repent and were they saved? Find out about Edom’s demise in the short book of Obadiah. Obadiah prophesied to the Southern Kingdom earlier in history than Isaiah.

Why will Edom be left desolate and without inhabitant according to Obadiah? What was their sin against Israel for which God judged them using the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians and finally the Romans? (Obadiah 10-14)

What other grave sin did Edom commit for which God sent the nations against her in battle? (Obadiah 1-7)

Edom was eventually defeated by Babylon. After Jerusalem was taken captive by the Babylonians, the Edomites moved northward towards Judea. Sometime between the 6th and the 4th centuries B.C., the Nabateans (from Arabia) invaded Edom, and by 312 B.C. they had pushed the Edomites into southern Judea. When Rome came on the scene, the Idumeans (Greek for Edomites) were placed as rulers over the Jewish people. The ongoing battle between Jacob (I loved) and Esau (I hated) was prolonged by the Herods of Jesus’ day. The Herods (i.e., Herod the Great) were Idumeans. With the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. at the hands of the Roman Empire, the Idumeans vanished from the world scene altogether.ⁱⁱⁱ

Day 3 – The Burden Against Arabia – Isaiah 21:13-17

Please read Isaiah 21:13-17. Mark “oracle” as before and the players as before. In this short oracle, Isaiah mentions three key cities in Arabia. Dedan was in southern Arabia, Tema in northwestern Arabia, and Kedar in northern Arabia. Tema was a great oasis known to everyone of that time. Kedar was known for its beautiful, black tents. Tema and Kedar were each one of the 12 sons of Ishmael and Dedan was the grandson of Cush who was a son of Ham. Remember that the backdrop of this burden is the advancing Assyrian army. In addition to the devastation on Arabia by the Assyrians, Babylon would soon overwhelm them, as well.^{iv}

Please read some additional material concerning Jeremiah’s burden against Arabia in Jeremiah 49:28-33.

The Arabians are the descendants of the sons of Ishmael (the modern-day Arabs). The Israelites are the descendants of the sons of Isaac (the Israelites). They both have been in contention with each other throughout all of Arab/Jewish history and they are still hostile towards one another today. Ishmael’s mother, Hagar, was the servant of Isaac’s mother, Sarah, Abraham’s legitimate wife. Abraham, was the father of both boys.^v

Very little is written about the burden of Arabia. However, the Arabians were known for stealing from the Israelites and for ransacking their homes and their things. It is probable that the judgment axe of God fell on the Arabians because of these deeds done against Israel.

In 715 B.C., within one year of this prophecy, the Assyrians had devastated Arabia. It was Sargon II, who defeated them, and who deported some of their tribes to Samaria.^{vi} In Samaria, these tribes were mixed with the already half-breed Israelites who had not been deported. Could this deportation of the Arabians to Samaria been part of the reason that Saudi Arabia did not go up against Israel in the first Gulf War? Could their “kin” have been mixed in with the Jewish nation? Just food for thought!

Please write the theme or themes of this chapter on the double-spaced worksheet and on the Isaiah-summary-theme chart in the appendix.

Day 4 – The Burden against Jerusalem – Isaiah 22

The inhabitants of Jerusalem were acting just like their pagan neighbors who surrounded them. They trusted in their alliances, the work of their hands in preparation for war, and in the other gods whom they worshiped. They deserved to be judged. God had been merciful to the S. Kingdom and stayed His hand of judgment until after He defeated the Assyrians at Jerusalem, for He had promised Jerusalem His protection against them. When the Babylonians came to world domination, Judah and Jerusalem’s sin became ripe, their hearts hardened, and God’s mercy had reached its limits. He would use the Babylonians as His rod of correction for the Southern Kingdom and Babylon would

devastate their land, kill thousands of Jews, and take the remainder into captivity. Isaiah points out two specific sins for which the citizens of Zion would be judged: the sin of unbelief and the sin of unfaithfulness.^{vii}

The Sin of Unbelief

Please read Isaiah 22:1-14 and work on your double-spaced text for this chapter. Mark “oracle” as before and any references to “depended on” or “depend on.”

Note the “in that day” statements. Mark them on the double-spaced text for that chapter and also in the appendix for “in that day” observations.

This chapter is a very difficult chapter to discern as to which dominant world power Isaiah is referring (Elam, Assyria, Babylon). Isaiah probably is referring to the Babylonian conflict yet ahead of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The valley of vision (probably the Kidron valley just east of Jerusalem) speaks of the low points and not the high points and symbolizes a place of sorrow and death. God would deliver Jerusalem from Assyrian domination, but looking down the road to the maturity of Jerusalem’s disobedience and unbelief, God would eventually have to deliver some of the Jews unto death and others into Babylonian captivity.^{viii}

What did the people do to the city in their own strength to prepare for a siege from the enemy? (Isaiah 22:8-10)

See I Kings 7:2-6,10:17; II Chronicles 9:20; Is. 39:2.

See II Chronicles 32:5.

See II Chronicles 32:3-4.

Why did the city fall this time? (Isaiah 22:11)

What will happen to those in Jerusalem in that day according to Isaiah 22:12-14?

Isaiah Part 2: Deliverance and Comfort for the Faithful Isaiah 21, 22, 23, 37, 39
Week 5, Judgment on the Nations, Persian Gulf Area, Edom, Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre

When the inhabitants of Jerusalem should have been repenting, what were they doing instead? (Isaiah 22:13)

Will the Lord GOD of hosts forgive them? (Isaiah 22:14)

During the Babylonian siege on Jerusalem, instead of defending Jerusalem, the rulers tried to flee the city ahead of the coming armies. They were caught and taken to Babylon as captives. See Isaiah 22:3.

Who is crying in Isaiah 22:4? And what is he crying about?

What will be involved in the battle of the valley of vision? (Isaiah 22:5)

Who are Elam and Kir here? (Isaiah 22:6)

What is the sin here in the first 14 verses of chapter 22?

The Sin of Unfaithfulness

Please read Isaiah 22:15-25 and Isaiah 36 and 37

Who were Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, and Shebna? Please see Isaiah 36:22, 37:2, II Kings 18:26-37; 19:2.

What kind of character did Shebna have according to Isaiah 22:15-19?

What was Shebna's sin of unfaithfulness?

What kind of character did Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah have? (Isaiah 22:20-23)

Isaiah Part 2: Deliverance and Comfort for the Faithful Isaiah 21, 22, 23, 37, 39
Week 5, Judgment on the Nations, Persian Gulf Area, Edom, Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre

What or who is being contrasted here? (Revelation 3:7)

What will happen to Eliakim? (Isaiah 22:20-24) Could this be a foreshadowing of the Christ to come who will overcome the Anti-Christ?

Eventually, what, too, will happen to this peg that has been driven into a firm place who will become a throne of glory to his father's house? (Isaiah 22:23-25)

Is verse 25 talking about a time future to Shebna and Eliakim's day?

Who can you place your trust in?

On whom are you hanging your life and everything you have?

Who is the only One who can be faithful to you?

Please write the theme or themes of this chapter 22 on the double-spaced worksheet and on the Isaiah-summary-theme chart in the appendix.

Day 5 – The Burden against Tyre – Isaiah 23

Please read Isaiah 23 and work on your double-spaced worksheet for this chapter. Mark "oracle" as before. Can you make a list in the margin of what the LORD has planned for Tyre? Can you make a list in the margin of the words used to describe Tyre?

Who are the people of the land of Tyre today?

Isaiah Part 2: Deliverance and Comfort for the Faithful Isaiah 21, 22, 23, 37, 39
Week 5, Judgment on the Nations, Persian Gulf Area, Edom, Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre

The Phoenicians were from present-day Lebanon, the coastal area just north of present-day Israel. From maps in the back of your Bible, you can see the areas occupied by the 12 tribes in ancient days included the city of Tyre. (See the New Inductive Study Bible, NAS, p. 2211, Israel's Territories: Ancient and Modern). Both Sidon and the land occupied by Tyre in ancient days are located within Lebanon's borders today. The land of Lebanon has been in the most recent news because Israel had been warring with the Hezbollah terrorist group in the southern-most part of Lebanon.¹

When we looked at Satan's origin in Isaiah 14 and cross-references in Ezekiel 28, we saw that Satan's sin was pride. We also decided that the King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28 was Satan himself. We again, here, are presented with the land of Tyre. What does God have against Tyre? What is their offense against Him?

From where did Tyre get so much pride? (Isaiah 23:1- 7)

How are these merchants of Tyre described in Isaiah 23:8?

Who has planned this destruction of Tyre according to Isaiah 23: 8-13?

Why has He planned it according to Isaiah 23:9?

How many years will the Chaldeans, be allowed to halt Tyre's trade? The Chaldeans are the Babylonians.

How is 70 years described here?

What will happen to Tyre after those 70 years according to Isaiah 23:15-18?

What will be different about the land (occupied by Tyre in Isaiah's day) in the Millennial Kingdom according to Isaiah 23:18?

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Isaiah Part 2: Deliverance and Comfort for the Faithful Isaiah 21, 22, 23, 37, 39
Week 5, Judgment on the Nations, Persian Gulf Area, Edom, Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre

What was Tyre's offense against Israel? Hint: see I Kings 16:29-33.

In lesson 2 of Isaiah Part 2, we looked at Revelation 17 and 18 in some depth. Return to those two chapters now and answer the following questions:

What is Babylon called in Revelation 17:2-3?

What happens to nations where opulence is the norm? How is our country doing with opulence?

When Babylon is destroyed, what will happen to the nations who have committed immorality with her according to Rev. 18:9?

What will the merchants of the earth do when she is no more?

Babylon will be utterly destroyed in the last days and she will incur the judgment of God's wrath on her pride. This same kind of judgment Babylon will receive, was levied on Tyre for 70 years, but Tyre was allowed to return to her trade afterwards. Babylon, in the end times, after her final destruction, will never exist again. The land of Tyre does not exist today. However, Tyre will be present during the Millennial Kingdom and is promised a glorious future.

Please write the theme or themes of this chapter on the double-spaced worksheet and on the Isaiah-summary-theme chart in the appendix.

I hope that you have enjoyed these lessons on the nations that surround the tiny little plot of land known as Israel. What great lesson(s) have you learned from studying all this? What can we glean from these past five weeks of study that will cause us to think and rely on the faithfulness of our God?

Thank you for your diligence in study. I know that it has not been easy for most of us. However, you will not regret studying about these surrounding nations for you will now be able to discern the times that we live in and know that His Second Coming is near.

What have you learned about God's sovereignty and His actions taken against the nations of the world?

How are we as a nation to respond to Israel today?

What are some of the signs of the age that we live in?

What hope do you have for some of the Gentile nations, including our own?

ⁱ John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary of the Old Testament*, Wheaton, Ill.: SP Publications, Inc., 1985, pp. 1067-1068.

ⁱⁱ Ibid, pp. 1068-1069.

ⁱⁱⁱ Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Chicago, Moody Press, p. 515.

^{iv} John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary of the Old Testament*, Wheaton, Ill.: SP Publications, Inc., 1985, p.1069.

^v J. Vernon McGee, *Isaiah Part 1*, Laverne, CA, El Camino Press, 1978, p. 158.

^{vi} John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary of the Old Testament*, Wheaton, IL: SP Publications, Inc., 1985, p. 1069.

^{vii} Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Comforted*, USA, Sp Publications, Inc., 1992, p. 54-56.

^{viii} Ibid.