

INITIATION INTO ISAIAH

by

J. Vernon McGee, Th.D., LL.D.

Copyright @ 1960

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THEME:

The Burden of the Valley of Vision (Jerusalem), and the history of Shebna and Eliakim.

REMARKS:

This burden evidently refers to Jerusalem as we shall point out under COMMENTS. The burdens began way off at a distance in Babylon and they have continued to come closer and nearer to Jerusalem, now the storm breaks in all its fury upon the Holy City. Just what siege and enemy is in the mind of the prophet? Persia is mentioned by name but Jerusalem was in ruins while Persia was in power. Apparently all the enemies who have come up against Jerusalem are before us here, from the Assyrian who only laid a siege, but did not enter the city, to the last enemy from the north who will threaten the city but will not enter. The interval between these two has seen this city captured more than any other. This is the burden of Jerusalem.

The unusual insertion of historical document out of the archives of Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah at this point is worth noting.

Many have seen in Shebna, a cheap politician, a picture of the Antichrist. While Eliakim sets before us none other than the Lord Jesus Christ who will supplant the Antichrist in this world.

OUTLINE:

1. **The BURDEN of the Valley of Vision** (Jerusalem). Verses 1-14
2. **The BRIEF from the Case of Shebna and Eliakim.** Verses 15-25

COMMENT:

Verse 1—**The burden of the valley of vision, What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house tops?**

“**Valley of vision**” refers to Jerusalem as verses 4, 8, 9 and 10 imply. The expression, “**valley of vision**” is another of Isaiah’s paradoxical statements. “Mountain of vision” would be understood. The mountain is the place of the far view. Moses stood on Mount Nebo to view the Land of Promise. Our Lord looked over Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

The valley in Scripture is the place of sorrow, humbleness, and death. Valley of salt, slaughter and death are scriptural expressions.

“How Pleasant is My Valley” is secular, and *“There Will Be Peace in The Valley”* is sentimental, not scriptural.

The vision here is one of sorrow and coming battle. The valley is the proper place for this vision.

Curiosity and fear send people to the house top to enquire about the approaching danger. See the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem in Isaiah 36 and 37. In the last siege our Lord warns these people to leave the housetop and flee (Matthew 24:17).

Verse 2—**Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.**

Verse 3—**All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound by the archers: all that are found in thee are bound together, which have fled from far.**

Verse 4—**Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.**

Verse 5—**For it is a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.**

Verse 6—**And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men and horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield.**

Verse 7—**And it shall come to pass, that thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate.**

Verse 8—**And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest.**

These verses apply in a definite way at the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrian under Sennacherib, but this does not exhaust their meaning as again under succeeding victors.

Elam in (verse 6) means Persia and Kir refers to Moab. Both were allies of Assyria in the siege of Jerusalem.

Verse 9—**Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.**

Verse 10—**And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.**

Verse 11—Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

Hezekiah actually took these precautions in defending Jerusalem. (See II Chronicles 32). This section refers to the future. As Dr. Jennings puts it, “the history eventuated in the deliverance of Jerusalem, the prophecy in its capture: therefore the history does not fulfill it.”

Verse 12—And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

Verse 13—And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.

Verse 14—And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of hosts.

“**In that day**” refers to the future: “**did**”, the past tense, refers to history. It is both historical and prophetic. God gave His people feast days to come before Him with joy. Their sin made it imperative to substitute fasting for feasting and weeping for joy. Then people complained in the days they should have rejoiced. In their desperate plight, when they should have mourned, they adopted the materialistic philosophy of a God rejecting people, “**eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die.**” This is fatalism of a deadly sort. Paul says that the resurrection of Christ makes it impossible for a Christian to adopt this attitude toward life.

Verse 15—Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house, and say,

“**Shebna**” was Secretary of the Treasury and a cheap politician under Hezekiah. Apparently he was misappropriating funds. (See also II Kings 18:18; 19:2; Isaiah 36:3; 37:2).

Verse 16—What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?

Shebna was building a tomb to perpetuate his name. It was ironical, as he was to die and be buried in a foreign land (verses 17-18).

Verse 19—And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.

He was to lose his position.

Verse 20—And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:

Verse 21—And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

Eliakim was a statesman who succeeded Shebna. Eliakim, the statesman, was an unselfish man, he and Shebna are in contrast. Isaiah has brought together these men who are more than paradoxes. They are opposites. Shebna pictures Antichrist; Eliakim, Christ. The language is typical.

Verse 22—And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

This Scripture is applied to Christ.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth: and shutteth, and no man openeth (Revelation 3:7).

Verse 24—And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.

Our Salvation likewise hangs on Him.

Verse 25—In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cutoff: for the Lord hath spoken it.

This verse refers back to Shebna, and as he is a picture of Antichrist, the statement is prophetic as the phrase “**in that day**” clearly indicates.

~ end of chapter 22 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
