



Series: Bible Survey

Lesson: 31. Isaiah 13–39

- **Review**

- Main themes:

- The supremacy of the Holy One of Israel
 - God's relationship with *all* of Creation
 - Judgment and restoration
 - The coming Messiah

- Isaiah 1–12 show the 'big picture' of God's case against Judah and the future that awaited them after that had been dealt with, Isaiah's vision of God's holiness and his call to preach to a stubborn people, and how God used one king's faithlessness to show how the coming King would be God's way of making all things right on the earth.

- **_____ Against Israel's Neighbors (13–27)**

- Judgments are pronounced against proud neighbors Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, Egypt, Edom, Arabia, and Tyre.
 - Even though the focus is on the destruction to come, there are also echoes of earlier prophecies of salvation to come.

- These messages would have been to encourage Judah that her enemies were to be defeated, to warn her against relying on any of these human powers, and to demonstrate God's sovereignty over all human fates and activities.

- They were also given when everyone was afraid of Assyria, who provided a near fulfilment of most of these prophecies over the next few decades.
 - However, it is noteworthy that the largest amount of text is devoted to Babylon's later capture by the Medes.

- There is significant prophetic escalation in the section about Babylon.
 - **HP: Prophetic escalation=When a prophecy about a localized group/event begins to 'ramp up' beyond what makes sense for them, Scripture is using them as a 'springboard' to discuss a greater reality, though there is often overlap. Always take the text at face value *first!***
 - The Day of YHWH refers to the ultimate day of reckoning when God will establish perfect justice at a global scale by destroying all in rebellion to Him and fulfilling all remaining promises to His people, but it has many near fulfilments along the way when specific nations are destroyed in judgment to illustrate how severe the warnings about the ultimate one are.

- The Christological prophecy in ch28:
 - God will 'rebuild,' starting with this new Cornerstone that will be a source of salvation as He 'measures' the people against His standards of justice and righteousness.
 - This is quoted by Paul in Rom. 9:33 to show that Israel failed by trying to justify themselves according to their own righteousness instead of clinging to the only source of real righteousness.
 - It is quoted again in 1 Pet. 2:6 to show how Christ is our foundation and source of salvation as we are built up as the Church.

- New Testament quotations from ch29:
 - Verse 13 says they were getting judgment despite observing religious rituals because they had no understanding of God's Word and were relying on their own strength and human forces. Jesus quotes this in Matt. 15:8–9 to show that the Pharisees were also showing no understanding of God's Word by using religious observance (with human additions) to ignore what God taught.
 - Verse 16 shows that Israel thought the lack of immediate consequences meant they were 'getting away with' disobeying God, but they thought too little of God. Likewise, Paul uses this language in Rom. 9:19–21 to show that when we question God, we are (like Israel) trying to bring God 'down to our level.'

- This section also ends with hopeful language about Israel's future deliverance and restoration.

- **Isaiah's Ministry to _____ (36–39)**

- This section corresponds to 2 Kings 18–20.
- This section functions as a 'bridge' between the two major divisions of the book:
 - The first part mainly deals with how fears over Assyria were leading to unrighteous responses, how God would use Assyria to punish both Israel and the surrounding nations, and how God was in control of even Assyria and would protect Judah from ultimate destruction, so this section details how Judah's interactions with Assyria were fulfilled.
 - The second part deals with their future in light of the Babylonian captivity, so this section ends by revealing the prophecy that Babylon would be their eventual captor.
- There is also much to be found regarding the power of prayer and God's jealousy over His reputation (cf. 1 Sam. 17).

Discussion:

1. What should we take away from God's pattern of punishing nations through evil superpowers who are themselves later judged?
2. Why do you think God uses lesser human realities to teach us about ultimate ones?

FOR REFLECTION: When you are afraid, do you tend more often to 'give up' on righteousness in some way(s) or to run to human resources for security? How should you combat this?

Blanks: Oracles, Woes, Hezekiah