

SALVATION IS  
OF THE LORD

*A Study of Isaiah - #4*

A dramatic sky with a sunburst over a sea of clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright starburst effect and casting long, golden rays across the sky. The clouds below are thick and billowy, illuminated from below, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall scene is majestic and awe-inspiring.

# CAUSES AND CURSES OF SEVEN WOES

**Isaiah 5:8-12**

# High-Level Outline

## I. Sovereign Judgment of All (1-39)

### A. Judgment on Judah (1-6)

A. Condemnation of Judah (1)

B. Judgment & Redemption of the Lord's Day (2:1-4:6)

C. Deserved Judgment, Without Excuse (5:1-6:13)

1. Parable of the Beloved Vineyard Owner (5:1-7)

2. Causes and Curses of Seven Woes (5:8-12)

3. Isaiah's Calling and Preaching (6:1-13)

B. Judgment on Judah and Her Invaders (7-12)

C. Judgment against Heathen Nations (13-27)

D. Woes against Jerusalem (28-35)

E. Transition of Threatening Empires (36-39)

## II. God's Salvation of Zion (40-66)

# Oppressive Land Barons

24) What general problem is the cause of the first two woes issued (**5:8-12**)? How can we avoid causing similar judgment against us?

***<sup>1</sup>Woe to those who join house to house; They add field to field, Till there is no place Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land! In my hearing the LORD of hosts said, “Truly, many houses shall be desolate, Great and beautiful ones, without inhabitant. For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, And a homer of seed shall yield one ephah.” (5:8-10)***

- Indicates unchecked land & house acquisition.
- Building upon previous, implies weak are pushed away until only rich dwell isolated in the middle.
- But, God will empty the houses and render fields fruitless (**Haggai 1:5-11; Leviticus 26:18-24; Deut. 28:15-20**).

# Oblivious Party Animals

24) What general problem is the cause of the first two woes issued (**5:8-12**)? How can we avoid causing similar judgment against us?

***2Woe to those who rise early in the morning, That they may follow intoxicating drink; Who continue until night, till wine inflames them! The harp and the strings, The tambourine and flute, And wine are in their feasts; But they do not regard the work of the LORD, Nor consider the operation of His hands. (5:11-12)***

- All they can think about drunken satiation, “*lovers of pleasure*” (**2 The. 2:9-12; 1 Tim. 5:5-6; 2 Tim. 3:1-8**).
- Those who recognize their (past) state and God’s gracious “*work*” will be given to “*good works*” (**Titus 2:11-3:8, 14**).
- What work of God today must we accept or promote?

# “Haughty spirit before a fall”

25) How will God’s punishment and discipline address the root problem (**5:13-17**)? How does this help us identify at least one “*work of the Lord*” (**5:12, 17**)?

***Therefore my people have gone into captivity, Because they have no knowledge; Their honorable men are famished, And their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself*** And opened its mouth beyond measure; ***Their glory and their multitude and their pomp, And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it. People shall be brought down, Each man shall be humbled, And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.*** (**5:13-15**)

- Note, very early reference to Babylonian captivity and cause.
- Selfish pleasure seeking represents arrogance, pride (“I alone and my desires matter”). God will destroy it (**Pro. 16:18**).
- Represents removal of obstructions to the truth, what is paramount – God and His work.

# God's Work?

25) How will God's punishment and discipline address the root problem (**5:13-17**)? How does this help us identify at least one "*work of the Lord*" (**5:12, 17**)?

***But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, And God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness. Then the lambs shall feed in their pasture, And in the waste places of the fat ones strangers shall eat. (5:16-17)***

- Vindicates God. Eliminates accusations of Him being unjust, unseeing, uncaring or unable, punishing wicked oppressors.
- Properly elevated and hallowed, men can more easily "see" the holy God, repent and be redeemed – God's work, redemption.
- Furthermore, those deprived will enjoy their due, and those unknown to the "*fat*" will consume their abandoned hoard.

# “Come down, We’ll believe”

26) What is the root cause prompting the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> curses (**5:18-21**)?

***3*** ***Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, And sin as if with a cart rope; That say, “Let Him make speed and hasten His work, That we may see it; And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, That we may know it.”***

***4*** ***Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*** ***5*** ***Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! (5:18-21)***

- Assume that God will not work (**Matt. 27:39-42**) – foolish.
- A. Overlook periods of patience precede judgment (**2Pet.3:3-11**)
- B. Redefine morality, righteousness to justify self (**1 Jn. 1:10; Luke 10:29; 16:15**).
- C. Why? Will not let go of sin. Must “move the goalposts” (God).

# “That You May Distinguish”

27) How does the behavior prompting the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> woes reflect this problem (**5:22-23**)?

***6*Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, *7*Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away justice from the righteous man! (5:22-23)**

- 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> closely related, intertwined. But how?
  - A. Justice perverted in drunken stupor (**Lev. 10:9-10**)?
  - B. Justice perverted to enable drunken stupor, pay for it?
- Readily violate, **redefine** justice for personal benefit, gift.
- “**Mighty, valiant**” at pleasure (drinking), when should be “**mighty, valiant**” for upholding justice, righteousness.
- Pitiful contrast.
- Exhibit no fear of God acting, judging them.

# Extensive, Incomplete Destruction

28) What does the promise of such extensive destruction indicate about God's judgment and pronouncement of these seven woes (**5:24-30**)?

***Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, And the flame consumes the chaff, So their root will be as rottenness, And their blossom will ascend like dust; Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore the anger of the LORD is aroused against His people; He has stretched out His hand against them And stricken them, And the hills trembled. Their carcasses were as refuse in the midst of the streets. For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still. (5:24-25)***

- Terrible sin worthy of fierce destruction, worthy of His wrath.
- “not turned away – stretched out still” – more to come ...

# Extensive, Incomplete Destruction

*He will lift up a banner to the **nations from afar**, And will whistle to them from the end of the earth; Surely they shall come with **speed, swiftly**. No one will be weary or stumble among them, No one will slumber or sleep; Nor will the belt on their loins be loosed, Nor the strap of their sandals be broken; Whose **arrows are sharp**, And all their **bows bent**; Their horses' **hooves will seem like flint**, And their **wheels like a whirlwind**. Their roaring will be like a lion, They will roar like young lions; Yes, they will roar And lay hold of the prey; They will carry it away safely, And **no one will deliver**. In that day they will roar against them Like the **roaring of the sea**. And if one looks to the **land**, Behold, **darkness** and **sorrow**; And the light is **darkened by the clouds**. (5:26-30)*

- Terrible invasion with no hope for escape – destruction from God.
- “*Roaring Sea*” – becomes associated with invasion, societal upheaval.
- “*Land*” – become associated with unregenerate, false religion.
- “*Clouds*” – become associated with God coming in judgment.



ISAIAH'S CALLING  
AND PREACHING

**Isaiah 6:1-13**

# The King on His Throne

- 29) What specifics of Isaiah's vision emphasized God's holiness and power (**6:1-5**)? How would this be relevant to Isaiah's message thus far?

*In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord **sitting on a throne, high and lifted up**, and the train of His **robe filled the temple**. **Above it stood seraphim**; each one had six wings: with two he **covered his face**, with two he **covered his feet**, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: "**Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts**; **The whole earth is full of His glory!**" And the posts of the **door were shaken** by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was **filled with smoke**. So I said: "Woe is me, for **I am undone!** Because I am a **man of unclean lips**, And I dwell in the midst of a **people of unclean lips**; **For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.**" (**6:1-5**)*

- Although Uzziah was dead, the true King was still on His throne – provide reassurance, hope and confidence in time of uncertainty.

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- Physical temple did not begin to express holiness, power of God.
- Even the "burning" seraphim covered their faces & feet (**Exo. 3:5**).

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- In God's presence, Isaiah recognizes his own uncleanness, sinfulness.
- If seraphim and Isaiah felt unworthy, how much more Judah – us?

# “Man of Unclean Lips”

30) Why was Isaiah unwilling to speak (**6:5-7**)? How does this scene help correct any excuse we may offer to minimize our sins?

*So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.” Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a **live coal** which he had taken with the tongs **from the altar**. And he **touched my mouth with it**, and said: “Behold, this has **touched your lips**; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.” (6:5-7)*

- “*Unclean lips*” may not only represent sinful words but also sinful heart from which they proceed (**Matthew 12:33-35**).
- Defiled Isaiah so he could not even approach God.
- May also play a pivotal role in cleansing Isaiah for service.

# “Here am I! Send me!”

*Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.” (6:8)*

31) How can Isaiah’s eagerness to proclaim God’s message encourage us (6:8)?

- Contrast with Moses looking for excuses (**Exo. 4:1-17**).
- Like a little child, you can almost see his genuine desire to be chosen (“Ooh, ooh, pick me, pick me!”).
- With his sin purged, nothing restrained Isaiah from serving the Holy, Holy, Holy God. What restrains us?
- What greater cause or One could he serve? Where else can we go (**John 6:67-69**)? Is there not a need, a cause (**1 Samuel 17:26, 29**)?

# “Make their hearts dull”

*And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but **do not understand**; Keep on seeing, but **do not perceive**.’*

***Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.” (6:9-10)***

32) Why would God give a message to Isaiah that encouraged ongoing obstinance (6:9-10)? What other Scriptures may help us understand this passage more clearly?

- Generally, “*this people*” will reject, be galvanized
- Hard message for a hardened people (**Eze. 12:2; Acts 7:51; Matt. 23**).
- God’s message designed to drive change, softening or hardening, repentance or rebellion (**Mt. 13:13-16; Jms.4:6**).

# Until No One Remains

*Then I said, “**Lord, how long?**” And He answered: “Until the cities are **laid waste and without inhabitant**, The houses are **without a man**, The land is **utterly desolate**, The LORD has **removed men far away**, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. But **yet a tenth will be in it**, And **will return** and be for consuming, As a terebinth tree or as an oak, Whose **stump remains when it is cut down**. **So the holy seed shall be its stump.**” (6:11-13)*

- 33) How does the gospel compare to Isaiah’s message? How long should we keep preaching and teaching, especially considering the duration of Isaiah’s mission (6:11-13)?
- Similar message of condemnation, redemption and reward.
  - Likewise, we know this earth’s final end (**Rev. 20:7-21:8**)
  - Similarly, we must also preach until no one is left, end of time.

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- Sad, somber warning of imminent judgment and doom.
- Joyous hope of redemption, even if only for a remnant.
- If God would not allow His prophets to give up & quit, can we?

# Until No One Remains

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- 33) How does the gospel compare to Isaiah’s message? How long should we keep preaching and teaching, especially considering the duration of Isaiah’s mission (6:11-13)?
- Ties into theme of chapters 5-6 that Judah’s judgment was well deserved. There was nothing more God could do.
  - God’s ongoing preaching through Isaiah represented ongoing mercy and opportunity, eliminating excuse.

A dramatic landscape featuring a valley between two rugged, brown mountains. The sky is a mix of deep blue, green, and orange, with a bright sun or light source creating a lens flare effect. The overall mood is one of awe and grandeur.

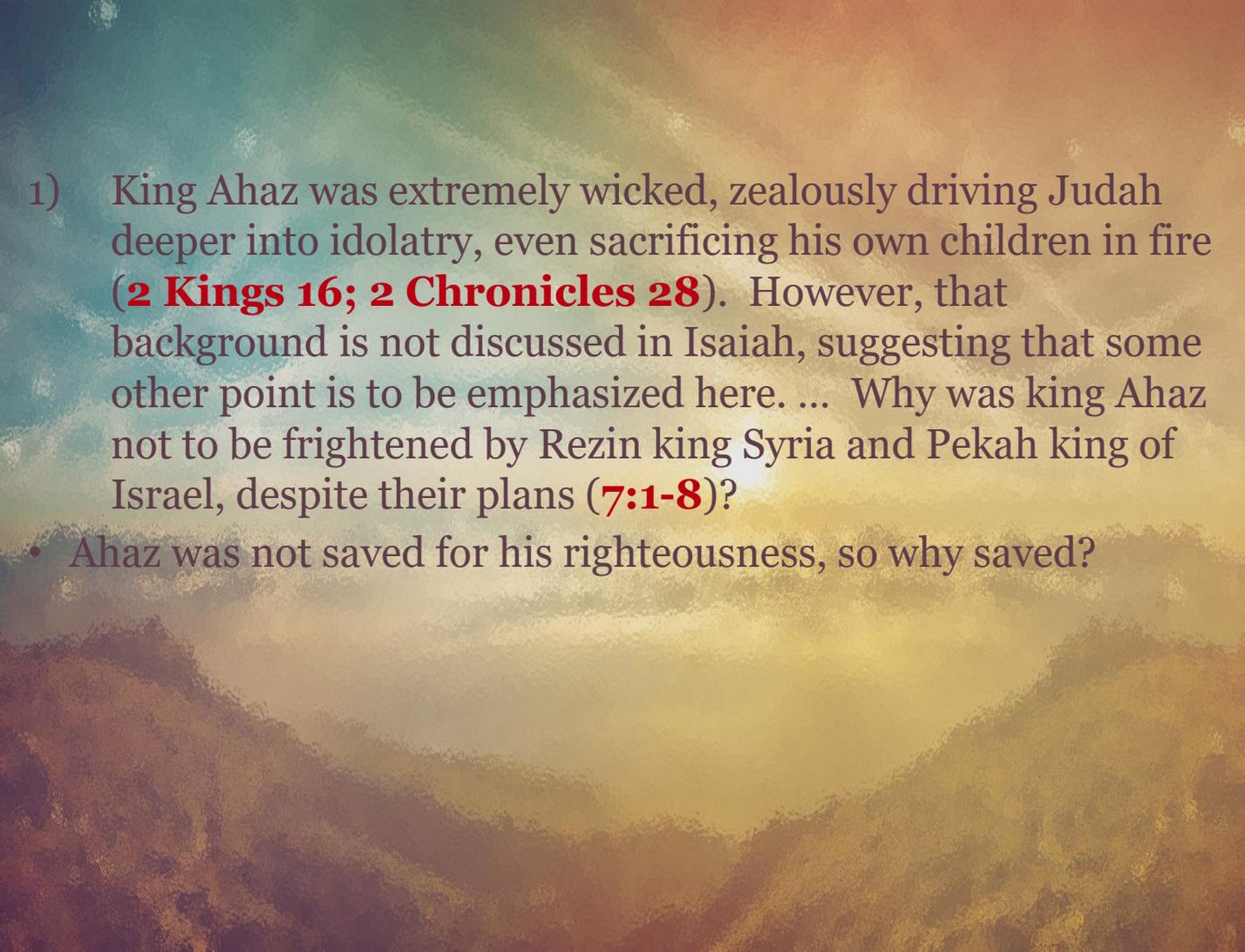
JUDGMENT ON  
JUDAH AND HER  
INVADERS

Isaiah 7-12



DOOM OF THREATENING  
SYRIA AND ISRAEL

Isaiah 7:1-8:7

- 
- 1) King Ahaz was extremely wicked, zealously driving Judah deeper into idolatry, even sacrificing his own children in fire (**2 Kings 16; 2 Chronicles 28**). However, that background is not discussed in Isaiah, suggesting that some other point is to be emphasized here. ... Why was king Ahaz not to be frightened by Rezin king Syria and Pekah king of Israel, despite their plans (**7:1-8**)?
- Ahaz was not saved for his righteousness, so why saved?

# “Stubs of Smoking Firebrands”

... So his heart and the heart of his people were moved as the trees of the woods are moved with the wind. Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub your son, at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller’s Field, and say to him: **Take heed, and be quiet; do not fear or be fainthearted** for these two **stubs of smoking firebrands,** for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, “Let us go up against Judah and trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over them, the son of Tabel” – thus says the Lord GOD: **“It shall not stand, Nor shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, And the head of Damascus is Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken, So that it will not be a people.” (7:2-8)**

# Redemption through Election

- 1) King Ahaz was extremely wicked, zealously driving Judah deeper into idolatry, even sacrificing his own children in fire (**2 Kings 16; 2 Chronicles 28**). However, that background is not discussed in Isaiah, suggesting that some other point is to be emphasized here. ... Why was king Ahaz not to be frightened by Rezin king Syria and Pekah king of Israel, despite their plans (**7:1-8**)?
  - Ahaz was spared more because the threats (Samaria and Damascus) were to soon be destroyed by God's will.
  - The concern for Ahaz's fear and faintheartedness reflects both mercy and opportunity from God for Ahaz to repent, even in his obvious rebellion, which is amazing considering his sin. The promise unto David no doubt also factored into their preservation (**Deu. 7:6-8**).
  - God and His preservation is emphasized in this selected focus.

# “If you will not believe ...”

2) For him to be strengthened as a king, what was required of him (7:9)? How would the current events have demanded an even greater level of this required virtue?

*“and say to him: **Take heed, and be quiet; do not fear or be fainthearted** for these two stubs of smoking firebrands, ... For the head of Syria is Damascus, And the head of Damascus is Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken, So that it will not be a people. The head of Ephraim is Samaria, And the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. **If you will not believe, Surely you shall not be established.**”” (7:4, 8-9)*

- God's promise to remove Jerusalem's threats required **faith**.
- Although God's promise to establish David's house would stand regardless, that promise did not require Ahaz as king!
- Ahaz would turn to idols & Assyria (**2 Chr. 39:1-8, 17-25**).
- Failure to believe resulted in a short, shaky reign (16-yrs).