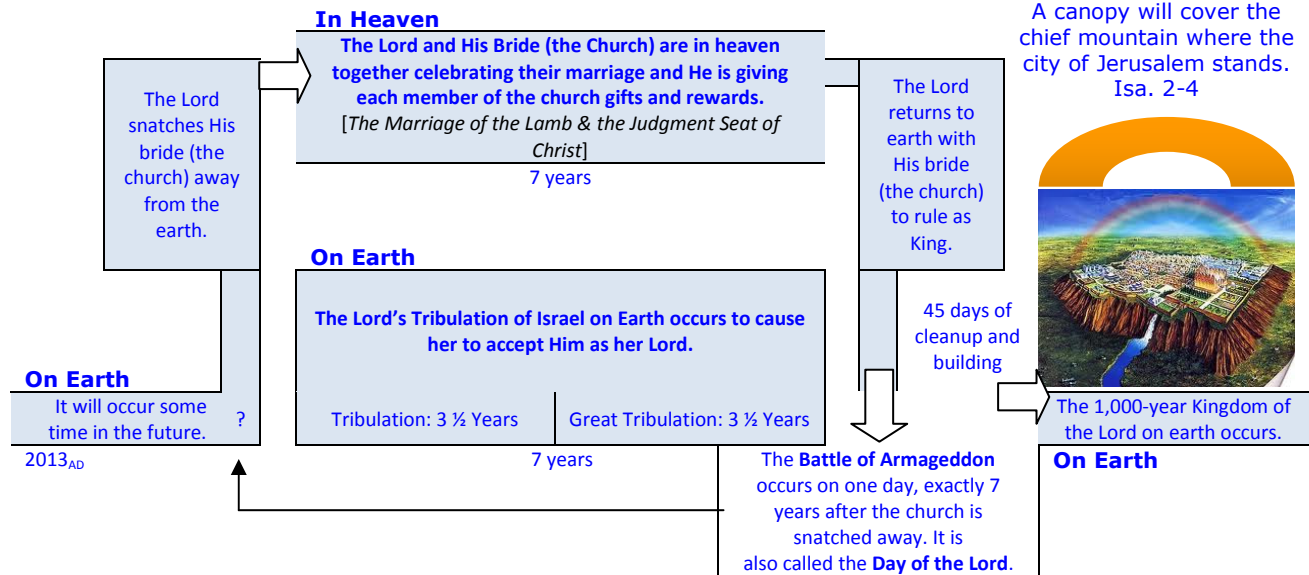


## The Prophecies of Isaiah <sup>13</sup>

### Lesson 4

#### Time Line 1: Last Days - General Overview



Isaiah Chapters 2 – 4 tell of the coming of the Lord to establish His chief city on His chief mountain where He will rule the earth in total peace. But the vision also explains the Lord's love for Israel and tells what He will do to make sure she turns from her rebellion and allows Him to be the Lord and Savior of her population. About 790 years after the Lord gave this vision to Isaiah to proclaim to the Southern Kingdom, He told a powerful parable that demands our attention.

**Mark 12:1** And He began to speak to them in parables: " A man PLANTED A VINEYARD, AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT, AND DUG A VAT UNDER THE WINE PRESS, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. <sup>2</sup> "And at the *harvest* time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive *some* of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. <sup>3</sup> "And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>4</sup> "And again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. <sup>5</sup> "And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so *with* many others, beating some, and killing others. <sup>6</sup> "He had one more *to send*, a beloved son; he sent him last *of all* to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' <sup>7</sup> "But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' <sup>8</sup> "And they took him, and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. <sup>9</sup> "What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. <sup>10</sup> "Have you not even read this Scripture: ' THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*; <sup>11</sup> THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES?'"

<sup>13</sup> All Scriptures in this lesson entitled "The Prophecies of Isaiah" are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, Copyright (C) 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1988, by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Nothing is new in the New Testament. Every thought in the New Testament originates in the Old Testament and the roots of the Mark 12 passage are found in the last portion of Isaiah's second vision.

## The Lord's Vineyard

*History/Present Day*

### **PLANTED VINEYARD**

**Isaiah 5:1** Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill. <sup>2</sup> And He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it, And hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected *it* to produce *good* grapes, But it produced *only* worthless ones.

The Lord instructed Moses to appoint Joshua as the leader of the nation of Israel after she endured 40 years in the wilderness. A good leader, Joshua spent the next 30 years in the conquest of the Promised Land. In all but one battle, the Lord fought the for Israel and she prevailed because of His mighty hand. He established her as His choice nation and fully expected her to produce godly offspring who would love Him.

*History/Present Day*

### **WORTHLESS VINEYARD**

**Isaiah 5:3** "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between Me and My vineyard. <sup>4</sup> "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected *it* to produce *good* grapes did it produce worthless ones?"

However, the Northern Kingdom of Israel has failed to produce the godly results expected by the Lord and He has Isaiah ask the Southern Kingdom of Judah, "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected *it* to produce *good* grapes did it produce worthless ones?" Has He wronged Israel or has Israel wronged the Lord? He asks Judah to judge Him and decide if He can do anything else to make the Northern Kingdom fruitful. His cry is heartfelt when He says, "What more was there to do for My vineyard."

## The Lord's Judgment

*Near Prophecy*

### **UPROOTED VINEYARD**

**Isaiah 5:5** "So now let Me tell you what I am going to do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge and it will be consumed; I will break down its wall and it will become trampled ground. <sup>6</sup> "And I will lay it waste; It will not be pruned or hoed, But briars and thorns will come up. I will also charge the clouds to rain no rain on it." <sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah His delightful plant. Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress.

The entire vision of Isaiah Chapters 2-5 is given shortly before the death of King Uzziah in 755 BC. The Lord prophesies in this passage that He will trample the Northern Kingdom of Israel soon. She is the vineyard that is producing worthless fruit. At the time of the prophecy, the Southern Kingdom of Judah is still the Lord's delightful plant. When does the Lord bring about the judgment on Israel? In 722 BC this prophecy is completely fulfilled.

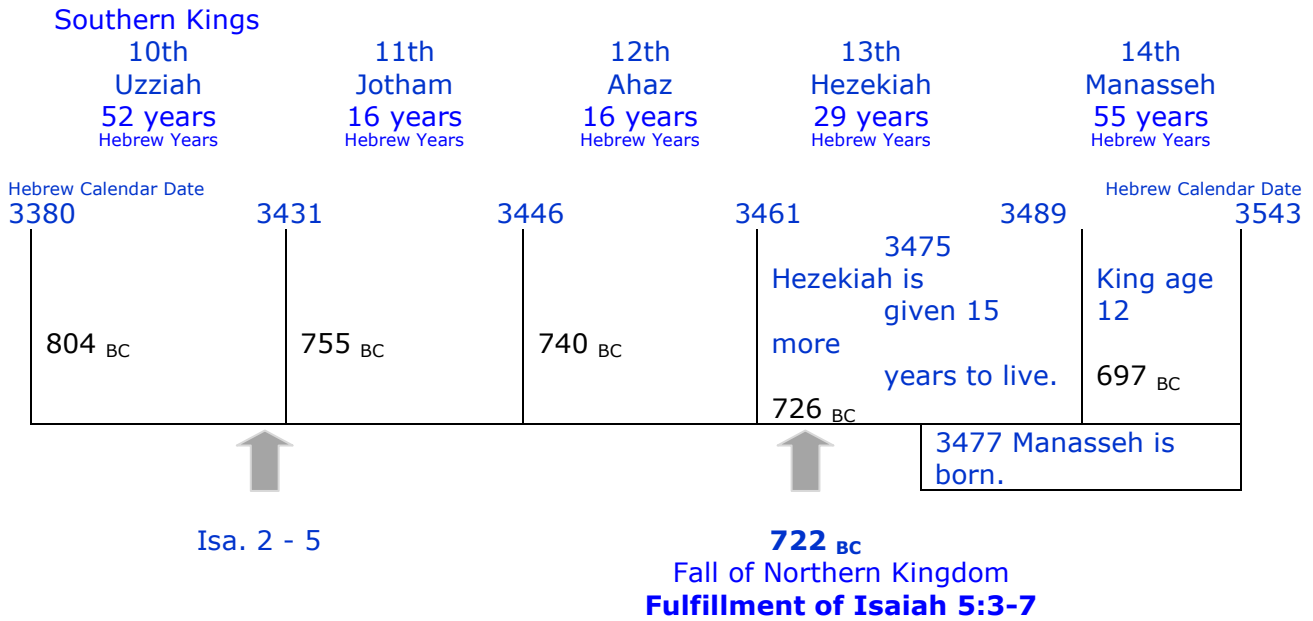


Figure 9: Time of Prophecy - Isaiah 2-5

The Lord has many reasons to end the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He is upset with her because of what she had done with the land and wine and her iniquity - lies, pride and theft.

### The Lord's Reasons

*History/Present Day*

#### WOE ONE - LAND

**Isaiah 5:8** Woe to those who add house to house *and* join field to field, until there is no more room, so that you have to live alone in the midst of the land! <sup>9</sup>In my ears the LORD of hosts *has sworn*, "Surely, many houses shall become desolate, *Even* great and fine ones, without occupants. <sup>10</sup>"For ten acres of vineyard will yield *only* one bath of wine, And a homer of seed will yield *but* an ephah of grain."

After coming out of Egypt, the Northern Kingdom breaks the Lord's Law given through Moses. Beginning about 1099 BC, primarily the northern 10 tribes cry for a king. Finally, the Lord allows Samuel to anoint Saul as king in 1076 BC but the clock had started for those tribes over two decades before. In a message to Ezekiel, the Lord says her sins continued for 390 years.

**Ezekiel 4:**<sup>5</sup> "For I have assigned you a number of days corresponding to the years of their iniquity, three hundred and ninety days; thus you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. <sup>6</sup>"When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, *but* on your right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; I have assigned it to you for forty days, a day for each year.

The clock for the time of Judah's sin will begin during the days of Manasseh, but after the death of Isaiah.

During the 390 years, the 10 northern tribes break the Law given through Moses by the community leaders who have permanently purchased the houses and land in the unwallled areas of the Promised Land. The Law says:

**Leviticus 25:**<sup>10</sup> You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.<sup>11</sup> 'You shall have the fiftieth year as a jubilee; you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in *from* its untrimmed vines.<sup>12</sup> 'For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you. You shall eat its crops out of the field.<sup>13</sup> ' On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property.

Every 50 years, land sold in the unwalled towns and surroundings had to be returned to the family of the owners when the Promised Land was divided by Joshua. People who lived in walled cities did not have to follow this rule. The issue at hand focuses on the selling of houses and lands to the wealthy leaders and the failure to return that land at the end of every 50 years celebrated as the year of Jubilee. The failure to return the houses and lands to the original owners angered the Lord. Micah, prophesying at the same time, says:

**Micah 2:**<sup>1</sup> Woe to those who scheme iniquity, Who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, For it is in the power of their hands.<sup>2</sup> They covet fields and then seize *them*, and houses, and take *them* away. They rob a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.

What is the purpose of the house and land grab? The leaders want to be the owners and the common people, tenants. What will be the punishment from the Lord when the exile occurs? The crops will fail. A normal vineyard can produce hundreds of gallons of wine, but the Lord's punishment will cause the field to produce only six gallons, equal to a bath in Isaiah's day. A homer of seed, about six bushels today, after being planted, weeded and harvested, will produce no more than an ephah, or a half bushel of seed, about one-twelfth of the original seed sown. Woe to those evil leaders of the Northern Kingdom who have perpetuated the sin through the years. The reckoning day is near.

*History/Present Day*

#### **WOE TWO – WINE**

Isaiah 5:11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink; Who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them!<sup>12</sup> And their banquets are *accompanied* by lyre and harp, by tambourine and flute, and by wine; But they do not pay attention to the deeds of the LORD, Nor do they consider the work of His hands.<sup>13</sup> Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; And their honorable men are famished, And their multitude is parched with thirst.<sup>14</sup> Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth without measure; And Jerusalem's splendor, her multitude, her din of *revelry*, and the jubilant within her, descend *into it*.<sup>15</sup> So the *common* man will be humbled, and the man of *importance* abased, The eyes of the proud also will be abased.<sup>16</sup> But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in judgment, and the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.<sup>17</sup> Then the lambs will graze as in their pasture, and strangers will eat in the waste places of the wealthy.

The Northern Kingdom is guilty of drunkenness. The people drink when they wake up in the morning. They drink through the day and they drink late into the night. They drink alone and they drink serenaded by musicians at their banquets. Like all addicts, the drunkards pay more attention to the desire for more drink than to the mighty work of the Lord and His desires for their lives. They have no respect for the Lord and misuse their bodies that were created in the image of God. Because of their drunkenness, they are unable to pass on the knowledge of the Lord. Exile will come to the whole nation because of the sin of its leadership. The Lord will be reduced all men to slaves and He will be exalted when the exile

occurs. What will happen to the land left behind? Animals will graze at will and strangers, non-Jews, will inhabit the homes and lands of the exiled wealthy.

#### **WOE THREE - INIQUITY**

**Isaiah 5:18** Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes; <sup>19</sup> Who say, "Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see *it*; And let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come to pass, that we may know *it*!"

With vain and deceitful arguments as well as pretences, some of the northern leadership have challenged God to appear and do His work if there really is a God who created it all. "Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see it" is a blatant challenge for God to show up and do something. Those who take this stand purposefully sin to prove God will do nothing. He compares using lies to pull people into sin with ropes that are used to pull cart along the road. These leaders are spiritually void of God and His purposes. Their sin is intentional and they are headed for destruction when He has had enough.

#### **WOE FOUR - LIES**

**Isaiah 5:20** Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Up to this point in the vision, all fingers point at the Northern Kingdom for its evil intent. Today, the entire world is guilty of this sin. The verse speaks of the perverted values of substituting evil for good and good for evil. Every possible sin against the Lord oozes from almost every sentence spoken on reality television. Sexual exploits of all kinds dominate movies. Even the "wholesome" family shows portray deviant behaviors and ungodly desires. Adultery, sodomy, homosexuality, idolatry and all the other sins identified by the Lord in the Scriptures are considered good acts when they should be condemned for what they are – evil! Churches hold their services in darkness with the exception of the stage lighting and call it good. Good for what? It is good only in that it keeps the listener from being able to read the Scripture to see if the speaker is proclaiming the truth or a lie. The church should worship in light, not darkness. Outside the confines of the church buildings, the members should live in the lighted places and dare not hide in the darkness of a bar and grill. "A little of this and a little of that will not hurt," some say. But the little turns into a lot and before long, the values are all wrong. The Northern Kingdom had it all wrong and the Lord held it against them. Because the nature of God never changes, all nations and empires have fallen because of the proliferation of these sins and so will the nations who embrace them today and in the future.

#### **WOE FIVE - PROUD**

**Isaiah 5:21** Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and clever in their own sight!

The Northern Kingdom's government leaders bear the brunt of all these allegations from the Lord. They think they are intelligent and knowledgeable; therefore, they have no need for God and His laws and demands. Failing to accept or rely on God, they still think they are safe from all enemies and assume that self-reliance can protect them. Being "clever in their own sight" is their downfall. The drunken, evil, sinful leaders do not have the ability to make good decisions. They are "wise in their own eyes," but not God's.

#### **WOE SIX – THIEVES**

**Isaiah 5:22** Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink; <sup>23</sup> Who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

Why would anyone uphold their drunken leaders as heroes? Why would anyone revere as valiant men the hard liquor drinkers? Why do they allow these men to hold positions of leadership in the nation? Why do they allow thieves, who will act on behalf of someone's pet project for a price, to remain in office? Why do they allow their leaders to take away their inalienable rights given by God and clearly prescribed in the Scripture? It all starts when the leaders seize the houses and lands to become the landlords of all the people. During the 390 years, certain families have broken the Law of the Lord and gained wealth and therefore power. They have seized that which rightfully belonged to the many and centralized the control among a few. Wealthy beyond imagination, they will still accept bribes. Money, money, money is their goal. The corrupt leadership will even take away the rights of the people if they can add more money to their pockets while they are in power. Ecclesiastes addresses the hearts of these people.

**Ecclesiastes 8:**<sup>11</sup> Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.

About 1,000 years before Isaiah, toward the end of Job's conversation with his friends, Job said:

**Job 21:**<sup>7</sup> "Why do the wicked *still* live, Continue on, also become very powerful?<sup>8</sup> "Their descendants are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes,<sup>9</sup> Their houses are safe from fear, Neither is the rod of God on them.<sup>10</sup> "His ox mates without fail; His cow calves and does not abort.<sup>11</sup> "They send forth their little ones like the flock, And their children skip about.<sup>12</sup> "They sing to the timbrel and harp And rejoice at the sound of the flute.<sup>13</sup> "They spend their days in prosperity, And suddenly they go down to Sheol.<sup>14</sup> "And they say to God, ' Depart from us! We do not even desire the knowledge of Thy ways.<sup>15</sup> ' Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him, And what would we gain if we entreat Him?'<sup>16</sup> "Behold, their prosperity is not in their hand; The counsel of the wicked is far from me.<sup>17</sup> "How often is the lamp of the wicked put out, Or *does* their calamity fall on them? Does God apportion destruction in His anger?<sup>18</sup> "Are they as straw before the wind, And like chaff which the storm carries away?<sup>19</sup> "You say, ' God stores away a man's iniquity for his sons.' Let God repay him so that he may know *it*.<sup>20</sup> "Let his own eyes see his decay, And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

People are the same from generation to generation throughout time. Even while the nation of Israel was forming in Egypt, Job spoke of the same problem with the wicked persons who took advantage of others without regard for the Lord.

What will be the Lord's reaction to these types of leaders?

#### **REJECTION OF THE LORD**

**Isaiah 5:24** Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble, and dry grass collapses into the flame, so their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; For they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

The consequences of disobeying the Lord always result in punishment by a consuming fire, rot, and dust. The people will writhe and burn and the roots will rot in the ground, turn to dust, and therefore yield no further acts – evil or good.

## The Lord's Call

*Near Prophecy*

### ANGER OF THE LORD

**Isaiah 5:25** On this account the anger of the LORD has burned against His people, and He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them down, and the mountains quaked; and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of the streets. For all this His anger is not spent, but His hand is still stretched out.

The Lord has every reason to be angry with the Northern Kingdom. His hand is outstretched and the north cannot survive. At the time of Isaiah's vision, just about 33 years remain for Israel before the Lord's judgment rains down on her. He has spoken His word and nothing can stop the fall except a total repentance on the part of the leadership. If the leader will repent, the people will follow. But the north will not change. When the Lord sends the Assyrians, the mountains will quake as thousands of foot soldiers and horses march through the kingdom. The Southern Kingdom understood what it meant to feel the quake of the mountains. During the days of King Uzziah, some time near this prophecy, an earthquake occurred in the Southern Kingdom. Its destruction was so memorable that the Bible speaks of it through two other prophets. Amos, ministering in Bethel at the same time as Isaiah, says:

**Amos 1:**<sup>1</sup> The words of Amos, who was among the shepherders from Tekoa, which he envisioned in visions concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

Zechariah, ministering in Jerusalem 250 years after Isaiah, says:

**Zechariah 14:**<sup>5</sup> And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him!

*Near Prophecy*

### WHISTLE OF THE LORD

**Isaiah 5:26** He will also lift up a standard to the distant nation, and will whistle for it from the ends of the earth; and behold, it will come with speed swiftly. <sup>27</sup> No one in it is weary or stumbles, none slumbers or sleeps; nor is the belt at its waist undone, nor its sandal strap broken. <sup>28</sup> Its arrows are sharp, and all its bows are bent; the hoofs of its horses seem like flint, and its *chariot* wheels like a whirlwind. <sup>29</sup> Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; it growls as it seizes the prey, and carries *it* off with no one to deliver *it*. <sup>30</sup> and it shall growl over it in that day like the roaring of the sea. If one looks to the land, behold, there is darkness *and* distress; Even the light is darkened by its clouds.

At the proper time, the Lord will raise his banner over the Northern Kingdom as a signal to the Assyrian Empire to bring war and exile to His people in Israel. The Lord will whistle for the troops of the alien nation to come just as a rancher calls for his cattle or a shepherd calls for his sheep. The troops will not have a difficult battle because the Lord is directing their steps and preparing the way just as He prepared the way of the Israelites to take the land about 800 years before. He has prepared them for His purpose and they are fierce. Although they come from homes 600 miles away, they are not weary, they cannot sleep, they are crisp as the dawning of a new day and every shoe is in good order.

In that day, horseshoes were not nailed to the hoof. Rather, the whole hoof was encased in a leather wrapping similar to the shoes we wear to protect our feet. The leather, tied with straps, are highlighted with gold or silver dangles. The hoofs were strengthened over time by making the horses stand in their stalls on a pavement of round-headed stones. Amos, prophesying at the same time as Isaiah, says:

**Amos 6:12** Do horses run on rocks?

Although the horses did not run on them, rocks were used in the stables to make the hoofs as hard as flint to prepare them for any possible terrain in the field. Like the blast of a storm, the horses are coming with their riders as they stir up the dust that darkens the sky. The north can do nothing about their coming but feel distress, and so the vision ends.

What remains to be fulfilled from this second vision? The prophecies in Isaiah 2:1 through 4:6 remain unfulfilled. All will be fulfilled when the Lord comes to destroy His enemies at Armageddon and set up His kingdom to reign on earth for 1,000 years.

**Table 2: Scripture Fulfillment in Isaiah - Chapters 2-5**

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 2:1-4:6	<i>Far Prophecy</i> - The coming kingdom of the Lord.	To be fulfilled at the time of the Lord's coming at Armageddon to reign for 1,000 on the earth.
Isa. 5:1-4	<i>History/Present Day</i> - The Lord expected fruit from the vineyard He planted.	Fulfilled before the time of Isaiah's delivery.
Isa. 5:5-7	<i>Near Prophecy</i> - The vineyard will be trampled and consumed.	Fulfilled in 722 BC.
Isa. 5: 8-24	<i>History/Present Day</i> - Six reasons the Lord will allow the coming judgment and exile.	Fulfilled before the time of Isaiah's delivery.
Isa. 5: 25-30	<i>Near Prophecy</i> – The coming anger of the Lord.	Fulfilled in 722 BC.