

The Prophecies of Isaiah ⁴¹

Lesson 17

Isaiah's Presentation Format	<i>Near Future</i> The army that gathers in the valley outside Jerusalem will not capture the city.
	Isa. 22:1-25
Chapter 22:1-25	Figure 42: Vision 18 to the Valley Outside Jerusalem

It is 722 BC and the Northern Kingdom is still intact as the Lord delivers this 18th vision to Isaiah. It would be impossible to time the fulfillment of this vision except for Isaiah 22:20 which says, "Then it will come about in that day, that I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah." Eliakim is a good man who serves the Temple honorably along with Shebna as priests. He is sent out to receive the message from Assyria during the days of Hezekiah. Here are three Old Testament passages that identify Eliakim.

2 Kings 18:18 When they called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, came out to them.

2 Kings 18:37 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

2 Kings 19:2 Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

Therefore, Vision 18 is given in 722 BC and fulfilled in 712-711 BC.

Near Future

Valley's Oracle – Vision 18

Isaiah 22:1a The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

The city of Jerusalem is built on a hill surrounded by valleys; to the east is the Kidron Valley and to the west is the Hinnom Valley. The Kidron Valley is prominent in Scripture because it is there that Sennacherib's men will try to take Jerusalem in order to conquer the Southern Kingdom.

Near Future

Housetops

Isaiah 22:1b What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops? ²You who were full of noise, You boisterous town, you exultant city; Your slain were not slain with the sword, Nor did they die in battle.

⁴¹ 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.

All the houses in Jerusalem were built with flat roofs which became the places to eat and watch parades as well as to look over the walls and out into the countryside. When Sennacherib camps in the valley outside Jerusalem, the people rush to their rooftops to see the massive display of forces set to rise against them. Jerusalem, the joyful city of the kings and exalted above all other cities of the world, is in trouble. For days, Sennacherib waits outside the wall; inside the walls people are dying from a lack of food. The Assyrian king has captured 46 towns in the Southern Kingdom and he expects to take Jerusalem soon.

Rulers Flee

Isaiah 22:3 All your rulers have fled together, *and* have been captured without the bow; All of you who were found were taken captive together, Though they had fled far away.

History reveals that when Sennacherib camped outside Jerusalem's walls, many of the leaders tried to escape the city on the west side. The Assyrian forces captured them some distance from the city without a fight; they were not fighting men, they were politicians.

Panic

Isaiah 22:4 Therefore I say, "Turn your eyes away from me, Let me weep bitterly, Do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people." ⁵ For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day of panic, subjugation, and confusion in the valley of vision, A breaking down of walls and a crying to the mountain.

Isaiah includes his lament in this passage. He sees the panic and confusion in the vision; he sees the leaders breaking down the walls to run from the city and leave the people behind; he sees their crying as they are captured on the mountain. However, Isaiah will not live to see the actual event.

Elam and Kir

Isaiah 22:6 And Elam took up the quiver with the chariots, infantry, *and* horsemen; And Kir uncovered the shield.

The Elamites will be known as the Persians within one hundred years. In 711 BC, they are in the service of the king of Assyria and they account for the majority of the soldiers with Sennacherib's general in the valley outside Jerusalem. Kir is the major city in the area east of the Jordan that once belonged to the tribe of Reuben. At this time in the story, it is in Assyria's control and the exiles of Aram are living there. It is just a few miles from Jerusalem where the Assyrian army has unpacked its caravan of supplies and moved to the valley next to Jerusalem's wall.

Chariots and Horsemen

Isaiah 22:7 Then your choicest valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen took up fixed positions at the gate. ^{8a} And He removed the defense of Judah.

When the people of Jerusalem look over the walls of the city from their housetops to the northeast, they see the Kidron Valley filled with troops of the Assyrian arm forces. It appears that there is no hope for Jerusalem to survive.

House of the Forest

Isaiah 22:8b In that day you depended on the weapons of the house of the forest,

"The house of the forest," is an interesting name given to the large armory that Solomon built to house the nation's weapons. According to various descriptions, Solomon built it with 45 columns, each column comprised of a single, perfectly cylindrical cedar tree from the forests of Lebanon. The room contained so many columns that it looked like a forest of trees. The Jerusalem army gathered all the implements of war from that room but they would not be enough to stop Sennacherib's army.

1 Kings 7:2 And he built the house of the forest of Lebanon; its length was 100 cubits and its width 50 cubits and its height 30 cubits, on four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams on the pillars. **3** And it was paneled with cedar above the side chambers which were on the 45 pillars, 15 in each row.

Breach and Pool

Isaiah 22:9 And you saw that the breaches In the *wall* of the city of David were many; and you collected the waters of the lower pool.

As Sennacherib waits outside the walls for Hezekiah to respond to his demand, the barrier wall of Jerusalem is inspected from within. The political leaders had made their escape through holes in the wall which now need to be repaired. What will the people do to fortify the holes in the walls?

2 Chronicles 32:1 After these acts of faithfulness Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and besieged the fortified cities, and thought to break into them for himself. **2** Now when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come, and that he intended to make war on Jerusalem, **3** he decided with his officers and his warriors to cut off the *supply* of water from the springs which *were* outside the city, and they helped him. **4** So many people assembled and stopped up all the springs and the stream which flowed through the region, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find abundant water?" **5** And he took courage and rebuilt all the wall that had been broken down, and erected towers on it, and *built* another outside wall, and strengthened the Millo *in* the city of David, and made weapons and shields in great number.

Fortified Walls

Isaiah 22:10 Then you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you tore down houses to fortify the wall.

The Jerusalem citizens cannot leave the city to gather materials to repair the walls; instead, they tear down houses to make the repairs.

Water Within

Isaiah 22:11 And you made a reservoir between the two walls for the waters of the old pool. But you did not depend on Him who made it, Nor did you take into consideration Him who planned it long ago.

Prior to Assyria's arrival outside the wall, Hezekiah sees the necessity of bringing the water of the Gihon Spring inside the city wall. He redirects the water flow by building a tunnel under the wall and down through the city to ultimately fill the Pool of Siloam near the far south wall. Hezekiah has the mouth of the spring covered so his enemies are unaware of its origin. For over two hundred years, the spring had flowed outside the wall to feed the old pool of Siloam, a natural gathering place for the water in the Valley of Hinnom. When he builds the tunnel which diverts the water inside the city, Hezekiah, although a religious man, is not predisposed to rely on the Lord. He diverts the Gihon Springs water on his own,

moving it from God's original layout. Hezekiah will have water but he will have nowhere to turn except to the Lord for further help.

2 Chronicles 32:30 It was Hezekiah who stopped the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all that he did.

Weep and Wail

Isaiah 22:12 Therefore in that day the Lord GOD of hosts, called *you* to weeping, to wailing, to shaving the head, and to wearing sackcloth.

The day has come for the people to fear the Lord. He is looking for a change of heart, for emotions to turn to Him, for them to begin their accepted ways of mourning their sin by shaving their heads and donning the rough burlap type sackcloth garments.

Eat and Drink

Isaiah 22:13 Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: " Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die."

But the people in Jerusalem are not mourning; rather, they have accepted their fate of death when the sun rises in the morning.

Not Forgiven

Isaiah 22:14 But the LORD of hosts revealed Himself to me, "Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you until you die," says the Lord GOD of hosts.

The Lord tells Isaiah that the sin that brings the Assyrian army to the gate of Jerusalem will not be forgiven until it is time for Isaiah to die. The vision is given in 722 BC; the events of Sennacherib's assault will occur in 711 BC to fulfill the vision; Isaiah will see the sin of the Southern Kingdom forgiven when Hezekiah calls out to the Lord for help. Isaiah will die shortly after the king's change of heart but not until the Lord delivers to the prophet another 44 chapters filled with more visions and history.

Shebna's Tomb

Isaiah 22:15 Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts, "Come, go to this steward, To Shebna, who is in charge of the *royal* household, ¹⁶ 'What right do you have here, And whom do you have here, That you have hewn a tomb for yourself here, You who hew a tomb on the height, You who carve a resting place for yourself in the rock? ¹⁷ 'Behold, the LORD is about to hurl you headlong, O man. And He is about to grasp you firmly, ¹⁸ And roll you tightly like a ball, *To be cast* into a vast country; There you will die, and there your splendid chariots will be, you shame of your master's house.' ¹⁹ "And I will depose you from your office, And I will pull you down from your station.

The Lord sends Isaiah to confront Shebna for his sin. Shebna has devised a plan to build a tomb for himself in an attempt to establish a place so the world will remember him. The NASV text includes the word *royal* in italics, an indication that it is an added word to help with the translation yet it is the opinion of some commentator. It actually distracts the reader from the intended meaning. Shebna is a scribe and his attempt to build a tomb for himself that will record his name in stone for ages to come infuriates the Lord. Isaiah approaches Shebna more than a decade before the fulfillment of this passage because

Isaiah warns Shebna to repent and change. If he does not change, the Lord will roll him "tightly like a ball, *to be cast* into a vast country." We do know that Shebna is removed from his office in 711 BC and carried off to some region of Assyria; his station in the house is transferred to Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah.

2 Kings 18:18 When they called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, came out to them.

2 Kings 18:26 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna and Joah, said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand *it*; and do not speak with us in Judean, in the hearing of the people who are on the wall."

2 Kings 18:37 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

Eliakim's Promotion

Isaiah 22:20 "Then it will come about in that day, that I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah ²¹ And I will clothe him with your tunic, and tie your sash securely about him, I will entrust him with your authority, and he will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. ²² "Then I will set the key of the house of David on his shoulder, when he opens no one will shut, when he shuts no one will open. ²³ "And I will drive him *like* a peg in a firm place, and he will become a throne of glory to his father's house. ²⁴ "So they will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, offspring and issue, all the least of vessels, from bowls to all the jars.

Eliakim is Shebna's replacement. He will wear Shebna's tunic and sash as well as the rest of his garments; the Lord and the people will trust him; he will lead the people with great authority and father the people as expected. Eliakim will speak for God to the kings and firmly establish a right relationship between Jerusalem and the Lord. As long as he lives and serves in the Lord's house, Jerusalem will be protected.

Peg Broken

Isaiah 22:25 "In that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "the peg driven in a firm place will give way; it will even break off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken."

Even Eliakim will not live forever. The prophecy ends with a reference to his eventual death and the righteousness which lives within the city of Jerusalem will come to an end.

Figure 43: Fulfillment of Vision 18 in the Valley

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 22:1-25	<i>Near Future</i> The army that gathers in the valley outside Jerusalem will not capture the city.	Fulfilled in 712 BC

Vision 19

Isaiah's Presentation Format Chapter 23	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Near Future</i></p> <p>For seventy years Tyre will not maintain her position as the premier market capital of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">Isa. 23</p>
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Figure 44: Vision 19 for Tyre

Tyre's Oracle – Vision 19

The city of Tyre sits on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea about 50 miles north of Mt. Megiddo and about 40 miles north of Nazareth. Tyre is one of the two major cities in Phoenicia; the second is Sidon which sits 20 miles north of Tyre on the Mediterranean coastline. The commerce of the countries that border the Mediterranean Sea has converged in the markets of Tyre throughout most of recorded time. The Tyrian Phoenicians took to the waters and populated coastal islands of Greece, Africa, Carthage, Spain, Corsica, the Aegean Sea, Cyprus and Gadeira. Tyre is the capital of Phoenicia which is the home of the cedars of Lebanon. During the days of David and Solomon, Tyre had a good relationship with Israel and provided the cedars for the Temple and palace complex construction. The old city of Tyre sits on the mainland. During the time of the Assyrian Empire, Shalmanesar attacks Tyre in a five year siege, destroying much of the town. Seventy years later, the town is rebuilt, adding a new addition to the city on the rock island about half-a-mile off-shore. Beginning in 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar attacks the city for 13 years without success. Later, the old city is quickly taken by Alexander the Great but it takes seven months for him to take the new city.



Map 22: Tyre and Sidon

During this time, Tyre and Sidon are filled with shops with products from the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. Grain ships from Egypt unload in Tyre to be reloaded on other ships and sent to the countries on the northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Asia Minor to Spain; therefore, Tyre exists as the major economic city in the world trade system. In vision 19, Isaiah foretells the forthcoming destruction of the city and the reaction of the merchants of the world.

Near Future

Tarshish Hears of Tyre's Destruction

Isaiah 23:1 The oracle concerning Tyre. Wail, O ships of Tarshish, for Tyre is destroyed, without house or harbor; It is reported to them from the land of Cyprus.



Tarshish is a city on the south central coast of Spain situated between the two mouths of the Guadalquivir River. It is the home of a seaport controlled by the Phoenicians. Cyprus is an island about 148 miles long and 40 miles wide lying 60 miles of the north-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Ships leaving Tyre sail to the north around Cyprus to stay in semi-protected waters as they travel toward Italy and ultimately Tarshish in Spain. In the north, Cyprus is the first port of call for ships leaving Tyre and headed west and the last

port of call for ships headed east to Tyre. As this oracle is being given to Isaiah who is delivering the message to the Southern Kingdom, Shalmanesar is attacking Tyre 120 miles away from Jerusalem. The ships returning from Tarshish will soon hear of Tyre's trouble when they reach the Phoenician controlled port on Cyprus. When Shalmanesar finally conquers Tyre, he does not destroy the city completely; rather, he suppresses the free trade and commerce of the city. Assyria is the enemy of the world, especially, Egypt, the Northern Kingdom, Cyprus, Asia Minor and all points west to Spain. Not one of the countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea wishes to do business with Assyria; therefore, Tyre will be passed over as the central market of the sea.



Map 23: Cyprus

Near Future

Sidon's Shame

Isaiah 23:2 Be silent, you inhabitants of the coastland, You merchants of Sidon; Your messengers crossed the sea ³And were on many waters. The grain of the Nile, the harvest of the River was her revenue; And she was the market of nations. ⁴Be ashamed, O Sidon; For the sea speaks, the stronghold of the sea, saying, "I have neither travailed nor given birth, I have neither brought up young men *nor* reared virgins." ⁵When the report *reaches* Egypt, they will be in anguish at the report of Tyre. ⁶Pass over to Tarshish; Wail, O inhabitants of the coastland. ⁷Is this your jubilant *city*, whose origin is from antiquity, whose feet used to carry her to colonize distant places?

Tyre's roots can be traced to the time just after the Tower of Babel as the descendants of Ham move to the sea coast. Sidon is the oldest of the sea ports in Phoenicia and ancient documents from before 2,000 BC mention it; Tyre is mentioned in the documents after 2,000 BC. In 725 BC, Shalmanesar easily subdues and captures Sidon. By 722 BC, both cities are ancient establishments. Shalmanesar pounds Tyre for five years and conquers her in 722 BC. Sidon cannot offer help to Tyre even if she wants to because her government is controlled by Shalmanesar. Sidon remains silent when Tyre falls. The sailors of Tyre, Sidon and the entire Phoenician country are still sailing the Mediterranean Sea because commerce must continue even when Assyria is in control. From Tarshish to Egypt, the word of Tyre's trouble brings anguish.

Near Future

Lord's Plan

Isaiah 23:8 Who has planned this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns, whose merchants were princes, whose traders were the honored of the earth? ⁹The LORD of hosts has planned it to defile the pride of all beauty, to despise all the honored of the earth. ¹⁰Overflow your land like the Nile, O daughter of Tarshish, there is no more restraint. ¹¹He has stretched His hand out over the sea, He has made the kingdoms tremble; The LORD has given a command concerning Canaan to demolish its strongholds. ¹²And He has said, "You shall exult no more, O crushed virgin daughter of Sidon. Arise, pass over to Cyprus; even there you will find no rest." ¹³Behold, the land of the Chaldeans-- this is the people *which* was not; Assyria appointed it for desert creatures-- they erected their siege towers, they stripped its palaces, they made it a ruin. ¹⁴Wail, O ships of Tarshish, for your stronghold is destroyed.

Tyre's demise is not a surprise to the Lord; He has planned her doom. Tyre's influence in the world has become too powerful, even to the point of determining the elections of kings

and princes of other countries. Tyre is caught in the Lord’s plan to cleanse the earth of its pride; He has selected Assyria to begin the work and the Chaldeans of Babylon to complete the work. Tyre and Sidon are the two major cities in Phoenicia which Joshua could not subdue during the conquest of the Promised Land in 1435 – 1400 BC. Sidon was the first-born son of Canaan, the grandson of Noah. When the Tower of Babel occurred, Sidon settled the new city on the Mediterranean coast. Later, the Sidonites built and inhabited the city of Tyre, making her the daughter of Sidon. Tyre became so popular that once people moved there, it was very unlikely that they would move to another city; therefore, Tyre grew exponentially. Because Tyre failed to help establish or spawn other cities in the area, she is Tyre the virgin daughter of Sidon. If Tyre stayed in power, it is possible that she would threaten the authority of Assyria and later Babylon in the area; therefore, her power had to be usurped. Simply conquering the city as Assyria conquered Sidon would not accomplish the task; Tyre would be a constant threat as long as she held her commercial power thus facilitating the need for her total destruction. Assyria will destroy Tyre and then Babylon, a yet unknown power, which will arise to help free Tyre of her restraints. The ships of Tarshish have nowhere to dock their ships with the merchandise of the world for a long time.

Near Future

Seventy Years

Isaiah 23:15 Now it will come about in that day that Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years like the days of one king. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as *in* the song of the harlot: ¹⁶ Take *your* harp, walk about the city, O forgotten harlot; Pluck the strings skillfully, sing many songs, That you may be remembered. ¹⁷ And it will come about at the end of seventy years that the LORD will visit Tyre. Then she will go back to her harlot's wages, and will play the harlot with all the kingdoms on the face of the earth. ¹⁸ And her gain and her harlot's wages will be set apart to the LORD; it will not be stored up or hoarded, but her gain will become sufficient food and choice attire for those who dwell in the presence of the LORD.

For seventy years, from 722 BC until 652 BC, Tyre lies stunted in her ability to control the commerce around the Mediterranean Sea. In 652 BC, Esarhaddon, the King of Assyria dies and the area of Babylon is transferred to the rule of his son, Prince Shamash-shum-ukin who, after being immersed in Babylonian culture, begins a civil war against his own brother, Ashurbanipal who rules Assyria from the city of Nineveh. Shamash-shum-ukin enlists the help of the Elamites, the Chaldeans, the Suteans of Southern Mesopotamia and the Arabs of the desert to cause Ashurbanipal so much grief that his power over Tyre weakens as the seventy years of suppression come to a close. Tyre begins to return to her old habits and she establishes her port anew by singing her song of advertisement to the countries of the Mediterranean. It takes several years for the nations to trust her again, but by 536 BC, she is strong enough to lend support to the returning exiles and help with the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. At the time of this oracle, the Temple is still standing in Jerusalem but it will be reduced to ruins by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC and then rebuilt over a twenty year period beginning in 536 BC. Although Tyre is a sinful city, the Lord will use her for His good when He calls for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

Figure 45: Fulfillment of Vision 19 - Seventy Years for Tyre

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 23	<i>Near Future</i> For seventy years Tyre will not maintain her position as the premier market capital of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.	Fulfilled in the seventy years between 722 BC and 652 BC.