

## The Prophecies of Isaiah <sup>92</sup>

### Lesson 36

Finally, we arrive at Section 3 of Vision 22, which deals primarily with the Southern Kingdom's future rebellion and then the eventual coming of the Lord to ransom the nation and establish His 1,000-year kingdom on earth.

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Section 3</b>
<b>The Majesty of the Lord</b> Isaiah 40 – 48	<b>The Suffering of the Lord</b> Isaiah 49-57	<b>The Coming of the Lord</b> Isaiah 58-66

The last nine chapters of Isaiah can be divided into the following major themes.

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5	Part 6
The Southern Kingdom's Future Rebellion	The Lord's Provision of Israel's Restoration	The Lord's Provision of Israel's Peace and prosperity	The Lord's Coming	Israel's Prayer and the Lord's Response	The Lord's Fulfillment of His Promises to Israel and the World
Isaiah 58	Isaiah 59	Isaiah 60	Isaiah 61:1-63:6	Isaiah 63:7-65:25	Isaiah 66

### Part 1

In this first part of this last section of Vision 22, the Lord calls for king Hezekiah to cry loudly as His trumpet to declare the coming sin of the Southern Kingdom which will send them into exile and ultimately cause the nation to reject the Lord until just before He arrives to redeem and ransom the nation.

*History/Present Day*

#### **HEZEKIAH - CRY LOUDLY, RAISE YOUR VOICE**

**Isaiah 58:1** " Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression, And to the house of Jacob their sins.

In 710 BC, under Hezekiah, the Southern Kingdom was still faithful to the Lord. Fifteen years later, Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, consciously leads the kingdom into the depths of rebellion against the Lord. A transgressor is one who goes beyond the boundaries, infringes on restrictions or steps across the established principles of the Lord. The sinner is the person who offends the Lord by indulging in evil, wicked, immoral debauchery. Within twenty years after the delivery of this vision, the Southern Kingdom will be guilty of both transgression and sin. Hezekiah is to trumpet the warning to his nation so it will be without excuse when it falls into depravity.

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History/Present Day

**ISRAEL – DELIGHT IN NEARNESS OF GOD**

**Isaiah 58:2** "Yet they seek Me day by day, and delight to know My ways, As a nation that has done righteousness, And has not forsaken the ordinance of their God. They ask Me *for* just decisions, They delight in the nearness of God.

Unaware of the future turpitude of the nation, the Southern Kingdom under Hezekiah delights in the Lord day by day. However, soon the nation will seek the Lord outwardly, claiming to want to know Him, maintaining the appearance of a desire for the nearness of God; however, it is a charade.

Near Future

**ISRAEL – WHY FASTS NOT ANSWERED**

**Isaiah 58:3** 'Why have we fasted and Thou dost not see? *Why* have we humbled ourselves and Thou dost not notice?' Behold, on the day of your fast you find *your* desire, And drive hard all your workers.

At some point in the future, after the nation has fallen into rebellion against the Lord, the people will complain because the Lord is not responding to their ritual fasts. Why should He? At this point, Israel has not heard a single command from the Lord to fast, nor has the Lord instructed her to establish a fast. Has fasting been a part of the Old Testament story to this point? Yes! Israel learned the principles of fasting while they were in exile in Egypt. When Jacob and Joseph died, both were embalmed like a Pharaoh and the Egyptian nation fasted for the required period. The nation of Israel carried that tradition out of Egypt and struggled to rid itself of performing the ritual without the blessing of the Lord. In the Northern Kingdom, Jezebel used a fast called by the false priests of the nation to kill Naboth and steal his vineyard for Ahab. Jonah would see the Assyrian capital repent in the only way it knew how when it heard the message of the prophet; she worshipped the Lord just as she had worshipped Baal. Every false religion of the world fasts for the blessing of its god; nevertheless, the Lord never calls for Israel to fast, nor does He bless her for her fasting attempts.

This message is delivered in 710 BC; one hundred and twenty-three later, in 586 BC, Jerusalem, the capital of the Southern Kingdom will be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar when the last exiles are removed to Babylon. When that occurred, Daniel had already been the second in command of the Babylonian Empire for at least 18 years. While in exile, the leaders of the Jewish remnant instituted fast days to commemorate days when the Lord brought great tragedy on the nation. The Lord did not instigate these fast days. When the nation returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian exile, the Lord instructed Israel to turn those fasts into joyous feasts in Zechariah 7:3 – 5 and 8:19. History revealed that Israel failed to comply with the Lord's command. She drove herself hard in her fasts to get the blessing of the Lord, but He did not bless her because her motives and methods were all wrong. He did not want to be worshipped like other gods.

Near Future

**LORD – WICKED FASTS**

**Isaiah 58:4** "Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like *you do* today to make your voice heard on high. <sup>5</sup>"Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed, And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD?"

Israel's fasts were contentious; she was argumentative, filled with bitter conflict in rivalry and with an evil uplifted fist. Here, the Lord forewarns Israel not to fast with all the self-righteous trappings commonly associated with the worship of false gods.

*Near Future*

**LORD – INSTEAD OF FASTS**

**Isaiah 58:6** "Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free, And break every yoke? <sup>7</sup> "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, And bring the homeless poor into the house; When you see the naked, to cover him; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh? <sup>8</sup> "Then your light will break out like the dawn, And your recovery will speedily spring forth; And your righteousness will go before you; The glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

The Lord forewarned Israel to follow those instructions that He had given instead of fasting. He had instructed them to flee from evil, eliminate oppression and set the browbeaten free, to share with the hungry, house the homeless, and clothe the naked so the inner righteousness of the people would break forth with the Lord's blessing. The Lord looks for an inward heart revealed in the outward acts of righteousness; He will protect this heart.

*Near Future*

**LORD – HERE I AM**

**Isaiah 58:9a** "Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

When Israel ends her fasts and follows the Lord's commands, He will hear when she calls. He will say, "Here I am" in answer to her cry.

*Near Future*

**LORD – CHANGE YOUR WAYS**

**Isaiah 58:9b** If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, <sup>10</sup> And if you give yourself to the hungry, And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness, And your gloom *will become* like midday. <sup>11</sup> "And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.

Soon after Hezekiah's death, the Southern Kingdom will be in such depravity that she can be saved only if she chooses to change her ways and return to the Lord and His Law. She will, at times, and the Lord will bless her beyond measure until she once again takes Him for granted and strays even further away from Him.

*Near Future*

**LORD – ISRAEL REPAIRER OF THE BREACH**

**Isaiah 58:12** "And those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; You will raise up the age-old foundations; And you will be called the repairer of the breach, The restorer of the streets in which to dwell.

When Cyrus the Great releases the Jews from the Babylonian Exile in 536 BC, that generation becomes the rebuilders of the ancient ruins destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar fifty years before. The Temple work begins first with the foundation and the walls. After a long pause in the building of the Temple, it will be finished and soon Nehemiah will arrive to

repair the breaches in Jerusalem’s wall. Then, and only then, will the nation live safely in the streets of Jerusalem under Persian, Greek and Roman rule.

*Near Future*

**LORD – TURN FROM OWN PLEASURE ON SABBATH**

**Isaiah 58:13** "If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot From doing your *own* pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, And shall honor it, desisting from your *own* ways, From seeking your *own* pleasure, And speaking *your own* word, <sup>14</sup> Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you *with* the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Resting on the Sabbath shows faithfulness to the covenant with the Lord that He established in the Law given through Moses. With the right heart, simply putting the week’s work aside for observance of the all important Sabbath will cause the Lord to propel, bless, and prosper the week’s work to the “heights of the earth.” At that time, the Israelites will finally receive the blessings promised to Jacob.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 58	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord begs Israel to change her ways, return to Him and He will allow her to rebuild.	Fulfilled in 520 BC