

## ISAIAH – Chapter 21

The oracle concerning – the wilderness of the sea – received by Isaiah as a harsh vision!

NOTE: this section speaks of the defeat of Babylon. This defeat will cause groaning, anguish, and the pains of a woman in labor to the Judahites. This could not be Babylon's destruction by the Medo-Persian Empire because the result of that event was the re-establishment of Judah in the land. What historical event could it be referring to?

- 1) Area – area around the gulf known today as the Persian Gulf, that is, territory near Babylon.
- 2) In 722 B.C. (same year Assyria defeated and carried off into captivity the ten tribes of Israel), a Chaldean prince from this area, called Merodach-baladan (Isa. 39:1), revolted against Assyria, captured the city of Babylon and was crowned “King of Babylon.”
- 3) Elam (Isa. 21:2) supported his revolt.
- 4) In 710 B.C., Sargon, king of Assyria, defeated and evicted Merodach from the city.
- 5) Sargon died in 705 B.C. and was replaced by Sennacherib.
- 6) In 702 B.C., Sennacherib devastated the entire Persian Gulf region, crushing both the Chaldeans and Elam.

Hezekiah, king of Judah, and other members of his court felt that by forming an alliance with Merodach that Judah could protect themselves from Assyria. Isa. 39:1-8 Isaiah's message to Judah in chapter 21 – it's not going to happen! No one will stop Assyria but God, and Judah needs to refocus their thinking!

As...so it comes.

Merodach, who arose suddenly from the desert regions, will revolt against Assyria.

Vs. 2 God gave Isaiah a “harsh vision” – Judah's belief (hope) that the Chaldeans will save them will disappear.

Elam and Media will attack Babylon and free it from Assyria.

I – Merodach – have made an end to the groaning caused by Assyria.

The Assyrian Empire had caused most nations to groan under her devastation. Merodach believes that he can liberate the entire region.

Vs. 3-5 Isaiah's reaction to the event is next given – pain, bewilderment, horror.

In contrast to the Judahites, who assumed that all would surely be well! Rather than feasting, they should be preparing for war. Matt. 24:37-39

Vs. 6 Isaiah is told by God to have someone posted as a lookout.

Vs. 7-9 What will this lookout see? The Babylonians.

- 1) Riders riding from the battle reporting the utter destruction that is taking place.
- 2) Fallen, fallen is Babylon (destroyed in 689 B.C.).
- 3) All their idols are shattered on the ground.

Vs. 10 Judah's last hope (apart from their God) of deliverance from Assyria is crushed! No one will be able to stop Assyria (except Judah's God).

These 10 verses are the word of the Lord – Isaiah saw it and he has faithfully delivered it.

Edom – area southeast and southwest of the Dead Sea on opposite sides of the Arabah.

- 1) Edom – “red” or “ruddy” – characterizes the red sandstone terrain of much of the area – wilderness, semi desert, not very well used for agriculture – its population was mostly nomadic. Isa. 63:1; Jer. 49:22; Amos 1:11-12 (Bozrah was its capital.)
- 2) Descendants of Esau. Gen. 36:1-43
- 3) Also called Seir. Gen. 32:3, 36:8; Judges 5:4
- 4) Forms the southern border of the Promised Land. Num. 34:3-4; Josh. 15:1-3
- 5) Teman was a district of Edom. Amos 1:12; (one of Job's comforters, Eliphaz, was a Temanite) Job 2:11; Ezk. 25:13
- 6) Because Esau was a brother of Jacob, Edom is occasionally referred to as a brother.
- 7) Jacob stole the birthright of Esau (Edom). Gen. 27:30-41
- 8) Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through his territory when God brought him out of Egypt. Num. 20:14-21
- 9) Both Saul and David (2 Sam. 8:14) conducted warfare against the Edomites.
- 10) God used “Hadad, the Edomite” as an adversary to both David and Solomon. 1 Kings 11:14-22
- 11) Edom became a vassal of Judah during the reign of Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:47) and successfully came out from under their domination during the reign of Joram. 2 Kings 8:20-22 Amaziah also fought against Edom (2 Chron. 25:11-12) and defeated them.

12) Eventually, Edom was “absorbed” by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Greeks.

13) In N.T. times, the area of Edom (Petra) was called Idumea. Mk. 3:7-8  
Herod, the Great, was of Idumean ancestry.

Vs. 11-12 The oracle concerning Edom (Seir) – even though mourning might be coming, it will be followed by another night. Joshua 24:4

Vs. 13-17 The oracle concerning Arabia – a peninsula lying between the Red Sea on the west and the Persian Gulf on the east, incorporating over 1,200,000 square miles of territory.

1) Home to the Arabs who are described as the nomadic occupants.

2) Present day Saudi Arabia, two Yemens, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, as well as parts of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and the Sinai Peninsula.

The Dedanites were a tribe from southern Arabia.

Tema was an oasis in northwestern Arabia. Job. 6:19; Jer. 25:23

Kedar was in northern Arabia. Isa. 42:11

This oracle discusses the difficult times the people of Arabia will experience under the hand of Assyria within one year:

1) All the splendor of Kedar will end.

2) They will run for their lives from the sword.

It will happen because the Lord God of Israel has spoken!