



Isaiah 22

A Prophecy concerning Jerusalem ~ Denunciation of Self-serving Officials

This chapter begins with an oracle about the "valley of vision." Isaiah asks why the city of Jerusalem is in such chaos. It doesn't make sense to him and he is brought to tears. Isaiah says that people helped knock down houses to build walls and defend against the invading armies, but they didn't turn towards the person who planned it and who helped them do it. They should have humbled themselves, worn sackcloth and mourned, but instead they threw a big party and ate and drank in celebration.

God tells the people to go ask a steward named Shebna why he's taken over the house he's in and set up a place to live. They're told to tell him that God's about to get rid of him, since he's disgraced his master's house. Instead, God appoints Eliakim to take his place. He'll be able to open and close the door of the House of David whenever he wants to. For a while, he'll be like a secure peg that God can trust with his glory, but eventually the peg's going to break.

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 20:1 The oracle concerning the valley of vision. What do you mean that you have gone up, all of you, to the housetops, ² you who are full of shoutings, tumultuous city, exultant town? Your slain are not slain with the sword or dead in battle. ³ All your leaders have fled together; without the bow they were captured. All of you who were found were captured, though they had fled far away. ⁴ Therefore I said: "Look away from me; let me weep bitter tears; do not labor to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people."</p> <p>⁵ For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day of tumult and trampling and confusion in the valley of vision, a battering down of walls and a shouting to the mountains. ⁶ And Elam bore the quiver with chariots and horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield.</p>	<p>a 22:1 Although Isaiah frequently refers to Jerusalem as a mountain (Mount Zion), he now sees it as a valley, from which nothing can be seen. See Jer. 7:31–34; 21:13. Jerusalem is both on a hill and surrounded by hills. The valley of vision is where Yahweh imparts revelation.</p> <p>b 22:2 See Ps. 48:1–2.</p> <p>c 22:3 Or "They were taken without their bows" or "The mighty ones among you fled away" (LXX).</p> <p>d 22:4 Or "the young women (daughter) of my people," a metaphor to show how Isaiah loved the people of Jerusalem.</p> <p>e 22:5 Or "the valley of Zion" (LXX).</p> <p>f 22:5 The Hebrew of this clause is uncertain. It can also be translated "The people shout."</p> <p>g 22:5 The word hill is singular and refers to the Temple Mount, the hill of holiness.</p>	<p>A Prophecy concerning Jerusalem</p> <p>Isaiah 20:1 A prophecy concerning "The Valley of Vision": a What's happening with you? Why have you all gone up to the rooftops? ² The whole city is in an uproar. What's happened to the once happy, bustling city? b The bodies of the slain litter your streets. They were not slain by the sword on the battlefield but executed. ³ All your leaders have fled far away, and those who were found were taken captive—before they even shot a single arrow. c ⁴ That is why I said, "Leave me alone to weep my bitter tears. Don't even try to comfort me concerning my beloved people d being destroyed.</p> <p>⁵ The Lord Yahweh, Commander of Angel Armies, has a day in store—a day of tumult, trampling, and terror in the "Valley of Vision." e It is a day when they breach the walls f and the people cry out to the mountain of holiness. g ⁶ The soldiers of Elam attacked with chariots and cavalry, armed with bows and arrows. The troops of Kir advanced with shields ready.</p>

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<p>⁷ Your choicest valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen took their stand at the gates. ⁸ He has taken away the covering of Judah. In that day you looked to the weapons of the House of the Forest, ⁹ and you saw that the breaches of the city of David were many. You collected the waters of the lower pool, ¹⁰ and you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you broke down the houses to fortify the wall. ¹¹ You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you did not look to him who did it, or see him who planned it long ago.</p> <p>¹² In that day the Lord GOD of hosts called for weeping and mourning, for baldness and wearing sackcloth; ¹³ and behold, joy and gladness, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine. “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” ¹⁴ The LORD of hosts has revealed himself in my ears: “Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die,” says the Lord GOD of hosts.</p> <p>¹⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts, “Come, go to this steward, to Shebna, who is over the household, and say to him: ¹⁶ What have you to do here, and whom have you here, that you have cut out here a tomb for yourself, you who cut out a tomb on the height and carve a dwelling for yourself in the rock? ¹⁷ Behold, the LORD will hurl you away violently, O you strong man. He will seize firm hold on you ¹⁸ and whirl you around and around, and throw you like a ball into a wide land. There you shall die, and there shall be your glorious chariots, your shame of your master’s house. ¹⁹ I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your station.</p> <p>²⁰ In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah,</p>	<p>h 22:8 Or “He (the invading army) has taken away Judah’s covering.”</p> <p>i 22:8 Or “the House of the Forest,” likely a royal armory mentioned in 1 Kings 10:17. A forest is often a metaphor for humanity. See Song. 2:3; Isa. 55:12.</p> <p>j 22:9 Possibly the Pool of Siloam.</p> <p>k 22:11 Or “mikveh,” a pool for an immersion ritual offering repentance and consecration. Mikveh can also be translated “ditch,” perhaps suggesting Hezekiah’s tunnel.</p> <p>l 22:13 See 1 Cor. 15:32.</p> <p>m 22:14 See 2 Kings 24:3–4.</p> <p>n 22:15 The meaning of the Hebrew word (a hapax legomenon) is uncertain, although most scholars view it as a word for a high government official in Hezekiah’s court, like a comptroller or perhaps a treasurer. In 2 Kings 18:18 Shebna is mentioned as the king’s scribe or secretary. The name Shebna means “one who rests himself” or “one who is captive.” Shebna becomes a picture of the Adam-life (the spirit of anti-Christ) that seeks self-promotion. But God will replace our “Shebna” with Eliakim (the Christ-life within us). This principle of replacement is found throughout the Scriptures (Isaac for Ishmael, David for Saul, Esther for Vashti, Samuel for Eli, Matthias for Judas, etc.).</p> <p>o 22:16 This elevated cliff may have been on the other side of the Kidron Valley, where the village of Silwan is now situated. Many rock-cut tombs have been discovered there. It appears that Shebna hewing out his tomb on a cliff was a gross display of self-promotion.</p> <p>p 22:18 Or “I will wind you up over and over like a headdress (turban).”</p> <p>q 22:20 Eliakim means “raised up by God,” and he becomes a picture of the Lord Jesus, who was raised up by the power of God to rule over God’s house. It is possible that Eliakim was the high priest. The Hebrew text uses priestly terms for his clothing and sash. See Rev. 1:13.</p> <p>r 22:20 There was a high priest named Hilkiah who could be the Hilkiah mentioned here as father of Eliakim. Hilkiah means “my portion is Yahweh.” See 2 Kings 22:4.</p>	<p>⁷ Your lush valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen took their stand at your gates. ⁸ He removed his protection from Judah. h In that day, you looked for additional weapons from the storehouse of the Forest of Lebanon. i ⁹ You discovered the many breaches in the City of David, and you collected water in the lower pool. j ¹⁰ You inspected the houses in Jerusalem and tore some down to fortify the wall. ¹¹ You built a reservoir k between the two walls in the city to conserve water flowing down from the old pool, but you gave no thought to the one who made it. You did not trust in the one who formed it long ago!</p> <p>¹² In that day, the Lord Yahweh, Commander of Angel Armies, called you to repent with weeping and mourning and to show your remorse by shaving your heads and wearing sackcloth. ¹³ But instead, you celebrated with joy and festivity, slaughtering the sheep and the fatted ox, saying, “We will feast on meat and drink much wine. Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” l ¹⁴ Revealed in my ears are the words of the Lord Yahweh, Commander of Angel Armies: “Until your dying day, certainly I will not forgive this sin.” m</p> <p>Denunciation of Self-serving Officials</p> <p>¹⁵ This is what the Lord Yahweh, the Commander of Angel Armies, has to say: “Go to Shebna, the treasurer n of the palace, and say to him, ¹⁶ ‘What right do you have to be here, and who gave you permission? And why do you chisel out a tomb for yourself here, carving out your royal burial place, a dwelling place in the rock?’ o ¹⁷ Watch out, O strong man, for the Lord is about to seize you and hurl you down. ¹⁸ He will sling you around and around p and throw you like a ball into a distant, barren land. There you will die, and all your splendid chariots will lie there in the dust. You are a disgrace to your master’s house! ¹⁹ I will kick you out of office and pull you down from your high position!’</p> <p>²⁰ “On that day, I will appoint my servant Eliakim, q son of Hilkiah, r to take your place.</p>

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<p>²¹ and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. ²² And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. ²³ And I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honor to his father's house. ²⁴ And they will hang on him the whole honor of his father's house, the offspring and issue, every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons.</p> <p>²⁵ In that day, declares the LORD of hosts, the peg that was fastened in a secure place will give way, and it will be cut down and fall, and the load that was on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken."</p>	<p>s 22:21 As a father, Eliakim (Jesus) cares for, provides for, and loves his people. See Isa. 9:6–7.</p> <p>t 22:22 See Rev. 3:7. Eliakim (a picture of Jesus) is to have unlimited control. The doors he opens (looses) are doors of revelation, treasures, favor, and opportunity. When he closes (binds) those doors, no amount of human striving can open them.</p> <p>u 22:23 The Hebrew word yathed can be translated as either peg or nail.</p> <p>v 22:23 The Hebrew word 'aman is most frequently translated "believe." It is also a form of our word amen. God fastened Jesus on the cross, the sinner's place of security, so that we would believe in him.</p> <p>w 22:23 We are now seated with Christ as part of his Father's house (sons and daughters). See Eph. 2:6; Rev. 3:21.</p> <p>x 22:24 Or "leaves" or "everyone small or great" (LXX). The Hebrew is uncertain.</p> <p>y 22:25 That is, the Lord has decreed that even Eliakim's authority and prominence will one day be cut off. Human authority is always temporary.</p>	<p>²¹ I will honor him by clothing him with your robe and binding your priestly sash upon him. I will transfer your authority into his hands, and he will be a father s to those living in Jerusalem and to the people of Judah. ²² I will place upon his shoulders the key to the treasures of David's palace. He will open doors that no one can shut, and he will shut doors that no one can open. t ²³ I will strike a blow to him as a nail u in a secure v place, and he will be a glorious throne of honor for his father's house. w ²⁴ All the glory of his father's house they will fasten to him, including offspring and branches that will trust in him. x Every vessel, jar, and bowl, both small and great, will be fastened to him.</p> <p>²⁵ "And in that day," declares the Lord Yahweh, Commander of Angel Armies, "the nail fastened in a secure place will give way and be cut off and fall. And all the load hanging on it will fall off." The Lord Yahweh has spoken. y</p>

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY

John A. Martin

JERUSALEM (CHAP. 22)

Chapters 13-23 are more than a catalog of judgments against various nations. They also discuss the responses of various peoples to the Assyrian threat in the days of Isaiah. Jerusalem, "the Valley of Vision," was also under God's judgment and needed to respond properly to the Assyrian threat. That Isaiah was speaking of Jerusalem is evident in 22:9-10.

- Judgment against Jerusalem (22:1-14)

It is not certain which Assyrian invasion Isaiah was speaking of in these verses. Perhaps it was the invasion of Sennacherib, who surrounded Jerusalem in 701 B.C. (chaps. 36-37). From God's perspective the purpose of that invasion was to encourage Judah to turn to Him and repent of her sinful ways. Unfortunately the people did not respond positively to the invasion and used it as a time for revelry (22:2) and for shoring up the city's defenses (vv. 8-11).

- **22:1-4.** This oracle (see comments on 13:1) pertains to the Valley of Vision (cf. 22:5). Often Jerusalem is referred to as a mountain (e.g., Mount Zion), but here the city is called a valley. This also fits because a valley—the Kidron—runs between two hills directly east of the city. From this city God was revealing Himself to Isaiah; hence it was called the Valley of Vision. Jerusalem was filled with people (in commotion and tumult; cf. v. 5) from the surrounding towns

and villages in Judah. (Sennacherib wrote that he had captured 46 towns of Judah.) The important people (leaders) had escaped but were captured (v. 3) by the Assyrians. People still inside the city of Jerusalem went up on the flat housetops (v. 1) to observe the enemy outside the city walls. Because the Assyrian advance had caused the destruction of many of Isaiah's people (v. 4), he lamented (cf. his remorse in 15:5-7; 21:3-4).

- **22:5-8a.** Jerusalem was being besieged and the people inside the walls could do nothing about it. The people realized that the enemy's advancing to the very walls of Jerusalem was a day of judgment brought on by the Lord, the LORD Almighty (cf. vv. 12, 14-15, 25). The attack was not happenstance; it had come because of the people's disobedience (cf. vv. 12-14). In the city people were in tumult and terror as they saw the enemy camped outside waiting for an opportunity to get inside to sack and burn the city (v. 5). The Hebrew words for "tumult," trampling, and "terror" sound much alike. Soldiers from Elam, east of Assyria with its capital at Susa, and Kir, perhaps an Assyrian province (2 Kings 16:9; Amos 1:5; 9:7), joined the Assyrian warriors. Perhaps Isaiah mentioned these two areas of the Assyrian Empire to point out (by a figure of speech known as a merism) that troops from all over the empire were now gathered at Jerusalem's very door. Enemy chariots were in the valleys around Jerusalem, and at the city gates enemy horsemen were ready to attack (Isa. 22:7). Since Judah was defenseless, this was certainly a frightening time!
- **22:8b-11.** One would think that in such a precarious position the nation [Vol. 1, p. 1070] would turn back to God and repent. Obviously the city could not deliver itself (v. 8a). However, in their sinful condition the people still tried to do things their own way. Rather than count on God for protection they wanted to depend on their own strength. So they got out the weapons from the Palace of the Forest, which Solomon had built (1 Kings 7:2; cf. 1 Kings 10:17, 21). It got its name from the huge cedar columns brought to Jerusalem from Lebanon. Apparently armaments were stored in that building in Isaiah's day.
 - At the time of Sennacherib's threat Hezekiah took several defense measures: (a) he repaired broken parts of the wall (cf. 2 Chron. 32:5) of the City of David (cf. 2 Sam. 5:7, 9); (b) he collected water in the Lower Pool (cf. 2 Chron. 32:4); (c) he demolished some houses to use their material for repairing the wall; and (d) he preserved the city's water supply in a reservoir between the two walls. The exact location of this reservoir and the meaning of the two walls and of the Old Pool are not known. Perhaps the reservoir refers to the Pool of Siloam which Hezekiah connected to the Gihon Spring (2 Chron. 32:30) by his now-famous underground water tunnel, which extends 1,777 feet and was carved out of solid rock. This marvelous feat of engineering was successful. But it could not be a means of the nation's deliverance, for the people refused to look for help to God who had given them the water long ago.
- **22:12-14.** When the people saw the enemy they should have repented, realizing they were helpless before the Assyrians. Pulling out their hair (cf. Ezra 9:3; Neh. 13:25) and wearing sackcloth (cf. comments on Isa. 3:24) were signs of mourning. But instead of mourning (22:12) the Jerusalemites "lived it up" in revelry (cf. v. 2), banqueting, and wine-drinking in the face of their impending death (tomorrow we die, v. 13). They did not believe God was powerful enough to save them and to follow through on His promises. Therefore a pronouncement of woe came to the people through Isaiah: this sin of lack of trust in the LORD would not be atoned for. Eventually the curses of the Mosaic Covenant (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 27:15-26; 28:15-68) would come on the nation of Judah.
- **Judgment against Shebna (22:15-25)**
 - **22:15-19.** The reason for this section on judgment (vv. 15-25) is not explicitly stated. Shebna was a high court official, a steward, involved in the negotiations with Sennacherib when he besieged Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37; 19:2; Isa. 36:3, 11, 22; 37:2). Some think that his position as steward (secretary) of the palace gave him a position second only to the king. Why he was to be deposed from this important position is not stated. Perhaps he opposed Isaiah's message of impending judgment. He apparently shared the attitudes of the Jerusalemites Isaiah had described (22:2, 11-13).

- The impiety of Shebna apparently involved his trying to make a permanent name for himself by fashioning a grave, as people did in many of the surrounding nations. Perhaps he thought that by being buried in a prominent grave site (on the height) his name would live on in spite of the current conditions. However, Isaiah prophesied that Shebna, rather than having a permanent resting place, would be demoted and would die in a large foreign country, probably Assyria. There is no record of what happened to him other than the prophecy given here by Isaiah.
- **22:20-25.** Eliakim, the palace administrator and a godly man, would fill Shebna's important position (vv. 20-21). Eliakim also was involved in the negotiations with Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37; Isa. 36:3, 11, 22; 37:2). He would be a respected leader (like a father to the Judahites) and a faithful administrator who would make wise decisions (22:22). In contrast with Shebna, who was to be cast away, Eliakim was to be like a well-driven peg (v. 23a), a firm foundation for the nation. He would be an honorable person (v. 23b), and would cause his family name to be well known to humble people (figuratively called lesser vessels) and to more influential family members (called bowls and jars). However, Isaiah warned that eventually even this peg would come to an end (v. 25), signifying that eventually the kingdom of Judah would be taken away into captivity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In the first half of Isaiah 22, the people of Jerusalem quite pleased with themselves for the successes they have enjoyed. Instead of giving God credit, they have credited themselves with the outcome. What typically happens when we take credit for something God empowers us to do?
2. When you realize you've overstepped your bounds with God and taken credit for something he's done in your life, what steps can you take to effectively "humble yourself" before him?
3. What was Shebna, the treasurer of the palace, doing that so caught God's attention? Relate his behavior back to the actions of the leaders in Jerusalem. What common theme ties the two together?
4. After God commands Isaiah to have the leaders "hurl down" Shebna, he tells Isaiah he wants Eliakim anointed to take his place. The Lord says, "I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place." Do you feel like God has fastened you in a secure place? Why, or why not? What would it be like for God to do this in your life?
5. After studying this chapter in the book of Isaiah, what would you say was the significance of verse 22 ("I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.") for the church today?