

The Book of Isaiah

Salt & Light Institute
Winter 2010

Week 4: A Troubled Vineyard

Isaiah 1-12

PROMISE
PREVAILS OVER
JUDGMENT

- Isaiah 1.1-2.5
- The juxtaposition of judgment and salvation

Judgment	Salvation
Isa. 1.2-31	Isa. 2.1-5
Isa. 2.6-4.1	Isa. 4.2-6
Isa. 5.1-9.7 are more complicated: The verdict of 8.22 is "former time" (9.1) while 9.2-7 articulates the promises of a "latter time" (9.1)	
Isa. 9.8-10.4	Isa. 10.5-27a
Isa. 10.27b-34	Isa. 11.1-16 (esp vv. 1-9)
Isa. 12.1ff culminates in a song of praise	

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Overview of 2.1-5.30

- The Bookends of Salvation
 - 2.1-5 The Latter-Day Mountain and the Nations
 - 4.2-6 The Latter-Day Mountain and the Branch
- The Pages of Judgment
 - 2.6-22 In That Day God Alone Will Be Exalted
 - 3.1-4.1 They Have Brought This On Themselves
- A Troubled Vineyard
 - 5.1-7 The Vineyard Song
 - 5.8-23 The Woes Against Judah and Jerusalem
 - 5.24-30 The Nation of Judgment

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Isaiah 2:6-22

- 2:5 and 2:6
- What's wrong?
- Two refrains
 - 2.10 is nearly identical with 2.19 and 2.21
 - 2.11 is nearly identical with 2.17
- Contrasting Visions
- The whole point – 2.22

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Isaiah 3.1-4.1

- Breakdown of Chapter
 - Yahweh will take away all their sustenance and leadership and will create social chaos (3.1-12)
 - Judgment is mainly aimed at the ruling class and wealthy, the “haughty” of chapter 2 (3.13-4.1)
- Of Note:
 - Three “take away” verses (3.1; 3.18; 4.1)
 - The entire chapter illustrates the main point of chapter 2 --- they regard man, not Yahweh
- Main Point: Growing anarchy initiated by Yahweh will result in disaster for Judah and Jerusalem

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Isaiah 3.1-4.1

- Continuity with Chapter 2
 - “that day” is still in view
 - Further details the implications of the refrain
- Continuity with Chapter 1
 - The “vineyard” (3.14; 1.8)
 - Comparison with Sodom (3.9-10; 1.9-10)
 - The “daughter(s) of Zion” (1.8; 3.16)

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Isaiah 4.2-6

- Breakdown of passage
 - “In that day” still
 - Introduction to the Branch of Yhwh (11.1)
 - Jeremiah also envisions him (23.5; 33.15; Zech 3.8; 6.12)
 - A remnant will survive judgment (c.f. 1.9)
 - Judgment results in the cleansing of Zion, providing a booth and refuge for the inhabitants
- Main point: Just as in chapter 1, judgment is not the end of Judah, but is its cleansing so that Yahweh can again dwell with his people

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Isaiah 4.2-6

- Note:
 - Contrast between the haughty of chs. 2-3 and the redeemed of ch. 4
 - A return to paradise (32.16; 62.3, 9; 65.23; 66.11)
 - Revelation 21.22-27
 - Presence of God replaces the temple and provides light (Isa 60.19-20)
 - Nations walk by its light (2.24) and bring wealth into the city (60.11), whose gates are open always (60.11)
 - Only the pure enter the city (2.24)

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Isaiah 5.1-7

- The Gardener did everything right (5.1-2), but the grapes didn't turn out good
- The result (5.5-6) [a reproduction of Gen. 2-3]
- What God expected:
 - “He waited for *mishpat*, but behold! *mispach!*”
 - Justice vs. bloodshed
 - “For *tsedaqah*, but behold! *tse'aqah!*”
 - Righteousness vs. an outcry for distress

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Isaiah 5.8-24

- The answer to “what went wrong?” (5.4)
- Six woes accuse the people of going into exile because of a lack of knowledge, because they have rejected Torah and despised the words of God

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Isaiah 5.25-30

- A bigger “therefore!” – not “why” but “now what”
- The preceding accusations call for judgment
- The anger is expressed in 25a
- The indictment is in 25b
- The judgment to come is in 26-30
 - A unidentified foreign nation will descend
 - “That day” is extended into cosmological dimensions (5.30)

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So What?

- We need to learn from Judah’s mistakes
 - We must seek knowledge from the Scriptures
 - We must regard God, not man
 - We must seek to exalt God in all our affairs
- We need to understand the mission of God
 - The Branch will be a major player – how will the book of Isaiah extend and develop this image?
 - The city – how will we get from unfaithful to faithful?
 - What is Yahweh going to do?

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