

Isaiah

Bible Study

❖ Introduction

❖ Chapter 1

Isaiah = “The Eternal is salvation” [760—680 BC]

- Ministry began in 740

Isaiah was a contemporary with Amos and Hosea—(Israel),
and Micah—(Judah)

- He lived in and around Jerusalem

He was part of the royal family (Judah) —1st cousin to King Uzziah and grandson to king Joash, by means of his father Amoz

He began as a prophet when Israel was divided into two kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south

- Isaiah was living as a prophet when the northern kingdom was destroyed in 722/721 BC

The northern kingdom had sinned greatly, leading to their destruction...and Judah in the south was headed in the same direction

His warning message was primarily to Judah, but there are also prophecies for the northern kingdom

Isaiah's call, when he began his public ministry was in **740 BC**



His call, the earliest event in the book appears in chapter 6, rather than at the beginning of the book
“in the year the king Uzziah died” [Ch. 6:1]—740 BC

Isaiah's ministry spanned the reigns of five kings of Judah



Uzziah (767—**740**)

Jotham (740—736)

Ahaz (736—729)

Hezekiah (729—686)

Manasseh (686—642)

Isaiah is quoted more times in the new testament than any other prophet—85 times

He has been called:

- The Paul of the old testament—his teaching of faith in God's promises
- Hebrews of the old testament—faith of God's people during dark times
 - James of the old testament—teaching on obedience

His message was directed towards Judah and Jerusalem and the nations who interact with them

- But it is also a prophecy for end time Judah, Israel and other nations

Prophecy: The deliverance of Israel and Judah as well as Gentile nations is a central theme

Many prophecies about the Messiah and his coming reign over the nations

General outline of
the book of Isaiah

Chapters 1-6—introduction to the book
Guilt of Judah and Jerusalem...restoration
➤ Outlines the situation into which he was called [6]

Chapter 7-12
Enemy invasion and promise of relief through the prince of
peace, the heir of the throne of David

Chapters 13-23
Attention to the nations surrounding Judah, and of divine
judgments upon them (Inc. Babylon, Ethiopia, Egypt, Tyre)

- Chapters 24-35
- Events of the end of the age
 - Salvation to come from God and future hope

- Chapters 36-39 (Narrative history)
- Deliverance from Assyrian in Hezekiah's day
 - Babylonian captivity foretold

Chapters 40-66
Babylonian captivity, sins covered by the Lord's servant,
and restoration of Zion

Some commentators/critics claim that chapters 40-46 were not written by Isaiah but by a 2nd Isaiah, and others a 3rd Isaiah for chapters 55-66

They are critical because Isaiah accurately prophesied future events, for example:

- Isaiah named Cyrus to become the ruler of Persia 200 years before he came to power (Isa. 44:28; 45:1)

Critics assign a later date to these sections implying that another “Isaiah” wrote about what happened in the past rather than a prophecy of the future

The New Testament does quote from these sections of the book, crediting the biblical prophet Isaiah himself



Romans 10: 20-21 (Isaiah 65: 1-2)

20 “But Isaiah is very bold and says: “I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.”

21 But to Israel he says: “All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

Assyria—the dominating world power under which Isaiah spent his life and ministry



Assyria

Assyria—the dominating world power under which Isaiah spent his life and ministry

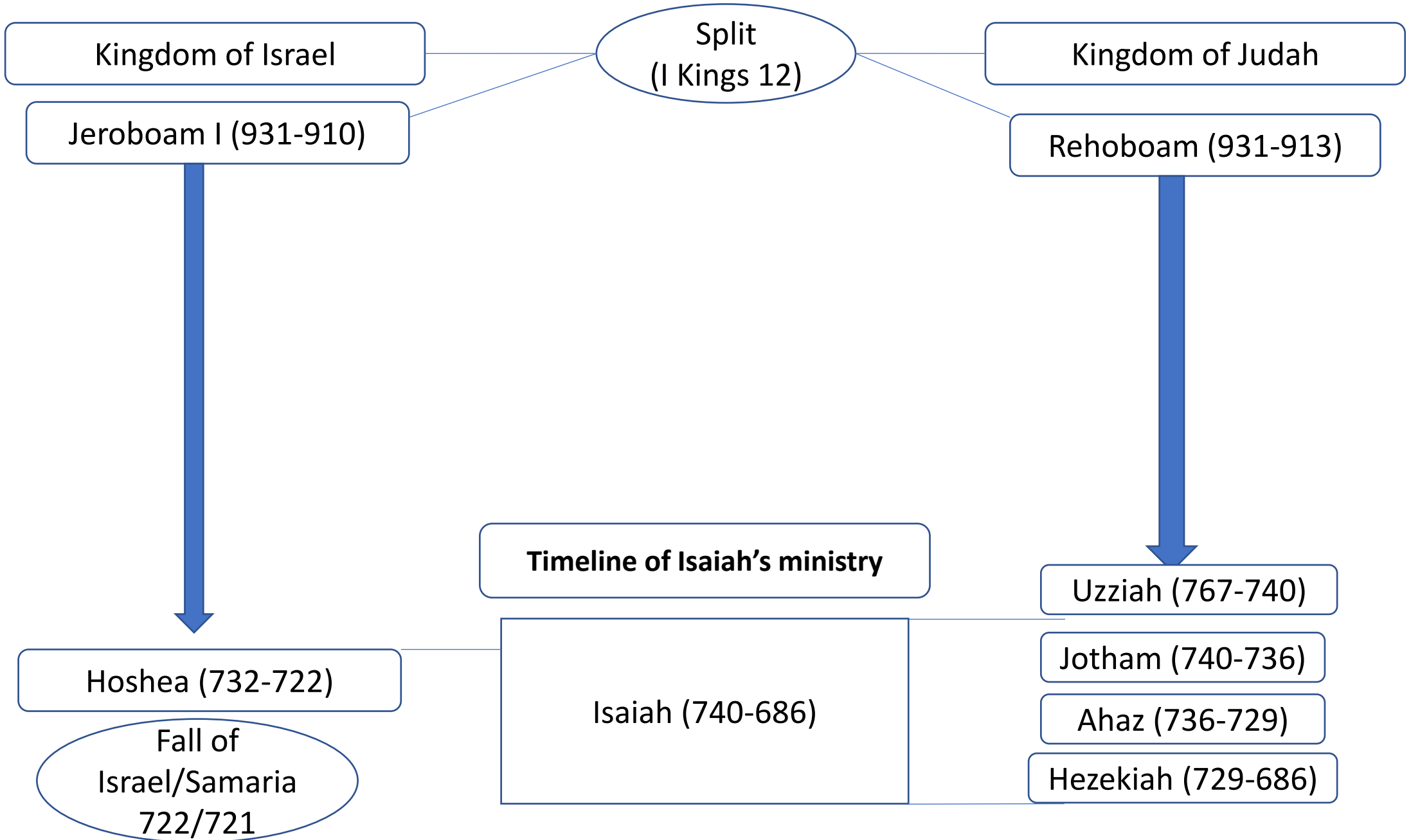
734 BC—Isaiah a young man
Assyria carried away the very northern part of
Israel (II Kings 15: 29)

721 BC—Samaria fell and the rest of Israel fell
(II Kings 18: 9-11)

A few years later (715) the Assyrians marched
into Judah, destroyed all the walled cities and
took them (II Kings 18: 13; Isa. 36:1)

701 BC—Isaiah an old man
The Assyrians marched to the gates of Jerusalem
but were stopped by an angel of God (II Kings
19:35; Isa. 37:36)





Kingdom of Israel

Split
(I Kings 12)

Kingdom of Judah

Jeroboam I (931-910)

Rehoboam (931-913)

Hoshea (732-722)

Fall of
Israel/Samaria
722/721

Timeline of Isaiah's ministry

Isaiah (740-686)

Uzziah (767-740)

Jotham (740-736)

Ahaz (736-729)

Hezekiah (729-686)

Isaiah and Hosea as prophets were contemporaries

Isaiah 1:1

¹ The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Hosea 1:1

¹ The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beerī, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah, **and** in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Both Isaiah and Hosea gave their prophecies during the reigns of the same four kings of Judah, but **Hosea** also mentions one king of Israel (during Uzziah's reign)...which suggests that Hosea's message was primarily to the northern kingdom of Israel

Isaiah's message was directed towards Jerusalem and Judah and nations interacting with them...but his message is also a prophecy for the end time nation of Judah, Israel and other nations of the world

Isaiah 1

¹ The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

“The vision” (Companion) “This is the title of the whole book”

“vision” (Heb. *hazon*) = a revelation or oracle, meaning to see with the eyes...used like the word ‘behold’

“concerning Judah and Jerusalem”

- Jerusalem is often a reference to all 12 tribes of Israel (they were at one time all united under it)

v.1 [last part]: Four kings of Judah that span about eighty years

v. 2-9 Background

(Halley's Bible Handbook) "This frightful indictment seems to belong to the middle period of Hezekiah's reign, after the fall of the northern kingdom, when the Assyrians had invaded Judah and had carried away a large part of its population, Jerusalem alone being left (7-9)."

722/721 Israel falls to Assyria

701 Jerusalem under siege by Assyria

v. 2-9
Seems to describe this
period

(1st part of chapter one—v.2-7)

Theme: rebellious Israel

v. 2-3 introduce a trial scene—God is doing the judging

² Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: " I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me;

v. 2 "Hear I heavens, and give ear, O earth"

- The heavens and earth serve as **witnesses** for God's complaint against his people—creation would agree with the statements God would say

"hear o heavens and earth"

- (JSB Tanakh) "In ancient Israelite thinking, heaven and earth serve as witnesses to the covenant between God and Israel; hence God calls on them to hear the charges against Israel."

▪ "brought up children, And they have rebelled against me"

- The words '**children**' and '**they**' are emphatic in the Hebrew—underlines the rebellious attitude
- The Hebrew term translated into the English "**rebelled**"—means **to refuse** to submit to someone's authority and rule

³ The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; *But Israel* does not know, My people do not consider."

v. 3 The ox and donkey know their masters, and serve them with trust and obedience—they recognize who feeds them and do not rebel against him

“**Israel** does not know”—(Parallel) “implies a deliberate and self-willed disobedience”

- modern descendants of Israel do not know God either

“**Israel**” (NSB) “The word Israel sometimes refers to both the southern and northern kingdoms. Isaiah lived to see the nation of Assyria take the northern kingdom into captivity in 722 BC.”

Most scholars believe this was written after the fall of the northern kingdom...

- If the northern tribes had already been taken into captivity when this was spoken, this prophecy has end time fulfillments

v. 4-7 The message is addressed to Israel

⁴ Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward.

v. 4 “sinful nation”... “laden with iniquity”...God had brought Israel out of Egypt and stated that they were to be a holy nation, but instead it was a sinful one

“turned away backward” (Companion) “Apostasy in action”-- [evildoers, corrupters, forsaken the Lord]

“they have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel”



Psalm 7:11

¹¹ God *is* a just judge, And God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

v. 5-7 Consequences for turning away from God

⁵ Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints

⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head, *There is* no soundness in it, *But* wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.

⁷ Your country *is* desolate, Your cities *are* burned with fire; Strangers devour your land in your presence; And *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers

v. 5 “You will revolt more and more” (against God)—description of ancient Israel and our people today

v. 5 [last part] “The whole head is sick”—leadership...“the whole heart faints”—nation’s spiritual condition

- Also describes the extent of the sin...the mind and spirit

v. 6 “wounds and bruises”—spiritual sickness of the nation

- But also military weakness as foreign nations take advantage of their spiritual condition (v.7 middle part)
 - “your cities are burned with fire”

v.7 Dual prophecy—ancient fulfillment and end time
(Judgment)--Pictures the repetition of Assyrian invasions [734-721BC] and ...Assyria’s invasion of Judah
“desolate”... “burned”—as if it happened already (it’s certainty)

v. 8-20 (2nd part of chapter one)
Theme—violence on Jerusalem's temple

v. 8-9 Description of Jerusalem's inhabitants

⁸ So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, As a hut in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city.

⁹ Unless the LORD of hosts Had left to us a very small remnant, We would have become like Sodom, We would have been made like Gomorrah.

v. 8 Zion= Jerusalem

- Zion draws attention to the city's religious significance

v. 8 'a booth'—an elevated booth of branches for the watchman

- Temporary structure to shade persons from the sun who guarded the crops against thieves and animals
 - These 'booths' were usually alone and easily attacked

v. 8 'Like' Sodom and Gomorrah—Judah's spiritual condition

- Devastation like Sodom and Gomorrah would have been Judah's fate had God not left some survivors (God always leaves a remnant)—Paul quotes this verse (Romans 9:29)

Romans 9:29

²⁹ And as Isaiah said before: *"Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We would have become like Sodom, And we would have been made like Gomorrah."*

Spiritual state of the nation

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the law of our God, You people of Gomorrah:

¹¹ "To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats.

¹² "When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts?"

v. 10 "rulers"... "people"—all levels of society should hear God's word

v. 10 "you rulers of Sodom"

During the days of king Ahaz the kingdom of Judah was in a deplorable moral state...brought in the detestable practices of the other nations (Baal worship) including burning his son in the fire (II Kings 16: 1-4)

- v.11 "your sacrifices to Me?"

- Hypocritical sacrifices by the people...a show of religion but not to God

Keeping of days that God did not appoint

¹³ Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity **and** the sacred meeting.

¹⁴ **Your** New Moons and **your** appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing *them*.

¹⁵ When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.

v. 13 “The New Moons”—are not holy days
“the Sabbaths”—were not keeping it the right way

v. 13 [last part] “I cannot endure **iniquity** and the sacred meeting”

- The manner in which they kept the Sabbath and festivals had become offensive to God—they were not God’s feasts but were the people’s feasts, combining paganism in them

v. 14 “**your** New Moons and **your** appointed feasts My soul hates”—God does not hate the Sabbath or Feast days

v. 15 God does refused to hear their prayers because of their iniquity

¹⁶ "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,

¹⁷ Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

v. 16 "wash yourselves"—God wanted them to be spiritually clean

James 1:17

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

A call to repentance

¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land;

²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword"; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

v. 18 Upon repentance sins can be forgiven...God is willing to forgive when people repent

v. 19 "If you are willing and obedient"
➤ An admonition—blessings for obedience

v. 20 "But if you refuse and rebel"
➤ A warning—for disobedience

v. 21-31 (3rd part of chapter one)
Theme: unfaithful city of Zion—God's lament

²¹ How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.

²² Your silver has become dross, Your wine mixed with water.

²³ Your princes *are* rebellious, And companions of thieves; Everyone loves bribes, And follows after rewards. They do not defend the fatherless, Nor does the cause of the widow come before them.

v. 21 The contrast between the condition of Jerusalem under David and Solomon's early reign—a faithful city...to a harlot because of their paganism

- It had been known for justice but in Isaiah's time for murderers

v. 22 The silver and wine which used to be valuable, had become worthless

- Like worthless dross the nation would be discarded

v. 23 Rulers should have the highest standards...but they did not—theft, bribery and injustice

- Looking out for themselves and not the people who need attention

Judgment and then restoration (Future)

²⁴ Therefore the Lord says, The LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, "Ah, I will rid Myself of My adversaries, And take vengeance on My enemies.

²⁵ I will turn My hand against you, And thoroughly purge away your dross, And take away all your alloy.

²⁶ I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."

²⁷ Zion shall be redeemed with justice, And her penitents with righteousness.

v. 24 The lawsuit in court which began in the beginning of the chapter is concluded with God making the judgment

- The adversaries and enemies are those in the nation who were unfaithful to Him

v. 25- 27 The purpose for purging was to turn the nation back to a proper relationship with God

v. 27 The remnant will dwell in a new redeemed city where justice will be present

- The ultimate fulfillment of verse 26, 27—at the return of Christ

v. 28-31 The fate of those against God: wicked

²⁸ The destruction of transgressors and of sinners *shall be* together, And those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

²⁹ For they shall be ashamed of the terebinth trees Which you have desired; And you shall be embarrassed because of the gardens Which you have chosen.

³⁰ For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades, And as a garden that has no water.

³¹ The strong shall be as tinder, And the work of it as a spark; Both will burn together, And no one shall quench *them*.

v. 28 those who rebel against God will perish [v. 29 explains why]

v. 29 “ashamed of the terebinth trees”= (KJV) “ashamed of the oaks”—trees used in pagan worship
“gardens”= groves—where Baal worship took place

(Zondervan Bible Back. Com.) “These were not only places of relaxation but also of worship, since gardens, sacred trees, and groves were important in Canaanite and Mesopotamian popular religion. Trees even became objects of worship either in their own right or as symbols of a deity. Trees were also associated with the goddess Asherah.”

v. 31 Those who had been strong in defying and their work of disobeying God...they and their work will burn

- The Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem was the first fulfillment of it burning

Redemption and restoration pictured

²⁷ Zion **shall be** redeemed with justice, And her penitents with righteousness.



Isaiah continues the theme of this verse in chapter 2

Lessons

- Isaiah emphasized the consequences for turning away from God

⁷ Your country *is* desolate, Your cities *are* burned with fire; Strangers devour your land in your presence;
And *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers

- God is angry with sin and those who do wickedness

v. 4 “They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger, The Holy One of Israel”

- But He does want people to repent and upon repentance He will forgive

v. 18 Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow”