

**ISAIAH**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Isaiah chapter 14 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Keep in mind that Isaiah chapters 13 through 23 form a section of judgments that God is pronouncing against the Gentile nations that were surrounding Israel and Judah. As we concluded last time in Isaiah chapter 13 we saw that judgment that was to come upon the Babylonian Empire. They were going to be defeated. We also saw that this looked out into the future and the judgment, the destruction of religious and commercial Babylon at the end of the Tribulation Period spoken of in Revelation chapters 17 and 18.

Here in Isaiah chapter 14 we are continuing with that same thought regarding the destruction on Babylon and the mercy of God upon His people, the Jews. With that said, let's begin reading in Isaiah chapter 14 starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

**ISAIAH 14****VERSES 1-2**

1. I am so thankful that our Lord is merciful and in spite of our failures He chooses us and He will use us and we see that here with Israel, both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, that God has not given up on them and He will bring them back into the land once again.

Did this happen after the Babylonians took them captive? Yes, under the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, the Jews were set free from their captivity. In 536 B. C. some 50,000 out of some several million Jews returned home under the leadership of Joshua and Zerubbabel. Also following the Jews home were some proselytes or those who came to believe in the Lord that were not Jews.

2. But as you read over these verses and we continue on in this chapter you will see that this has to be speaking of something even more than just their return from Babylonian captivity. The “**people**” spoken of in these verses relates to Gentiles or non-Jews and what we see here is that the time of Gentile domination over the Jews will be over. That has not happened yet!

In Luke 21:24 we are told, “**... And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**” That phrase, “**times of the Gentiles**” started way back in 586 B. C. when Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, made his third and final assault upon Jerusalem, taking the remaining Jews captive to Babylon and it continues on through today and up until the powers of the Antichrist are destroyed and Jesus sets-up His Kingdom.

Now some feel that these “**times of the Gentiles**” were fulfilled in our recent past because the Jews are back in the land. Remember that the Jews had a homeland once again on May 15, 1948 and then on June 7, 1967 they took back the city of Jerusalem once again. And because of that many claim that the “**times of the Gentiles**” have been completed but as I look at what is going on that does not make sense.

Yes, the Jews are in their homeland but the Gentiles are still trampling upon them. Look at the wars; look at how nations are coming against them. In fact, during the Tribulation Period it is going to get so bad that they will have to flee Jerusalem just to survive during this time! So that can't be the case, these "**times of the Gentiles**" are still upon the Jewish people but I don't believe that is going to continue on much longer.

You see, in the Kingdom Age when the "**times of the Gentiles**" comes to an end they will be in the land and live at peace. "**The strangers**" we are told will be with them and they too will receive the goodness of God with the Jews, and I am speaking here of the Gentiles as being "**The strangers**" spoken of in verse 1.

Not only will Gentiles be blessed but they will no longer oppress the Jewish people but will assist them. The Jews will rule over them! But prior to this happening we know that the whole world is going to turn against the Jewish people and the nation of Israel and that will climax during the Tribulation Period!

Spurgeon sums this up for us like this, "This promise had a measure of fulfillment when Israel was brought back from Babylon; and still is it true that, when God's people come to their worst, there is always something better before them. On the other hand, it is equally sure that, when sinners come to their best, there is always something terrible awaiting them."

### **VERSES 3-8**

1. As you read this you see that the LORD is telling His people that there is coming a day when He will give His people rest. That leads to a question, "A rest from what?" We don't have to guess because the Lord is telling us that He will give His people a rest from "**sorrow**" and "**fear**" and "**hard bondage.**"

Now we see this partially fulfilled when they returned from Babylon but there is no way that this is a complete fulfillment because look at Israel today. When Syria launched sarin gas upon its people Israel was giving out gas masks to protect their people, the Jews in case Syria launched rockets filled with sarin gas into their land. So they truly are not at rest from “**sorrow**” and “**fear**” and “**hard bondage.**”

But that day is coming and it will be fulfilled when those Jews who have escaped the power of the Antichrist will return home and Jesus will set up His Kingdom here on earth. Then and only then will peace fill this earth because the Prince of Peace will be ruling and reigning from Jerusalem! And talk about great joy, there will be so much joy that songs will break forth in praise of the Lord and His Kingdom because He has given His people a rest from “**sorrow**” and “**fear**” and “**hard bondage.**”

2. Now let’s apply this to us today. As a Christian, a believer in Jesus Christ, do you have a rest from “**sorrow**” and “**fear**” and “**hard bondage?**” You should. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, “**Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.**”

That is what Jesus has for us right here and now. I do understand that in this world we *WILL* have tribulation. But we need to keep our eyes focused upward because He has overcome this world and thus, in the midst of tribulation we can find that peace, that rest from “**sorrow**” and “**fear**” and “**hard bondage**” in Christ!

VERSES 9-11

1. The near fulfillment of this is speaking of Belshazzar who was the King of Babylon. And Belshazzar was killed by the Medes and the Persians the same night he mocked God by having a drunken party using the Temple vessels of God.

You may remember in Daniel chapter 5 that as this party was going on, as he was mocking God and really mocking the Medes and the Persians who were outside his walls plotting how to get in, he saw the hand writing of God upon the wall.

He did not know what it meant but Daniel interpreted this handwriting for him and told him that, **“God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it . . . You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting . . . Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”** Daniel 5:26-28. And that very night judgment fell and King Belshazzar was killed. And this King who was so arrogant, so proud was brought down to Hell!

2. Now I think this is not only looking at the King of Babylon but as we will see as we read on it is also looking at Lucifer, Satan who is going to be brought down. The one who thought he was so strong, the one who destroyed so many lives will be brought down to the level of everyone else, he will have no great power to do anything and he will be punished as everyone else in Hell. Isaiah put it like this, **“They all shall speak and say to you: ‘Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.’”** Isaiah 14:10-11.

Let's read on and I think you will clearly see that this is speaking of Satan, the power behind the leaders of this world and how he fell, what caused Satan to fall from his position in heaven before God.

#### VERSES 12-15

1. Isaiah is now looking at the power behind earthly Kings and that is this person who is called "**Lucifer**" or "light bearer" or "morning star." And of this we are told in Luke 10:18 these words by Jesus, "**... 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.'**" The Bible speaks of four falls of Lucifer, now called Satan or destroyer and many other destructive names. No longer is he bearing the light of God but in his pride he is shining forth his own light and it is ugly! When I speak of four falls of Lucifer it really is one big fall and the consequences related to that fall but let's take a quick look at them.

- **ISAIAH 14:12-15** – In these verses we see that he fell from glory to profane. Lucifer was the anointed cherub, in charge of the angelic realm, God's number one created being and in charge of worship in heaven. He was full of beauty and wisdom. And yet that was not enough for him. And because of pride, as we shall see, he lost his position before God. And we will look at these five "**I will**" statements of Lucifer in a minute because this is what brought him down and they are all related to pride!
- **JOB 1:6-7, REVELATION 12:7-9** – In these verses of Job we see Satan having access to heaven. We are told, "**Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'**"

Yes he had access to heaven but there is coming a day when that will be restricted, there is going to be a fall from the presence of God or his access to God. In Revelation 12:7-9 we are told, "**And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.**"

Now I believe this war takes place in the middle of the 7-year Tribulation Period. In Daniel 12:1 we are told, **“At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.”** Thus, the Great Tribulation now begins or the last 3½ years before the Lord returns and it is then that his access to God is cut off, he fell from the presence of God

- REVELATION 20:1-3 – In these verses we see Satan cast into the bottomless pit after the Tribulation Period and he will remain there for 1,000 years! We are told, **“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.”** So this is the third fall of Lucifer you might say, into this bottomless pit.
- REVELATION 20:10 – This fourth and final fall of Lucifer is that he will be cast into the Lake of Fire as Revelation 20:10 tells us, **“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”**

So which one is Jesus speaking of? Many say the first one, from glory to profane, and I agree with that to a point. Let me just throw this out to you. Jesus knows the beginning from the end and thus, He could have seen all four of Satan’s falls in an instant. Whatever way you want to take it, remember that he is a conquered enemy and thus, we can have victory in Jesus, that victory is assured!

2. Now let’s deal with these ***“I wills”*** of Lucifer that are found in these verses. And please keep in mind that he was not forced to do this, but this came from his heart and was manifested in his words and deeds! Pride has filled his heart. No longer is he concerned with the will of God but his own will, for he wants to be God.

***I will ascend into heaven:*** In other words, he is saying that “Heaven will be my home and my place of honor.” He is taking it away from the Lord!

***I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:*** Notice his point here. He is saying that, “I will be enthroned, and will be exalted above all other angelic beings.” In other words, he is the top dog. Now he was in charge of all the angels, but that was not good enough, he wanted a title, he wanted to be known for who he is and thus, he again was taking away from the Lord and exalting himself!

***I will also sit on the mount of the congregation:*** Notice how bold he is getting here as he continues to exalt self. He is basically saying, “I will sit in the place of glory and honor and attention.” He is the top one, all glory and honor and attention is his! Do you think there is a pride issue here? You bet there is!

***I will ascend above the heights of the clouds:*** The word, “**clouds**” should be in the singular and read, “cloud” and I believe this is speaking of the Shekinah glory, the glory of God, that he will rise above it, ascend higher than God! Think of it like this, “I will continue to rise, even in heaven, until all see me in my bright shining glory.” And there is one more to go, if you can believe that.

***I will be like the most high:*** In other words, “I will be glorious, and be set equal to God, far above all other created beings.” Talk about your boldness, the pride and yet, how many people today try to sit upon the throne of God themselves!



And please understand that there is a powerful lesson for us to learn from this because the pride that brought Lucifer down will also bring us down if we allow it to grow in our lives. It is as Solomon said in Proverbs 16:18-19, **“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.”**

Lucifer and anyone who exalts himself above God will be brought down; you can't fight against God and win. How does the creation think he is better than the Creator who created him? That makes no sense and that is true with pride, we think too highly of ourselves and before long we are brought down, we have fallen and if we refuse to repent and get right with God, we will not get up!

#### VERSES 16-17

1. First of all when the King of Babylon fell, literal Babylon, all the boasting about how strong he was, how strong his kingdom was came to mean nothing. In fact, as people looked at what happened they were amazed.

Make no mistake about it; the same is true of Satan. People today are fearful of Satan, they wonder what he is going to do next and they have taken God out of the picture. Yes, as you read these verses you can see the destruction he brings. People trembled at what he can do. Kingdoms were fearful. Cities were destroyed. People were in bondage, in prison, put there by Satan. But in the end he will be put into the Lake of Fire along with all those who, in their pride, refused to come before the Lord. Pride brought Lucifer down and it will be the thing that brings every person who rejects Jesus down!

But Lucifer, yes he was beautiful when he was created and I don't think he runs around in red underwear today with a pitchfork in his hand. He is a deceiver, and I believe that he portrays himself as an angel of light to deceive people. And when he is judged by God we will be amazed how someone who had such great beauty could do such evil!

#### VERSES 18-23

1. Once again Isaiah is speaking of the King of Babylon, Belshazzar. You see, in his death he was not put in the tomb of a King. He did not have all that pomp and circumstance that goes with that position. The Medes and the Persians thrust him through with the sword and tossed his body out in the street to be trampled underfoot.

Now that is what happened to this King from literal Babylon but also keep in mind that this is speaking of another Babylon, both the religious and commercial Babylon and its destruction is also going to be complete because the LORD will “**... sweep it with the broom of destruction ...**”

2. Now as we move on here in Isaiah chapter 14 we are going to see God pronounce judgment upon the Assyrians.

#### VERSES 24-27

1. I realize that as people, as Christians many look at this world and they are fearful but let me ask you this. Why are you fearful? You see, hasn't God told us of these things that are coming to pass and when God makes a promise, when He puts forth His plan, it is not something we have to worry about, God is faithful and what He says He will do.

You see, we have God's Word and His Word is faithful, His Word is sure, His Word will stand. It is as Numbers 23:19 says, "**God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?**" God always accomplishes His purpose! His plan is never frustrated! Even when we have no trust at all in our own plan, we can fully trust God's purpose!

2. Now this judgment is against the Assyrians and I think there is a near fulfillment that is being spoken of. The Assyrians were attacking the Northern Kingdom of Israel, on the verge of taking them into captivity. They were a threat to the Southern Kingdom of Judah and they will eventually come down upon them. But their plan will fail and the angel of the Lord will destroy 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night, sending the rest home fleeing for their lives.

It is as we are told that God's Word will stand, His purpose shall stand and thus, "**That I will break the Assyrian in My land, And on My mountains tread him underfoot. Then his yoke shall be removed from them, And his burden removed from their shoulders.**" In other words, God's Word stands, man's plans will fail!

3. But I also see this as an end time's fulfillment. You see, in Isaiah 14:26 we are told, "**This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth, And this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.**" In other words this judgment of God is coming against the whole world, all who have rejected Him and "**the Assyrian in My land**" may be speaking of the Antichrist. And God says that He will take care of Him, no one will stop His plans that He has shown us in His Word! You can't stop God!

2. Now we will see God's judgment upon Philistia.

VERSES 28-31

1. God's judgment is now upon the Philistines who were a perennial enemy of Israel. He is telling them not to rejoice over the judgment of Assyria, the ones that struck them, because another will arise and be just as devastating.

In II Chronicles 26:6-7 we are told of what King Uzziah did, "**Now he went out and made war against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath, the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities around Ashdod and among the Philistines. God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabians who lived in Gur Baal, and against the Meunites.**" We see these Philistine cities along the Mediterranean Sea now being taken by Uzziah and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, both Gath and Ashdod, major Philistine cities! And even Jabneh, which was not a major city, but it too was taken by Judah!

But King Ahaz was a weak King and he allowed the Philistines to recapture some of the land, some of the cities in the southern part of the Kingdom of Judah. But then came Hezekiah and when he ascended to the throne in Judah he was more dangerous, much more dangerous than Ahaz ever was. In II Kings 18:8 we are told that, "**He subdued the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.**"

2. This may also be looking ahead to when the Lord destroys people that come against His people, the Jews. Today they are called Palestinians but that is not really accurate. That term is used for a location of land and not really a race of people or nationality. It was something that the Romans called the land of Israel showing that the Jews would no longer live there.

Let me share some things with you because the news is filled with misinformation on this issue of Palestine. Palestinian's and a Palestinian state are no more real than Never-Never Land! The term "Palestine" was never applied to the whole land of Israel until 135 A. D. At that time, after Rome had crushed the second Jewish revolt, the Roman Emperor Hadrian began using the term "Palestine" for the whole land of Israel.

His motivation for doing this was his anti-Semitism, to negate the connection between the Jews and their Promised Land. He was very successful in this. Down through the centuries the whole land has been called Palestine, even though Philistia was originally just a small corner of the land.

Now when we say that land belongs to the Jews some get upset, many do because of the Islamic holy sites that are located on the Temple Mount and thus, how can this land be for the Jews alone? Those Islamic holy sites are the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa mosque, representing Islam's third most holy sites behind Mecca and Medina.

Now let me give you a little more information. Did you know that "***Jerusalem***" is spoken of over 800 times in the Old Testament Scriptures? Specifically, "***Jerusalem***" is mentioned some 677 times, the ***city of David*** some 44 times, and ***Zion*** some 153 times! And it is spoken of as a place for the Jewish people to dwell in.

Many kings, prophets, people walked the streets of Jerusalem, even our Lord, and yet, for Mohammed there is no historical evidence that he ever visited Jerusalem. The Koran does not mention Jerusalem even once! You would think if it is such a holy site that their holy book would mention it, but again, it doesn't!

Interestingly enough, during World War II the British Army had a Palestinian Brigade made up entirely of Jewish volunteers! Then there was the Palestinian Symphony Orchestra, which again was all Jewish. In fact, even the Palestinian Post was a Jewish newspaper. So I guess there is a Palestinian state, it is called Israel, with its capitol, Jerusalem, occupied by the Jews.

Dave Hunt puts things into perspective when he said, “There never was a Palestinian people, nation, language, culture or homeland. They are always Arabs who immigrated into the land of Israel with no more right to make a ‘homeland’ therein than German, French, Dutch or other immigrants to carve up America to make ‘homelands’ for themselves.”

Now if you still have a problem with this, let’s read on and see what the Lord has to say about the Jews being in the land of Israel, the land that He gave them!

#### VERSE 32

1. What does God have to say to His people and to all the nations, when these nations are being judged? “. . . **the LORD has founded Zion, And the poor of His people shall take refuge in it.**” Now you can agree with it or not but that is not going to change anything because God has given them the land of Israel and one day He is coming back to rule and reign from Jerusalem!

How do I know it will happen? Remember what we were told in Isaiah 14:24, “**The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, ‘Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, And as I have purposed, so it shall stand.’**” What God has promised will come to pass and no one will be able to stop Him!

2. As we move into Isaiah chapter 15 we are going to see God pronounce judgment against Moab. Keep in mind that Moab was located on the east side of the Dead Sea right in the middle of it. Today Moab is modern-day Jordan. Now understand that the Moabites were family, the descendants from Lot, the Nephew of Abraham. But the Moabites treated the Jews very harshly, and God is now bringing judgment upon them. So let's read on and see what God has to say against Moab.

## ISAIAH 15

### VERSES 1-4

1. Just a little background information on these people called the Moabites. The founder of the people of Moab was the son born of the incestuous relationship between Lot and his eldest daughter. You see, Lot's daughters made Lot drunk, after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah because they thought everyone in the world died. (Genesis 19:30-38). And like I have said, the Moabites settled in the plains to the south-east of Israel, on the east side of the Jordan River in what is modern-day Jordan.

2. When you read of this judgment you can see that it happened quickly, suddenly and with devastating effects. These words were spoken around 704 B. C. Three years later we see that Sargon King of Assyria attacked Arabia. And as they traveled to Arabia they went through Moab, and for a little practice, wiped them out. Then, on the way back, they attacked Moab again, causing even more destruction. Thus, those who survived were mourning over the events that took place. From the north to the south of the land of Moab, you could hear their cry!

Wolf gives to us this perspective of what took place. He wrote, “Most of these sites were originally part of Israel’s territory when Moses and Joshua defeated Sihon, King of the Amorites. All the cities north of the Arnon River . . . once belonged to the tribe of Reuben. Throughout the years, however, the Moabites had persistently pushed the Israelites out of these regions.” God is bringing judgment upon them.

#### VERSES 5-7

1. As Moab is being devastated by the Assyrians, many people will flee to Zoar, which is about 30 miles away, on the southern end of the Dead Sea. The lush land will be burned up in this judgment and as Isaiah is speaking forth these words he is broken over it. I find that interesting.

Why was Isaiah weeping over their destruction? There are a few reasons. First of all there was a connection they had with Israel; they were related to Abraham through his nephew Lot. Not only that, but David was one-quarter Moabite. That may shock you but his grandmother Ruth was from Moab. And David trusted them so much that he sent his father and mother there for protection from King Saul in I Samuel 22:3-4. So that may be the reason we see Isaiah weep over their destruction.



2. For us as Christians, do we rejoice in the destruction of the wicked? Tough question but let's think this through. If we make our enemy a brother or sister in the Lord we have, in a sense, destroyed the wicked! If we just want to see them destroyed, maybe we need to examine our own heart and see why. The reason I say that is because all of us at one time where there, we were wicked and unless someone loved us and prayed for us with the love of Christ, we would still be there. They did not call for our physical destruction, but for a spiritual transformation. May we do no less with our enemies!

### VERSES 8-9

1. The Assyrians not only destroyed the people, but the land also. They shut up some of the streams, cut down the trees and just butchered the land making it very difficult for the people to return, those that had survived the attack.

And now, because the land had become so desolate, wild animals have come to take up residence there. And those who escaped death by the hands of the Assyrians will be killed by these wild animals. God will finish His work of judgment!

2. Now as we move into chapter 16 the focus seems to shift from a near fulfillment to a future fulfillment or a complete fulfillment as you will see.

**ISAIAH 16****VERSES 1-2**

1. It seems that the Moabites fled some 50 miles southward, to Sela or Petra in the Greek, which means “rock” and which is the capitol of Edom. And the lamb seems to be a tribute paid to Judah for staying in Petra for at various times the Moabites were under the control of Judah. It is here they are resting in safety. (II Kings 3:4-5).

2. Now what is this “**wandering bird**” all about? It could be speaking of the confused, the helpless state the Moabites were in because of the judgment of God that had come upon them. They are kind of wandering like a bird without a home. Now the “**fords of Arnon**” is a valley extending from the middle portion of the Dead Sea, and this valley is about 1700 feet deep, 2 miles wide from edge to edge, with a stream that winds through it, which is only some 40 yards wide. This could be another place they were trying to find rest as they were wandering around like a lost bird!

**VERSES 3-5**

1. Now this is interesting because God is telling Moab to hide His people, hide the Jews in your land. Remember in Matthew chapter 24 Jesus spoke of the Tribulation Period and at the half-way point of the Tribulation Period, the 3½ year mark He tells us that the Antichrist will enter the rebuilt Temple, he will set-up his image in the holy of holies and demand to be worshipped as God.

And Jesus warns the Jewish people that when they see this event take place, the abomination of desolation that was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, flee to the mountains. Don't stop to gather your clothes or for anything else, for this man will come after them to destroy them for their refusal to worship him as God!

We also see this in Revelation chapter 12 where we are told beginning in verse 13, **“Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”** Revelation 12:13-17.

I believe the place they flee to is Sela or Petra in Moab or modern-day Jordan as I have said. That is what we see here in Isaiah, for the people of Moab to hide the Jews from the claws of the Antichrist who are coming after them to destroy them. And I believe it is here that they come to recognize Jesus as their Messiah and they call upon Him and one of the places He goes when He does return is Bozrah or this area known as Petra, where the Jewish people are hiding out.

2. Now this ancient city has an interesting history and was a mystery for over a thousand years. It was literally a ghost town that was only known to the outside world by the stories that were told of its once glory. Then, in 1812 John L. Burckhardt, a Swiss adventurer, set out to find this city called Petra. Because he was a foreigner, he was told he would be killed before he reached his goal of finding this city, the Muslims would not let him find it, they would kill him.

So he disguised himself as a devout Muslim who was going to offer a sacrifice at the tomb of Aaron. This tomb was located on Mount Nor and this was the place that was overlooking Petra, or so he was told. Since no true Muslim could deny a fellow worshipper of Mohammed to reach his goal, he was given every aid possible. In fact, a guide led him to the heart of this ancient city.

What he saw was this. A small corridor or opening through the mountain which winds some 3/4 of a mile back into a hidden canyon. This corridor sometimes narrows down so much that only a horse and rider could get through. Thus, it was easy to defend against enemy attack for they could only get through one at a time.

On the sides the rock cliffs rose up some 400 to 800 feet straight up! And as it opened up into this canyon there was the remains of a beautiful city cut into the rock that at one time some 300,000 people lived. And if any of you saw the movie Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade, at the end of the movie you would have seen this city called Petra with its winding corridor opening up into a beautiful city.

This is the place many believe the Jews will flee to for it is easily defended as I have said. And there God will protect them from the forces of the Antichrist. Interestingly enough, two men, at different times, purchased thousands of Hebrew Bibles, and highlighted references to this place and the things that would occur and hid them throughout this ghost town. Are they still there? I don't know but one way or another God is going to reveal Himself to the Jewish people and they will receive Him as their Lord and Savior. The city is now empty, only home to tourist, but one day God's people will be protected there for 3½ years, until Christ comes and sets up His Kingdom here on earth.

Notice how verse 5 speaks of this, **“In mercy the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness.”** That is speaking of the Messiah, of Jesus sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem ruling and reigning!

3. Now Isaiah moves back to the near fulfillment and the destruction of Moab.

#### VERSES 6-8

1. What brought Lucifer down? It was his pride! What brings nations and people down? It is their pride. What brought Moab down? Pride brought Moab down! Do you think God is warning us of something here, that maybe pride is not a good thing and it will bring destruction to your life if you allow it to grow in you!

2. Keep in mind that Moab was not some military force or big nation like Assyria or Babylon. They were small, really an insignificant nation and yet it was pride that still brought them down. It doesn't matter if you are big or small, rich or poor, have a high powered job or just an average job, pride can bring all down. Wolf put it like this, "Like Assyria and Babylon, Moab was extremely proud. Isaiah piled term upon term to show that the nation's relative insignificance did not make it immune to pride."

Everything they took pride in God was going to bring down because they looked at these things apart from God, it was all about what they have done and if pride can't be broken by humility, then God will break it by His justice! They will end up wailing for each other because there will be no one to help them.

3. Let's apply this to those who reject the Lord, pride is the thing that gets in the way. "I am too smart to believe that stuff!" or whatever! And even on their deathbed they will cling to their pride, what they believe to be true rather than humble themselves and bow before the King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Many would rather die than bow and you can read Revelation chapter 6 and see that played out as they call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the wrath of God and of the Lamb! That is ***PRIDE!***

4. Now before we think too highly of ourselves, we are not different and that truly is the problem, when we are looking down on others we are thinking too highly of ourselves and you know what we call that? We call that ***PRIDE!*** Be careful. Let me share these words with you, words that were written by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Listen to the pride that he had and then see if that pride may be found in you. He wrote this,

What could your miseries have in common with mine? My situation is unique, unheard of since the beginning of time. The person who can love me as I can love is still to be born. No one has ever had more talent for loving. I was born to be the best friend that ever existed. I would leave this life with apprehension if I knew a better man than me. Show me a better man than me, a heart more loving, more tender, more sensitive. Posterity will honour me because it is my due. I rejoice in myself. My consolation lies in my self-esteem. If there were a single enlightened government in Europe, it would have erected a statue to me.

- Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*, p. 10

Sounds like our society today and not just one man! Our pride is what destroys this world because it is always about what we want, what we deserve, what is our right to have and in looking out for ourselves we destroy lives and relationships and nations! Arnold Toynbee studied civilizations across a span of time, looking at different periods of time and what he saw, what his conclusion was is what God warned us about already. He saw that self-worship is the religion of mankind and it can manifest itself in many different forms, but that is the focus. You either humble yourself before the Lord now, you bow before Him now or you will do so as He judges you! Pride will keep you from heaven because you refuse to bow the knee to the King!

#### VERSES 9-12

1. As Isaiah prophesied of the judgment coming upon Moab, he wasn't happy. He was not pleased that judgment was coming upon a rival nation. It reminds me of Daniel as he was asked by King Nebuchadnezzar what a vision meant that he had.

In Daniel 4:19-26 we are told, “Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, ‘Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.’ Belteshazzar answered and said, ‘My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies! The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home - it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth. And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, “Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him”; this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses. And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.””



That truly is the heart of a man or woman of God, praying for their enemies and broken of the judgment that will come upon them if they refuse to repent of their sin and get right with God. That is what we see here with Isaiah!

And this judgment would be severe. There is no joy, no singing, no festive occasions at harvest time because of the devastation that the Assyrians have caused them.

2. Make no mistake about it, Moab was a prideful, haughty people who looked to their gods for help. But when trouble came, when judgment came their cries fell on deaf ears and the Assyrians devastated the people and the land only leaving a few people, a remnant hiding out in Petra.

#### VERSES 13-14

1. God wants them to know that judgment was coming and it was only three years away. Thus, they had a choice to make, to either repent and get right with God or receive His judgment, which was severe, it was going to bring them down. All that they prided themselves in was going to be brought to nothing!

2. Why did God announce the time frame for His judgment? It was a warning to Moab and an invitation for their humble repentance (it wasn't unthinkable that this prophecy would get to the Moabites somehow). It was a lesson for God's people on how the Lord judges the proud. Finally, it assured God's people that the Lord would deal with other, worse, nations as He also dealt with Israel.

Judgment is coming upon this world and God has warned the people of this world of what is to come. Now it is up to them to either respond to what He has said or face the consequences because His wrath is going to be poured out upon a Christ rejecting world and it seems like very soon! But like in the days of Noah many will refuse to listen. Noah was preaching and building that ark for 120 years before the judgment fell and only eight people escaped.

It has almost been 2,000 years since God dwelt among us and paid the penalty for our sins. And He is warning that judgment is coming again, be prepared to escape the wrath of God that is coming and that escape is only found through Him! As Paul said, **“looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.”** Titus 2:13-15.

May we do just that! May we look up because our redemption is drawing near! May we tell others of these things! May we exhort them to go forward in the things of God! May we rebuke them in the love of God pointing them to Jesus! And may we not let anyone despise the words that we speak, the truths of God found in the Word of God that encourages the people of God!