

PROPHECIES CONCERNING SEVERAL GENTILE NATIONS (Isa. 13-23)

Ch. 13:1-14:23 – Babylon’s Doom Foretold

God holds all world power accountable for national righteousness.

I. BABYLON TO FALL (13:1-5)

- A. Babylon will be the conqueror of already-doomed Assyria & subjugator of Judah.
- B. Isaiah, who lived during the period of Assyrian domination, envisioned the rise (39:1-8) and subsequent fall of Babylon. In this context, the prophet projected himself into the future to write as though living under Babylonian domination.
- C. Babylon would be destroyed (13:5).

II. THE DAY OF THE LORD (13:6-16)

- A. The citizens will wail for the “day of the LORD” is at hand (13:6).
- B. 13:10 – Such language is common in the prophets to depict earthly events of major significance.
 - 1. The Babylonian Empire was the civilized world at the time of its downfall.
 - 2. The darkening of stars, the sun, and the moon is frequently used in the Bible as a symbol for judgment especially relating to national powers (Ezek. 32:7-8; Joel 2:31; Mat. 24:29).
- C. The nation is punished for its arrogant wickedness (13:11).
 - 1. The punishment will be so complete that survivors will be as rare as the gold of Ophir (13:12; cf. Job 28:16; Psa. 45:9; 1 Kings 22:48).
- D. No one will be exempt from the punishment – neither age nor gender (13:16).

III. GOD’S USE OF THE MEDES (13:17-22)

- A. The desolation would be perpetual (13:20).
- B. The fulfillment of this prophecy was progressive.
 - 1. See Jackson, 28

IV. ISRAEL TO BE RESTORED (14:1-3)

- A. In conjunction with messages about Babylon, the Mesopotamian power which would actually exile Judah, the prophet mentions the liberation of God’s people which would result from God’s judgment upon Babylon.
 - 1. The connection between Babylon’s judgment and Israel’s deliverance is clearly set forth in the Hebrew text by the conjunction *ki* (“for”).
- B. Even foreigners will assist Israel in returning to Palestine (Ezra 1:4, 6; Neh. 2:7-8), and the Hebrews’ prominence would become such that they would appear as victors instead of refugees (14:2).

V. THE FALLEN KING OF BABYLON TAUNTED (14:4-21)

- A. This is a taunt song that would be appropriate after the children of Israel had been delivered from the trouble and sorrow of the captivity (14:3ff.).
- B. Restored Israel would be able to sing a triumph song about Babylon’s fall:

1. The oppression ceased (14:4).
 2. God broke the persecuting power who terrorized the nations (14:5-6)
 3. The whole earth rejoiced (14:7-8).
 4. The monarch is humbled by the grave, having become like all other deceased rulers (14:9-11).
- C. The Chaldean king cut down (14:12-21)
1. “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!”
(14:12, ESV)
 2. As the morning star fades with the dawning of the day, even so the haughty Chaldean king, conqueror of nations, is cut down (14:12).
 - a. “Lucifer” (KJV, NKJV) is a mistranslation. The Hebrew word literally means “shining one.” It seems to have originally been a term for Venus as the morning-star, the word also had Canaanite mythological associations as the name of a lesser deity who sought to exalt himself against the high god in the pantheon.
 - b. Here the term figuratively (with cosmic imagery) expresses the high position and dazzling ambition of the king of Babylon.
 3. 14:21 – “Prepare slaughter for his children...” – The Babylonian ambition of world conquest would be terminated. Notice that the offspring suffer the consequences of their fathers’ iniquity. The GUILT of sin is never inherited, but the results of evil can linger for generations.

VI. BABYLON DESTROYED (14:22-23)

- A. The site of the once-proud city would become a place of quiet pools and wild creatures. Ancient travelers have commented on the stagnant pools among the ruins of this locale.

Ch. 14:24-27 – Assyria’s Destruction on Judah’s Mountains Foreseen

- A. This brief oracle epitomizes the doom message against arrogant boasting Assyria given at length in 10:5-34.
- B. This prophecy was likely fulfilled with the destruction of Sennacherib’s army (10:24-27; 37:36-38), but it was only a token of the fate that would befall the other nations of the earth.

Ch. 14:28-34 – The Doom of Philistia Foretold

- A. This prophecy is dated in the year of the death of Ahaz. Philistia (in the southwest region of Canaan) was a perpetual enemy of Israel.
- B. During the reign of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, Philistine cities were captured. Rulers and citizens alike were deported, resulting in the permanent termination of the Philistine nation.