

**Party Like It's 701 BC  
Believers with Confused Priorities  
Isaiah 22**

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As believers in Jesus Christ, do we ever get our wires crossed and give top priority to the wrong thing? Do we ever react to what God is doing, inappropriately? All the time.

Last year, we had a Category 5 hurricane pointed right at us. We prayed for protection and the Lord was gracious and turned it away. What was our reaction to His grace?

We just saw a tropical event that normally would have been a large hurricane, yet the Lord kept it knocked down and it was a non-event. What was our reaction to that?

Is it thanksgiving and prayer? Or did we just say, we lucked out? Or, did we not even give it a second thought?

For the church, our mission is simple, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19, ESV)

That is incredibly simple. But there is a lot of confusion today on what that even looks like. Especially in a pandemic. Not everyone is reacting to what is going on appropriately.

The fallen ones are using this as an opportunity to cause real harm to the cause of Christ by using government against the church. How are we reacting to that?

There are believers who sincerely believe it is unsafe to meet, there are others who see no harm in meeting. The problem...both sides are pointing at each other and doing so on social media, finding fault with each other. Paul pointed out this problem. “When one of you has a dispute with another believer, how dare you file a lawsuit and ask a secular court to decide the matter instead of taking it to other believers!” (1 Corinthians 6:1, NLT) Or to paraphrase Paul, how dare you go after another believer on social media. The enemy is using this to divide the church.

Are we reflecting what Jesus commanded?

John 13:34–35

“So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (NLT)

If we become more involved with the world and allow it to dictate what and how we do things rather than the Holy Spirit, is it possible for us to find ourselves reacting as the world or in some cases, even worse than the world? Welcome to Judah.

Local churches all over the world split so often that it is almost an assumed end. Pastors are fired, members storm off, staff members take a group from one church to start another just down the road. Business meetings become Christian versions of Thunderdome. Yelling, fighting, screaming. Taking sides against fellow believers. Doubting one another’s salvation. Power plays, deception, and alliances that would rival any Survivor episode. (Brunson and Caner 2005, 7)

We find ourselves going through the motions, just like Judah was. They would go to Temple, but it no longer meant the same as it did in the past, it was what you did. Many found excuses to not even bother. The pandemic has stopped many from being able to go to church. But for many, going to church was simply the thing to do, it didn’t really mean anything anymore and for many churches, they were not teaching the word anyhow but simply giving motivational talks on how to live your best life now. Laodicea is alive and well.

We suffer from the same disease that Judah suffered from. Spiritual atrophy.

Spiritual atrophy is perhaps the most prevalent spiritual disease in modern Christianity. It is marked by Christians who have had a glorious past, walking with God, serving God, but who have stopped seeking him, stopped serving him, and now, their abilities, discernment, and wisdom have lessened. (Brunson and Caner 2005, 34)

Losing your first love is bad enough (Revelation 2:1-7), but this has only gotten worse since much of the nation was “ordered” to no longer do church because of a virus.

The majority of pastors (96%) reports their churches have been streaming their worship services online during the pandemic. But that may not matter for nearly half of churching adults—that is, those who say they have attended church in the past six months; 48 percent of this group report they have not streamed an online service in the last month. Even looking at a more consistent segment—practicing Christians, who are typically characterized by at least monthly attendance—one in three (32%) admits they have not streamed an online service during this time. (Barna Group 2020)

Hebrews 10:23–25

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” (ESV)

Tough to encourage and love one another when you are not worshipping with one another and only doing so digitally.

But liquor sales are up, way up with new record sales taking place. Those states with legal recreational marijuana are also seeing record sales.

The party is on while we are seeing the Lord make one more call in these last days, to repent and return. With the number of those who name the name of Jesus Christ turning and walking away, revival, which is desperately needed, seems to be even further away.

## 2 Chronicles 7:13–14

“When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (ESV)

The call is to God’s people, believers, to repent. Not unbelievers, but believers.

This is no different than the same call made to Judah by Isaiah.

In the middle of oracles against the nations, is an oracle against Jerusalem. But I thought these oracles were against those nations that were divorced from YAHWEH as a result of Genesis 11? Yes, that is the case. But as we learned from the northern kingdom, when God’s people start acting like the nations, when God’s people begin to act like the world, He treats them like the world.

## Isaiah 22:1

“The oracle concerning the valley of vision. What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops?” (NASB95)

The city of Jerusalem was fortified with three walls, on such parts as were not encompassed with unpassable valleys; for in such places it had but one wall. The city was built upon two hills, which are opposite to one another, and have a valley to divide them asunder; at which valley the corresponding rows of houses on both hills end. (Josephus 1987, V.IV.1.136 703)



(Bolen, Jerusalem aerial from southwest 2012, Used with Permission)

And if we add to this the fact that Isaiah’s house was situated in the lower town,—and therefore the standpoint of the epithet is really there,—it is appropriate in other respects still; for the prophet had there the temple-hill and the Mount of Olives, which is three hundred feet higher, on the east, and Mount Zion before him towards the south; so that Jerusalem appeared like a city in a valley in relation to the mountains inside, quite as much as to those outside. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 254)

The valley of vision is Jerusalem. A valley from which nothing can be seen.

...in Scripture a valley symbolizes a place of sorrow, humbleness, and death. Because the vision here is one of sorrow and coming battle, the valley is the proper place for this vision. (McGee 1997, 248)

Jerusalem is the valley of vision, for it is the place where revelation is given. Although it is surrounded by mountains and shut apart from the world, nevertheless in this valley the light of heaven fell, and the words of God were made known. (Young 1969, 86)

After announcing who this is against, Isaiah follows up by commenting on actions the people are taking that he believes, based on the situation about to be revealed, is completely unwarranted. "The prophet cannot understand why the people are thronging to the housetops when they should be in their closets in repentance and prayer." (Oswalt 1986, 409)

This is a dual fulfillment prophecy and the first event being prophesied about, I believe, is the 701 BC attack from Assyria.

By the use of the term, Valley of Vision, "We are thus alerted to the fact that this oracle too operates on two levels: the factual level of reasonably datable events, and the visionary level of principles which those events exemplified and which will continue to operate in the undated future." (Motyer 1999, 170)

So why on the rooftop? Is it to see all the bodies left by the Angel of the Lord when He dealt with the Assyrian army? Is it to see the remaining Assyrian forces leaving? Are the people up on the rooftops celebrating what the Lord has just done or are they on the rooftops with the Assyrian army surrounding the city in full force before anything has taken place and, since they are going to die anyway, are partying with what resources they have left? There is curiosity and fear which leads them to the roof to see the vast number of troops that Sennacherib has surrounded Jerusalem with. Either view is not what Isaiah was anticipating. He was expecting to see repentance. He was expecting to see sackcloth and ashes.

Isaiah 22:2-4

"You who were full of noise, You boisterous town, you exultant city; Your slain were not slain with the sword, Nor did they die in battle. All your rulers have fled together, And have been captured without the bow; All of you who were found were taken captive together, Though they had fled far away. Therefore I say, "Turn your eyes away from me, Let me weep bitterly, Do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people." (NASB95)

Isaiah goes on talking about the city being excited and rejoicing. The deliverance they had experienced did not drive them to thanksgiving and repentance for being delivered. They had forgotten the cost already paid in Judah.

Isaiah outlines for them the overall cost. Sennacherib bragged about it. "As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered (them) by means of well-stamped (earth-) ramps, and battering-rams brought (thus) near (to the walls) (combined with) the attack by foot soldiers, (using) mines, breeches as well as sapper work. I drove out (of them) 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered (them) booty. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage. I surrounded him with earthwork in order to molest those who were leaving his city's gate. His towns which I had plundered, I took away from his country and gave them (over) to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza." (Pritchard 1969, 288)

Prior to setting up for a siege of Jerusalem, Sennacherib had eviscerated the surrounding countryside. There had been death from starvation as a result of siege, not battle. Those rulers who tried to escape from the towns around Jerusalem did not make it and were captured.



(Bolen, Lachish Assyrian siege ramp and gatehouse aerial from the northwest 2012, Used with Permission)

Over 200,000 citizens of Judah had been removed and taken captive.

Yes, Jerusalem was miraculously saved, but the humbling that should have been experienced by the people, was not being exhibited. They were reacting to the circumstances in an inappropriate manner. An attitude of repentance was not found.

There is indeed more to this prophecy. Not only is it looking at the situation being exhibited as a result of the Lord's miracle dealing with the Assyrian army, but it is also looking forward to the day that Jerusalem will be overthrown by Babylon. Isaiah sees that. He also sees an event even further in the future as well.

Isaiah sees those in the surrounding countryside and what happened to them, and then he sees a future Jerusalem with conditions far different than what was there post Sennacherib. He does not want to celebrate, he does not want to be comforted, he is seeing what the future for Jerusalem will be because of how they are dealing with the present.

He sees the coming destruction from Babylon in 587/586 BC and something yet in the future coming from Persia.

Isaiah 22:5

“For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day of panic, subjugation and confusion In the valley of vision, A breaking down of walls And a crying to the mountain.” (NASB95)

There is coming a day of judgement for Jerusalem. This was supposed to have been a learning experience for Jerusalem. What God had just done to the Assyrians, after what the Assyrians had done to the surrounding countryside of Judah, should have resulted in repentance not a party. Isaiah sees a day in the future, a day of judgement.

Thus one day Yahweh will deliver Jerusalem into the hands of the enemy. Then there would be a great tumult of war and the battering down of the city wall, the trampling of advancing soldiers' feet and hurrying people fleeing for refuge, total confusion leading to anarchy. The people's noisy shoutings would be heard from the tops of the surrounding hills (v. 5). (Widyapranawa 1990, 125)

Isaiah 22:6

“Elam took up the quiver With the chariots, infantry and horsemen; And Kir uncovered the shield.” (NASB95)

Just what siege and enemy is in the mind of the prophet? Persia is mentioned by name, but Jerusalem was in ruins while Persia was in power. Apparently, all the enemies who have come up against Jerusalem are before us here, from the Assyrians who only laid a siege but did not enter the city, to the last enemy from the north who will threaten the city but will not enter. (McGee 1997, 248)

Ezekiel 38:2–6

“Son of man, turn toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophecy against him and say: ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and bring you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them fully armed, a great company with shields of different types, all of them armed with swords. Persia, Ethiopia, and Put are with them, all of them with shields and helmets. They are joined by Gomer with all its troops, and by Beth Togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples are with you.’” (NET)

Isaiah 22:7–11

“Then your choicest valleys were full of chariots, And the horsemen took up fixed positions at the gate. And He removed the defense of Judah. In that day you depended on the weapons of the house of the forest, And you saw that the breaches In the wall of the city of David were many; And you collected the waters of the lower pool. Then you counted the houses of Jerusalem And tore down houses to fortify the wall. And you made a reservoir between the two walls For the waters of the old pool. But you did not depend on Him who made it, Nor did you take into consideration Him who planned it long ago.” (NASB95)

At the time Isaiah is writing this, these are prophetic coming events. Once again it reads like history, but in advance. Isaiah outlines the preparations that Hezekiah will actually take prior to the Assyrian Army arriving. Again, a possible view is that the people are on the rooftops looking out over the wall seeing the Assyrians arrive. Hezekiah knew they were coming. He will make the city ready for a siege.

The actual history shows up elsewhere in scripture.

2 Chronicles 32:2–8

“When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had invaded and intended to attack Jerusalem, he consulted with his advisers and military officers about stopping up the springs outside the city, and they supported him. A large number of people gathered together and stopped up all the springs and the stream that flowed through the district. They reasoned, ‘Why should the kings of Assyria come and find plenty of water?’ Hezekiah energetically rebuilt every broken wall. He erected towers and an outer wall, and fortified the terrace of the City of David. He made many weapons and shields. He appointed military officers over the army and assembled them in the square at the city gate. He encouraged them, saying, ‘Be strong and brave! Don’t be afraid and don’t panic because of the king of Assyria and this huge army that is with him! We have with us one who is stronger than those who are with him. He has with him mere human strength, but the LORD our God is with us to help us and fight our battles!’ The army was encouraged by the words of King Hezekiah of Judah.” (NET)

The work that was done by Hezekiah and his administrators, in preparation for an extended siege, can still be seen today.



(Bolen, Hezekiah's Tunnel 2012, Used with Permission)



(Bolen, Spring tower from north 2012, Used with Permission)



(Bolen, Pool of Siloam from east 2012, Used with Permission)



(Bolen, Pool of Siloam from south 2012, Used with Permission)

Hezekiah was a good king for Judah. He followed YAHWEH and took wise measures for the protection of Jerusalem. But there is still this initial intent to rely on self rather than YAHWEH though and we see it here.

The scripture is clear. The city has been stripped of its protection by YAHWEH; its means of defense was gone. All the surrounding cities of Judah that would normally be relied on for troops and defense had been taken by Sennacherib and were no longer there. YAHWEH had removed the defense of Judah and placed Jerusalem into a situation that only He could get them out of.

King Hezekiah intended to use the weapons that had been stored in the house of the forest. This had been built by Solomon (1 Kings 7:2-5) as a weapons depot, an armory in Jerusalem. But you need people.

The next thing that was done was an assessment of the defensive perimeter of the city. This perimeter was intended to be a well defensible wall, but there was a problem. Since the days of King Uzziah, there had been a serious degradation of the wall. Various forays from the Northern Kingdom, Syria, Egypt and others had caused there to be some breaches in the wall that needed to be repaired. Stones were needed and there was no time to go to the quarry and get them.

Recall back in chapter 7, Hezekiah met with King Ahaz as he was assessing the water situation in preparation for a siege. He also rejected any help from YAHWEH on behalf of the nation.

King Hezekiah was the opposite of Ahaz. Hezekiah took care of the water situation by putting up a tower around the fountain as well as creating a water supply tunnel system and a pool for the water to come to. This pool was known as the Pool of Shiloah (Siloam) But he still needed stone for the walls. He tore down houses to obtain the stone for the walls.

All the things that King Hezekiah and his people did were things that did have to be done. It was good defensive military strategy. The main thing being missed though was a simple fact that they are reminded of in verse 11. None of what was happening took God by surprise. "...But you did not depend on Him who made it, Nor did you take into consideration Him who planned it long ago." (Isaiah 22:11b, NASB95)

What would the preparation have been if God was sought first?

All of the preparation appears to have been done based on Hezekiah's assessment of the situation as well as his advisors. It was not based on a word from YAHWEH. What a change from the days of Jehoshaphat.

## 2 Chronicles 20:1–4

“Later the Moabites and Ammonites, along with some of the Meunites, attacked Jehoshaphat. Messengers arrived and reported to Jehoshaphat, “A huge army is attacking you from the other side of the Dead Sea, from the direction of Edom. Look, they are in Hazazon Tamar (that is, En Gedi).” Jehoshaphat was afraid, so he decided to seek the LORD’s advice. He decreed that all Judah should observe a fast. The people of Judah assembled to ask for the LORD’s help; they came from all the cities of Judah to ask for the LORD’s help.” (NET)

Simple move here, something bad is coming, let’s fast and pray about it and see what the Lord wants to do.

## 2 Chronicles 20:14–17

“Then in the midst of the assembly, the LORD’s Spirit came upon Jachaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph. He said: “Pay attention, all you people of Judah, residents of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat! This is what the LORD says to you: ‘Don’t be afraid and don’t panic because of this huge army! For the battle is not yours, but God’s. Tomorrow march down against them as they come up the Ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the ravine in front of the Desert of Jeruel. You will not fight in this battle. Take your positions, stand, and watch the LORD deliver you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Don’t be afraid and don’t panic! Tomorrow march out toward them; the LORD is with you!’ ” (NET)

This all runs counter to good military defensive theory. He did not check the walls. He did not check to see if his troops were good to go. No DFPs, nothing. He, before doing anything else, sought the Lord. God spoke through a prophet and His way of handling the situation clearly shows He is in control and we are not.

Here is the problem that Hezekiah has.

They did not reckon with the LORD, did not look to him, or have any regard for him. So here we see once again the sin of Ahaz described earlier in ch. 7. It seems to be a deep-rooted sin in human nature to ignore God in human deliberations and skillful calculations. Ingeniously planned programs for national development and welfare are nowadays expressed in neat designs and well-calculated ciphers. But important as these may be, human beings only too often tend to disregard God and ignore decisive spiritual factors in life. Faith primarily reckons with God. Mankind proposes but God disposes! (Widyapranawa 1990, 127)

The people did not trust the Lord but instead were trusting in their own ingenuity to take care of them. They had become self-sufficient and no longer needed God in their decision-making process.

They should have been doing just like the people did during the days of Jehoshaphat, seeking the Lord. They were not and even though Hezekiah is a good king, he failed in some aspects of leadership 101 and did not lead the people in seeking the Lord. Only when his back is up against the wall, Isaiah 37, does he turn to his “last” resort. That is the problem. Is the Lord our “last” resort or do we sit down with Him and let Him know what is going on in advance?

This refers first to the situation in which Jerusalem then found itself. The circumstances of the Lord’s people are not chance but design, and their resource is not to change their circumstances (challenging his will) or question them (doubting his will) but to throw themselves in faith upon the doer, the potter himself. Secondly and more particularly, it is Jerusalem itself, the city chosen by the Lord to make his name dwell there (Dt 12:5; 1 Ki. 8:29). When he chose it he knew all about its vulnerable water supply. It was no accident or oversight; the potter made it so on his wheel. He did not leave his city short of water; Hezekiah did not improve the supply, he only redirected it. But the Lord arranged the supply in such a way that living in Jerusalem was a perpetual exercise of faith, a perpetual challenge to find security in the Lord—and Hezekiah’s tunnel contradicted the way of faith. (J. A. Motyer 1996, 185)

#### Isaiah 22:12–14

“Therefore in that day the Lord GOD of hosts called you to weeping, to wailing, To shaving the head and to wearing sackcloth. Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die.” But the LORD of hosts revealed Himself to me, “Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you Until you die,” says the Lord GOD of hosts.” (NASB95)

Referring to verse 1 and the question posed by Isaiah, “...What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops?” (Isaiah 22:1b, NASB95)

It appears we now have a bit more clarity. As the people see the troops of Assyria gather, they should be in repentance. They are not. “Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die.”” (Isaiah 22:13, NASB95)

That is a problem.

The more threatening the future, the more insensibly and madly do they give themselves up to the rude, sensual enjoyment of the present. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 258)

The scoffers are promised that they will not be forgiven their scoffing, but they will indeed die. Thanks to the attitude of Hezekiah as these events took place, and his reliance upon YAHWEH, the city was spared, this time.

There is coming a day though where the city will not be spared.

Even if the danger of destruction which threatened Jerusalem on the part of Assyria had been mercifully caused to pass away, the threatening word of Jehovah had not fallen to the ground. The counsel of God contained in the word of prophecy still remained; and as it was the counsel of the Omniscient, the time would surely come when it would pass out of the sphere of ideality into that of actual fact. It remained hovering over Jerusalem like an eagle, and Jerusalem would eventually become its carrion. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 259)

Starting with verse 15, Isaiah provides us a picture of poor versus good leadership. YAHWEH has something to say to those who think they are somebody, they are characterized as poor shepherds (Jeremiah 23:1.) This contrasts with those who would be good shepherds, those who are interested in the welfare of the nation.

#### Ezekiel 34:11–12

“For this is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I myself will search for my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out my flock. I will rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered on a cloudy, dark day.” (NET)

Many have seen a picture of the Antichrist in Shebna, while Eliakim sets before us none other than the Lord Jesus Christ who will supplant the Antichrist in this world. (McGee 1997, 249)

The names give a hint.

Shebna = Who built; tarry, I pray. Grown up; youth; youthfulness; tenderness; who rests himself; dwell here. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 217)

Eliakim = Whom God sets up; i.e., establishes and causes to stand; God will raise up; God does establish. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 64)

Hilkiah = Portion of the LORD; the LORD my portion. Jehovah is protection. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 104)

Isaiah 22:15–25

“Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts, “Come, go to this steward, To Shebna, who is in charge of the royal household, ‘What right do you have here, And whom do you have here, That you have hewn a tomb for yourself here, You who hew a tomb on the height, You who carve a resting place for yourself in the rock? Behold, the LORD is about to hurl you headlong, O man. And He is about to grasp you firmly And roll you tightly like a ball, To be cast into a vast country; There you will die And there your splendid chariots will be, You shame of your master’s house. I will depose you from your office, And I will pull you down from your station. Then it will come about in that day, That I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, And I will clothe him with your tunic And tie your sash securely about him. I will entrust him with your authority, And he will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Then I will set the key of the house of David on his shoulder, When he opens no one will shut, When he shuts no one will open. I will drive him like a peg in a firm place, And he will become a throne of glory to his father’s house. So they will hang on him all the glory of his father’s house, offspring and issue, all the least of vessels, from bowls to all the jars. In that day,” declares the LORD of hosts, “the peg driven in a firm place will give way; it will even break off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken.” (NASB95)

Shebna is the epitome of the politician who is in it for what they can get out of it personally. Fame, fortune, you name it...they want it.

He was the number two under King Hezekiah, he was the secretary of the treasury, the steward. Isaiah goes and confronts him. We do not get the name of Shebna’s father, unusual, it may mean he is not from around here but is a foreigner. He is an earth dweller in that he is reliant upon position and money to get what he wants, and he wants to be remembered as powerful as well, thus the construction project of a tomb or memorial solely for himself.

He was, therefore, individually what the nation was collectively: wedded to present satisfactions and self-confident in the face of the future. (J. A. Motyer 1996, 186)

I agree with many of the commentators who also say he is a type of the antichrist.

Isaiah lets him know that he has a future, but not the one he expected. There are results from sin.

Isaiah 22:17–19

“Behold, the LORD is about to hurl you headlong, O man. And He is about to grasp you firmly And roll you tightly like a ball, To be cast into a vast country; There you will die And there your splendid chariots will be, You shame of your master’s house.’ “I will depose you from your office, And I will pull you down from your station.” (NASB95)

פָּרַח (ot) – This has been translated in the NASB “He is about to grasp firmly. The word also means “to delouse.” (Koehler, et al. 1994-2000, 814)

That the wrong he did was not minor appears from the strong pronouncement of punishment that is spoken against him. The Lord himself will take him in hand with a drastic sort of treatment which is described here figuratively in the following terms: He will be violently hurled away, after having been forcibly grasped and rolled up into a tight ball so as to be capable of being hurled all the more conveniently. (Leupold 1971, 353)

He is done. Instead of taking care of the Kingdom in a time of crisis, he is overseeing his tomb. God hates corrupt governmental officials and he will destroy Shebna for his corruption.

The successor to Shebna was Eliakim, who is manifestly a type of our Lord Jesus Christ who will take over the reins of the government of this world when antichrist has been destroyed. (Ironsides 1952, 130)

John picks up on some of the language in Revelation 3:7 as he describes Jesus to the Philadelphia church.

Revelation 3:7

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.’” (ESV)

To those who look up to Him as their divinely-given Guide and Protector, He opens the treasure-house of divine truth, revealing to them the precious things which God has stored away in His Word. Eliakim was to be as a nail, fastened in a sure place. The reference is to the wooden peg, driven into the supporting post of a tent. Upon this peg were hung vessels used in camp-life and the garments of those dwelling in the tent. So upon Eliakim would depend the means of refreshment and comfort which God had provided for His people. (Ironsides 1952, 131)

Eliakim, “My servant,” is given the authority to legislate, the key, and he will be the one who holds the kingdom firm. A picture of Messiah in the Kingdom.

He is a firm peg. Just as Judah could rely upon him and his support physically and spiritually, so we too can trust the one he is pointing to, Jesus Christ.

Eliakim came to his office (22:23–24) with God’s approval and God’s promise to make him a firmly secure peg that would provide a solid foundation for the government of the nation. Using the imagery of a tent stake driven into solid ground or a strongly rooted hanger driven into the wall of a house, God promises that Eliakim will be a solid support for all who depend on him. Since Eliakim served in Jerusalem during the siege by Sennacherib (36:3, 11), this promise is extremely significant, for it implies that Eliakim’s period of rule over the king’s house will not be destroyed by Sennacherib’s attack. His appointment will have a positive effect on the nation and his behavior will bring great honor to his reputation. (G. V. Smith 2007, 392)

Shebna is the embodiment of “former time, former things” and finishes in dishonor for having been disobedient, irresponsible, and self-serving, not attending to the centrality of the king. By contrast, the ideal Eliakim to come is the perfection yet to be received in Jerusalem; he plays his part faithfully, enjoys the “security” (‘āmēn) of power, and finishes in “a throne of honor.” Shebna and Eliakim come to be embodiments of old, failed Judah and the coming Judah yet to be given by God. (Brueggemann 1998, 181)

However, at some point, even Eliakim will pass away and the good leader in that position will be no more. He will be cut off and the nation will move towards judgement falling to Babylon finally in 586BC and then being able to return after 536 BC.

Are we reacting as the Lord would want us to react? Are we sensitive to the Holy Spirit and what it is He is doing? Or are we up on the roof?

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