

A Prophecy Against Bavel ~ Part 1 Yesha'yahu 13:1-10

In my last post, we examine **A Song of Praise** on **Yesha'yahu 12:1-6**. In this post, we move on to the next section of the **Book of Yesha'yahu** in **A Prophecy Against Bavel ~ Part 1** in **Yesha'yahu 13:1-10**.

In chapters 13 through 23, we come to a passage called the *book of burdens* in which judgments are pronounced upon the nine nations surrounding **Isra'el** and **Y'hudah**. They were called *burdens* for a reason. That is, they were heavy on his heart. These burdens hurt **Yesha'yahu** deeply. When we share the reality of the consequences of sin, of the existence of hell, may the Lord help us to have hearts that are broken. May He give us compassion that is obvious and concern that is very clear to those with whom we share.

Yesha'yahu's *book of burdens* begins with a judgment pronounced against **Bavel**, the area of present-day southern Iraq.

¹ This is a prophecy about Bavel, which Yesha'yahu the son of Amotz saw:

This is a *war prophecy*, a declaration of war. **Bavel** is the object, which is surprising since **Bavel** was not the dominant player on the world scene in **Yesha'yahu's** time. But **Bavel** will play a significant role in the judgment of God's people in **Y'hudah**. **Bavel** represented cultural arrogance and human self-reliance.

² Hoist a banner on a high mountain, shout to [the invaders]; beckon them to enter the Nobles' Gate.

The call to lift a banner is a call to rally troops before a battle (see Yesha'yahu 5:26; 11:10,12). The identity of the army and the object of their attack are unspecified. Even though an actual gate of the nobles is unknown, the name evokes ideas of elitism, power, and pride.

³ "I have ordered My holy ones, summoned My heroes, eager and bold, to execute My anger."

My *holy ones* might be angelic, but the reference is more likely to human warriors whom God will use for His purposes. Since they may not be conscious of such a divine purpose (see Yesha'yahu 10:5-11), they are not necessarily an army of the faithful.

⁴ Listen! A tumult on the mountains — it sounds like a vast multitude! Listen! The uproar of the kingdoms of the nations gathering together! Adonai-Tzva'ot is mustering an army for war.

As we have seen, many of the prophecies in **Yesha'yahu** have a double fulfillment. There is a present application to a historical situation. But they also look to the future prophetically and speak of the end of the ages. The nation of **Bavel** plays a significant part in prophetic Scripture. Revelation 17 and 18 speaks of **Bavel** as representing both a commercial and religious system that is false and abominable. In other words, **Bavel** speaks of the kingdom of this world - the false systems set up by the god of this world, Satan himself.

⁵ They come from a distant land, from beyond the horizon. It's Adonai, with the weapons of his rage, to lay waste to all the earth.

The distant land is not specially identified, but it may be a reference to the **Medes** (v. 17) whom God will use (as part of the **Persian Empire**) to defeat **Bavel**. The kingdoms will come together in the end times for the battle of **Armageddon**.

⁶ Howl! for the Day of Adonai is at hand, destruction coming from Shaddai.

The day of the Lord is a future time when God will wage war against those who oppose Him.

⁷ This is why every arm will hang limp, and everyone's courage melt away.

Weak arms and a melted heart refer to physical and psychological reactions to fear.

⁸ They will be gripped by panic, seized with pain and agony, writhing like a woman in labor, looking aghast at each other, faces aflame.

Yesha'yahu used the theme of a woman in labor, one that often appears in prophetic literature. It is a graphic image of the pain and distress that will result from God's warring activity.

⁹ Here comes the Day of Adonai, full of cruelty, rage and hot fury, to desolate the earth and destroy the sinners in it.

In **Yesha'yahu's** day, this spoke of the surprise invasion of **Bavel** by the **Medes** and the **Persians** (see Daniel 5). Looking ahead, of course, it speaks of the **Tribulation** period.

¹⁰ For the stars, the constellations in the sky will no longer give their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will no longer shine. ~ Yesha'yahu 13:1-10 (CJB)

The incursion of God as warrior causes nature to go into convulsions. On the day of God's judgment, the sun, moon, and stars, which God created to provide the world with light (see Genesis 1:14-19), will go out, plunging the world into darkness. Yeshua refers to this verse in Matthew 24:29.

In my next post, we continue in **A Prophecy Against Bavel ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'yahu 13:11-22**.