

# ISAIAH

ISAIAH 21:11-22:5, EDOM, ARABIA, JERUSALEM

Next, the prophet delivered a short oracle concerning Edom.

Edom was a nation off the south side of the Dead Sea bordering Judah and Moab on their southern borders. The Edomites were the descendants of Jacob and Rebekah's son Esau. The name, אֶדוֹם, comes from a root, אָדָם, meaning "red" or "ruddy" which is a reference to a color resembling blood, cherries, tomatoes, or rubies. Ruddy, אֶדְמוֹנִי, also means red referring to the color of one's skin or hair making it a synonym of red. Some definitions add the element of a healthy look to the meaning of ruddy.

Genesis 25:30 <sup>30</sup>and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red [אֶדָם] stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom [אֶדוֹם].

Edom was mostly a semi-arid desert nation and therefore lacked the capacity for engaging in productive agricultural pursuits which could feed a nation. There was some productive land southeast of the southern end of the Dead Sea and that was where most of the permanent population gathered. That area was home to the capital, Bozrah. Many of the residents were nomads, probably much as the Bedouins of that area still are today. Edom was also called Idumea and, at times, the nation's boundaries extended into the southern Judean hill country particularly after the Nabateans controlled the country. Seir and Teman are also references to Edom. Even though Edom was closely related to Israel through Jacob, closer than Moab and Ammon, the two nations were frequently at odds with one another. The Herodian line of kings in Judah at the time of Christ were Idumeans who had been forced by John Hyrcanus, who was a descendent of the Maccabees, to convert to Judaism after fleeing Edom to live in the Negev. Obviously, they became political appointees to their ruling positions in Judah and Samaria, and they were not part of the Davidic line of kings which has been held in abeyance since the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

The enmity between Edom and Israel began early in Israel's history when Edom refused to allow the new nation to cross her territory after the exodus out of Egypt. When Moses sent messengers to Edom, he referred to the Edomites as "brothers" of Israel, which, given the common ancestry from Jacob was an accurate statement. Yet, Edom rebuffed their request.

Numbers 20:18–21 <sup>18</sup>Edom, however, said to him, "You shall not pass through us, or I will come out with the sword against you." <sup>19</sup>Again, the sons of Israel said to him, "We will go up by the highway, and if I and my livestock do drink any of your water, then I will pay its price. Let me only pass through on my feet, nothing else." <sup>20</sup>But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against him with a heavy force and with a strong hand. <sup>21</sup>Thus Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.

The historical books of the Old Testament reveal many accounts of the strife between Edom and Israel.

After David defeated and subjugated the Edomites, a member of the royal line of Edom fled to Egypt and later returned to cause Solomon problems.

2 Samuel 8:14 <sup>14</sup>He [David] put garrisons in Edom. In all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David. And the LORD helped David wherever he went.

1 Kings 11:14–17 <sup>14</sup>Then the LORD raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the royal line in Edom. <sup>15</sup>For it came about, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, and had struck down every male in Edom <sup>16</sup>(for Joab and all Israel stayed there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom), <sup>17</sup>that Hadad fled to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, while Hadad was a young boy.

Edom also joined with Nebuchadnezzar in the Babylonian army's conquest and destruction of Judah and Jerusalem.

Psalms 137:7 <sup>7</sup>Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, "Raze it, raze it To its very foundation."

The oracle:

Isaiah 21:11–12 <sup>11</sup>The oracle concerning Edom [דִּמְיָה, Dumah]. One keeps calling to me from Seir, "Watchman, how far gone is the night? Watchman, how far gone is the night?" <sup>12</sup>The watchman says, "Morning comes but also night. If you would inquire, inquire; Come back again."

Edom here is actually Dumah, דִּמְיָה. Some think this is a Hebrew play on words with אֶדוֹם. "The name as it stands here is symbolical, and without any demonstrable topographical application. *Dumah* is deep, utter silence, and therefore the land of the dead. The name אֶדוֹם [אֶדוֹם] is turned into an emblem of the future fate of Edom, by the removal of the *a*-sound from the beginning of the word to the end. It becomes a land of deathlike stillness, deathlike sleep, deathlike darkness" [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 7, 7:250]. That is an apt description of what will happen in that place during the Tribulation.

Dumah was the name of one of Ishmael's sons and was also a place name for a region in Edom near the mountain of Seir. Others say it may have been a place in the southern Judean hill country near Hebron. In the context of this oracle, and if it applies to a geographical location at all, Edom seems to be the more likely place. Edom apparently earned the enmity of Assyria by siding with some of that nation's enemies which is significant because the timing of this oracle was during a time of successful Assyrian aggression in the entire region. The name is a reference to silence or to a place of silence. "Dumah therefore symbolizes the destiny of Edom, the hereditary enemy of Israel. It will one day become a silent, forsaken and forgotten place. The old abandoned city of Petra, built by the Nabateans in the last two centuries B.C., was located in ancient Edom.

An eerie, haunted, silent place—Dumah” [Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah: A Commentary*, 223].

In this oracle, an Edomite is calling to the watchman out of a desire to know Edom's fate. After Assyria and Babylon and all the other nations that conquered the Middle East area in succession, it was clear that Edom's fate as a nation was sealed. That area would be subjugated time and again. Morning would come, but night would fall once again which suggests the common biblical metaphor of peace and safety, represented by light, in contrast with war and harmful chaos, represented by darkness. The questioner was asking how long this would last. When would the light appear? The answer suggested hope, but only after suffering. Edom could inquire again later.

Historically, Edom has experienced ups and downs as might be expected for a nation that rejected God and hated His people. Much of what the Bible reveals about God's judgment on Edom involves the end times. Edom's hatred of Israel will have serious eschatological consequences for the nation. Unlike Moab, Ammon, and Egypt, there is no promise of eschatological restoration for Edom. In a revelation of God's wrath on the nations, which is an end time prophecy, special recognition was reserved for Edom.

Isaiah 34:5–6, 8 <sup>5</sup>For My sword is satiated in heaven, Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom And upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction. <sup>6</sup>The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, It is sated with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.... <sup>8</sup>For the LORD has a day of vengeance, A year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

Due to Edom's particularly egregious treatment of Israel and the Jewish people throughout Israel's history, the nation is used as the example of all the nations of the world that are going to experience God's wrath. “The choice of Edom as the representative nation is to be expected. Edom stands as Israel's opponent throughout the OT. Even in Rebekah's womb Israel (Jacob) and Edom (Esau) battled for position. The use of Edom in Isaiah depicts the choice that must be made. All humanity must choose the way of Edom or the way of the Lord. Either choice brings with it a specific set of consequences that are made clear through the prophetic word” [Michael Rydelnik and James Spencer, “Isaiah” in *The Moody Bible Commentary*, 1053].

Ezekiel 35 is clearly an end times prophecy concerning the judgment of Edom.

Ezekiel 35:3–5, 7–8, 14–15 <sup>3</sup>and say to it, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, And I will stretch out My hand against you And make you a desolation and a waste. <sup>4</sup>“I will lay waste your cities And you will become a desolation. Then you will know that I am the LORD. <sup>5</sup>“Because you have had everlasting enmity and have delivered the sons of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of the punishment of the end ... <sup>7</sup>“I will make Mount Seir a waste and a desolation and I will cut off from it the one who passes through and returns. <sup>8</sup>“I will fill its mountains with its slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those slain by the sword will fall.... <sup>14</sup>Thus says the Lord GOD, “As all the earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation. <sup>15</sup>“As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so I will do

to you. You will be a desolation, O Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

“Although Edom lost its national identity and significance after the Roman period, the wrathful judgment described by Ezekiel does yet not seem to be fulfilled. But it will happen at the end of days when the Messiah will bring His judgment on the archenemy of the Jewish people.... The Edomites, presented here as the epitome of Israel’s enemies, are no longer a distinctive people today. Nevertheless, the people that occupy their territory continue to mistreat the people of Israel even as the original Edomites did. Hence, this end-of-days judgment will fall upon the people in Edom in that day. God knows who His enemies are and will ultimately defeat them” [Michael Rydelnik and James Spencer, “Isaiah” in *The Moody Bible Commentary*, 1242].

This prophecy concerns the continual trouble Edom finds herself in which will culminate in the judgment that destroys that nation and its people at the end of the Tribulation. They know it and they want the night or darkness to end, but they will not do the one thing that will end it which is turn to Yahweh in faith.

Isaiah next addressed an oracle to Arabia.

Isaiah 21:13–15 <sup>13</sup>The oracle about [בְּ] Arabia [עֲרָב]. In the thickets [יַעַר] of [בְּ] Arabia you must spend the night, O caravans of Dedanites [דְּדָן]. <sup>14</sup>Bring water for the thirsty, O inhabitants of the land of Tema [תֵּמָא], Meet the fugitive with bread. <sup>15</sup>For they have fled from the swords, From the drawn sword, and from the bent bow And from the press of battle.

Most of the biblical references to Arabia refer to the northern and western areas. The Hebrew scholar Gesenius claims that Arabia as used in the Bible only refers to the area to the east and south of Israel and south along the Red Sea. Others generally agree but suggest it may also refer to the larger area further east encompassing the greater Arabian Peninsula.

It is a huge region that contains a number of present-day nations. It extends north into Jordan. The western boundary has a mountain range that runs from Edom (Jordan) south alongside the Red Sea with peaks up to 12,000 feet. The central and north to northeastern area extends into what is now Syria and Iraq. This area is a huge desert consisting of sand and rock, and it contains some of the driest areas on earth. Violent, wind-driven sandstorms are common. It gets almost no rainfall except along the coast where 20" a year is normal. The interior of the peninsula is largely uninhabited. There is only one river and lake on the peninsula and they have to rely on deep wells and oases for water. They use desalinization plants along the coast. The Arabian Peninsula itself is about 1,300 miles long and 800 miles wide. The ancient people in the south in what is now Yemen and Oman, developed sophisticated irrigation systems, allowing them to produce incense and spices that spawned a lucrative trading business in the Africa/Asia region. They were apparently rich in precious metals and gems which they mined and sold. This nation was a predominate player along the trading routes not only between southwest Arabia and the Mediterranean Sea, but almost certainly to the north and to the east.

This description of the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula is a fitting description for the area from which the Queen of Saba, or Sheba as it is known in the Bible, travelled to visit Solomon. Most theologians believe the Yemen area is correctly known as the place of her reign, although a few believe it to be Ethiopia.

1 Kings 10:2 <sup>2</sup>So she [the Queen of Sheba] came to Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones....

It is quite likely the queen's trip to visit Solomon was actually a diplomatic mission to establish and engage in trading activities with Solomon and Israel. Certainly, she was interested in discovering whether or not all the things she heard about the wisdom of Solomon and the splendor of his kingdom were true, but trade was part of the trip. The things she brought to the king—spices, gold, and precious stones—were the very things the Sabaeans traded in.

1 Kings 10:13 <sup>13</sup>King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested, besides what he gave her according to his royal bounty....

The proper name "Arabia" is from a Semitic root word and in Hebrew it is rendered עֲרָב meaning desert plateau, steppe, or arid and sterile. The Septuagint translates it as *ἄσπερα* meaning evening, but that word in Hebrew is spelled עֶרֶב with different vowel pointing. If the original meaning was "evening," then the meaning has to do with night about to fall on Arabia which portends destruction. The problem is that there were no vowel points in the original text; therefore, the added vowels were dependent on the interpreter and placed in the text over 2,000 years after Isaiah wrote the book. The TANAKH properly translates this word with the preposition "in" producing "The in the steppe pronouncement" which seems to make the most sense given the context, but all our English translations use "Arabia." The NASB translates the preposition as "about" producing "about Arabia." The proper name "Arabia" is derived from the concept of desert steppes that are arid. I think it could be interpreted either way, but it immediately refers to the "thickets" of Arabia which coincides with the idea of the desert steppe with which it is linked. "In the scrub, in the steppe, you will lodge" [TANAKH]. The bottom line is there is a textual question about the correct interpretation of this verse. I favor the TANAKH interpretation.

They are a Semitic people, that is, they are descendants of Shem. Abraham sent the sons of his concubines away into "the land of the east" (Gen. 25:6) which is presumed to be a reference to Arabia. A number of Arab tribes are mentioned in the Bible including the Midianites, Ishmaelites, Amalekites, Dedanites, Temanites, and others. Most of them are descendants of Abraham through Ishmael and his sons from his concubines and from his second wife, Keturah.

The biblical metaphor of light and darkness is carried over into this oracle. Whatever or whoever is causing problems in Edom is going to cause problems for Arabia as well. The Arabians are going to be hiding in the thickets to escape danger. Thickets, יַעַר, means woods, forest, or thickets referring to a relatively large area that contains trees and brush. The Arabian desert probably does not contain trees at all and large tracts of brush are not prevalent, but along the coasts and in the wadis, there must be some vegetation.

Whatever the situation, the people would need places in the wilderness to hide from aggressors.

If the TANAKH is the most plausible interpretation, the steppe, then how do we know Arabia is even the subject of the oracle? Beside the fact that the word is also the proper name for Arabia, the immediate reference is to the Dedanites, and they were a people of the Arabian Peninsula. The Dedanites were traders in the region and regularly traveled the caravan routes. Ezekiel noted that they traded with Tyre in ebony, ivory tusks, and saddlecloths for riding (Ezek. 27:15, 20). Assyria mounted offensive excursions into the area, but whether or not they actually conquered them, I'm unsure. I do know for sure the Babylonians conquered them. Nebuchadnezzar attacked the area and Nabonidus spent 10 years at Tema which explains why Belshazzar was in charge of the nation when it was conquered by Medo-Persia. In Jeremiah 25, the prophet predicted that God's wrath was going to fall on a number of nations or city-states including Dedan, probably at the hand of Babylon, but there is an end times element in that prophecy as well.

The people of Tema were to provide for the people of Dedan while they were hiding from this adversary. Whether they fled Dedan to hide from this adversary or whether they were taking less traveled and out-of-the-way trade routes north was not stated. My thought would be they left Dedan to hide in the wilderness. The whole area was under attack; therefore, how the people of Tema were able to provide food and water to the Dedanites was not revealed. Tema was a desert oasis so water was not a problem in terms of supply.

Verse 15 makes it very clear that they were going to face a foe determined to destroy them, and they would need to flee from it. The following verses will make it clear that they do not succeed; most of them will die.

Isaiah 21:16–17 <sup>16</sup>For thus the Lord said to me, "In a year, as a hired man would count it, all the splendor of Kedar [קֶדָר] will terminate; <sup>17</sup>and the remainder of the number of bowmen, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be few; for the LORD God of Israel has spoken."

Kedar, קֶדָר, was the name of the second son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13). "Kedar in the strictest sense, was a nomadic tribe of Ishmaelites that wandered as far as the Elanitic Gulf. But this term is usually used in Scripture as the collective name of the Arab tribes (Bedouin) in general" [Merrill C. Unger, s.v. "Kedar," *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed., 733]. Kedar is a synonym for Arabia, or at least for the northwest area nearest the biblical lands which is the subject of this Scripture. Whatever was going to take place in the short term, was going to take place within a year of Isaiah's prophecy.

It is noteworthy that even in the midst of warning and judgment, God continually identified Himself as "the Lord God of Israel" [יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל].

This oracle has the same primary message to the Jews as the other oracles do against the Gentiles. They are all going to be judged; therefore, it would be folly for the Israelites to enter into any kind of alliance with any of them. It bears repeating: the Israelites were not to enter into any mutual aid pacts with other nations; God would defend and protect them if they would only be obedient.

The next oracle is called "the oracle concerning the valley of vision;" it is an oracle against Judah and Jerusalem. The folly of seeking alliances with the nations in a vain attempt to buy security when their security resides only in the Lord God of Israel is in the background of these prophecies.

The context in terms of the historical setting here is unclear. Some theologians believe this oracle may have been referring to the time when Sennacherib had destroyed much of Judah and was beginning his attack on Jerusalem when the angel of the Lord destroyed his army and sent him back to Assyria in defeat and disgrace. That invasion was not without great damage to Judah even though Jerusalem was not captured. Assyria conquered many of the cities in Judah and enslaved many of Jewish citizens of Judah along the way. While it is not to be completely trusted, Sennacherib gave an account of capturing 46 Judean cities and numerous unwalled villages, of taking over 200,000 people captive, of taking cattle as spoil, and of some of Hezekiah's elite troops deserting the army [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 1-39*, 384].

Others believe it was related to the Babylonian attack that ultimately destroyed the city and the Temple. The problem with Babylon is that the events of the Scripture refer to events and to people that refer to the rule of Hezekiah and that points to Assyria and Sennacherib. The one thing that may be agreed upon is that judgment is promised the city for disobedience. The short-term and long-term factors of Isaiah's prophecies also have to be taken into consideration. What is happening in these verses concerning the destruction of Jerusalem is a type of what is going to happen on a much larger, more devastating scale during the Tribulation.

The problem for Judah was the deliverance at the time of Sennacherib was not the end; it was merely a reprieve from that specific attack. The Babylonian conquest was not the end either; Israel was going to be restored only to be destroyed again later. In the larger picture, there would be many centuries of trouble for the Jews yet to come, and it still has not ended to this day.

The valley of vision may refer to the fact that the old city of Jerusalem was bounded on three sides by valleys: the Kidron Valley on the east side, the Hinnom Valley, also known as Gehenna, on the south and the west, and the Tyropean Valley. Although, the old city was set on hill above these two valleys, the city was surrounded by mountains that gave the appearance that Jerusalem itself was in a valley. In a sense, the fact that Jerusalem was set apart from the world in this valley suggests that the theme of these oracles, Israel was to rely on God, is related to the geography of Jerusalem, hence, the valley the vision was about.

Another interesting observation is that this was the place, the residence of God in the Temple, where revelation was given, hence, the valley of vision. Vision, *תְּזִיּוֹן*, means a revelation, i.e., a communication from God to be spoken to others. It has the sense of a supernatural vision that is a religious or mystical experience of that supernatural appearance through which a message is imparted. Combined with the notion of a

specific geographical location, it refers to a place of revelation. In this sense, it simply refers to a place, Jerusalem, where this revelation was imparted to Isaiah.

Valley of vision as a title for this oracle is also interesting because Israel as a nation, with some notable exceptions among individuals such as the prophets, a few of the kings, and some of the people, never exercised sound spiritual vision. In that sense, the Israelites are no better off than the Gentiles around them which might explain why this oracle against Jerusalem is placed among the oracles against various Gentile nations. At this point in time, there is no real difference between them. The one common element to all the interpretations of the meaning is that it is referring to Jerusalem.

“But the epithet is intended to be something more than geographical. A valley is a deep, still, solitary place, but off and shut in by mountains. And thus Jerusalem was an enclosed place, hidden and shut off from the world, which Jehovah had chosen as the place in which to show to His prophets the mysteries of His government of the world. And upon this sacred prophets' city the judgment of Jehovah was about to fall; and the announcement of the judgment upon it is placed among the oracles concerning the nations of the world! We may see from this, that at the time when this prophecy was uttered, the attitude of Jerusalem was so worldly and heathenish, that it called forth this dark, nocturnal threat, which is penetrated by not a single glimmer of promise” [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Isaiah*, vol. 7, 7:254].

None of the things discussed in this Scripture exactly fit any particular historical situation; it seems to be a composite of several incidents. This leads me to believe this is a prophecy of the immediate future and of the end when Israel will believe they are living in peace and safety under the auspices of the antichrist only to find they have been betrayed and Jerusalem will once again be destroyed for the final time in this age.

The next verses relate to the foolish mindset of the Israelites who thought they were safe and secure due to their own devices.

Isaiah 22:1–3 <sup>1</sup>The oracle concerning the valley of vision [הַחֲזִיוֹן]. What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops? <sup>2</sup>You who were full of noise [תְּשֻׁעָה], You boisterous [הֶמְזָה] town, you exultant [עֲלִיָּן] city; Your slain were not slain with the sword, Nor did they die in battle. <sup>3</sup>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.

Those who believe this Scripture refers to the deliverance of the city by the Angel of the Lord during Sennacherib's siege understand the reference to the rooftops to be a reference to rejoicing over their deliverance from Sennacherib and his army. That is plausible in light of the revelation in verse 2. A somewhat related view is that they were on the rooftops to observe the defeat of the enemy which, if true, was an extremely overconfident view of their immediate future because they would have known nothing about God's supernatural intervention before the fact. This view implies that they thought they could defeat the enemy by means of their own military prowess. Remember, it took that supernatural intervention to prevent the destruction of the city.



Noise, תְּשׁוּעָה, simply means a noise and boisterous, הִמְקִה, means to make a noise or to be tumultuous. It may refer to the noise of a busy city with the sounds all around melding into a cacophony of noise. Exultant, עֵלִיץ, refers to rejoicing, reveling, or being jubilant; it pertains to a state of great joy and so exultant or rejoicing. This seems out of character for a city that is facing annihilation. This represents the mindset of a people who have ignored the Law and the Prophets and continue to go their own way. It is a denial of truth and reality.

They are mistaken. Some of them will starve to death during the siege. This, of course, is one of the primary purposes of a siege. They starve people to the point they are too weak to fight, too psychologically damaged to care, starved to death, or forced to surrender. They will not even be given the honor of dying for their nation and their families in battle. Their leaders will try to flee leaving the people behind, but they will be captured. They will not even put up a fight. What a cowardly picture of these leaders that is enshrined in the eternal Word of God.

At the same time the prophet sees the city rejoicing, he is driven to despair over the plight of his city and his Jewish brethren.

Isaiah 22:4 <sup>4</sup>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."

This represents a pattern. The Israelites were so rebellious and therefore subjected to so much temporal discipline that the situation broke God's heart and the heart of His prophets. Isaiah was weeping over the fate of Judah and Jerusalem. Jeremiah is often referred to as the "weeping prophet" for his reaction to the events occurring during the time he was warning Judah to change her ways while, at the same time, he was proclaiming the end of Judah as that nation had existed since the days of Joshua (Jer. 9:1, 13:17, 14:17). He wrote the mournful book of Lamentations after Jerusalem was captured and the Temple was destroyed (Lam. 1:16). Christ Jesus wept over Jerusalem knowing that it was soon to be destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70 (Luke 19:41) because they had rejected their King and His Kingdom.

We have already noted that the prophet expressed grief over the fate of Moab (Is. 16:11) and Babylon (Is. 21:3); therefore, how much greater should his grief be over the judgment of his Israelite brethren? Yahweh is also grieved over the imposition of judgment on the Israelites that His righteousness and holiness requires for their disobedience. During the Tribulation, Isaiah wrote that "In their [the Israelites] affliction He [Yahweh] was afflicted" (Is. 63:9).

The Israelites were not listening to the warnings of the prophet and that left the prophet sick at heart because he knew what was in store for them. He wanted comfort from no one; he wanted to grieve the destruction of his people. Destruction must, first of all, refer to the conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and it may refer to the destruction of Israel and Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans. Finally, it refers to the damage that will be done during the Tribulation. There is no doubt the prophet saw all these things at one time or another throughout the duration of his prophetic ministry.

Isaiah 22:5 <sup>5</sup>For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day of panic [מְהוּמָה], subjugation [מְבוּסָה] and confusion [מְבוּכָה] In the valley of vision, A breaking down of walls And a crying to the mountain.

The title of God here, the Lord God of hosts (or armies), is a reference to His omnipotence; it is a title of might and power frequently used in a military or an apocalyptic context. Whether God Himself is imposing judgment on the subject of His wrath or using the army of a nation, He has the power to execute judgment and impose His will.

The use of the word "day" is, in this context, another eschatological marker. "The prophet compares what was happening in Judah to events expected on the Day of the Lord.... This kind of activity was expected on the Day of the Lord ..." [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 1-39*, 385].

The words panic, subjugation, and confusion reveal a state of affairs that is entirely the opposite of a time of societal order, normalcy, and safety. These words are describing a horrific event, or events, in the nation's history. When everything you know is facing violent destruction, you can imagine the fear, the disorientation, and the sense of loss that envelopes people in that situation.

Panic, מְהוּמָה, means confusion, panic, tumult, and disturbance with the understanding that it is a severe disturbance. It refers a state of discomfiture (uncomfortableness) and consternation because one is not understanding a situation and so implying turmoil and panic.

Subjugation, מְבוּסָה, means a treading or a trampling down primarily by means of destructive action and subjugation. It has the sense of subjugating perceived as trampling something.

Confusion, מְבוּכָה, means confusion or confounding. It has the sense of a mental state characterized by a lack of clear and orderly thought and behavior.

None of the problems with the Assyrians resulted in the city's walls being torn down, but that did happen with the Babylonian siege and later the Roman destruction of the city.

Exactly what crying to the mountain means is difficult to determine. Some believe it refers to calling out to the God who resides on Mt. Zion to help them. Others believe it refers to calling out to those on the mountains outside the city for help, or it is simply a reference to those people who can hear the tumult of the battle and the cries of the wounded and the dying.