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SERIES: Isaiah, Part 1 (Judgment – But Hope)

TITLE: Program 39 – Depend On Him!

THURSDAY

OPEN

When someone dies in a war, when a 9/11, some sort of terrorist attack happens, when a tsunami comes and people are destroyed and taken away in the flood, do you want to hear that God knew nothing about it? That God was as surprised as man that it happened? Do you want to divorce God from it? Why? Because you think that will make God cruel. Does it? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

There is [a time to speak and there is a time to keep silent].
(PARAPHRASE, Ecclesiastes 3:7) There is a time to look at the audience that you're addressing and have discernment. There is a warning that "...[you do not] **cast your pearls before swine, ...lest they...turn...and rend you.**" (Matthew 7:6, KJV) But there is also an admonition in the Word of God that we're going to see today that says, ["As I have heard from God, so I need to speak."] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 21:10) Now I'm not

talking about supernatural revelations, a prophecy here, a prophecy there that comes to us that may be from God, but may not be from God. But I'm talking about taking the Word of God and saying, "This is what God says. This is who He is. This is what He has done. This is what He says. And whether you accept it or not, I have to share it with you. I have to share truth. I have to speak truth." If we're going to speak, if we're going to share, we need to share from the Word of God – Jeremiah makes that very clear— instead of these false prophets that share their dreams and their visions that are not from God. (See Jeremiah 23:16) Well today we're looking at Isaiah chapter 21. Now our goal this week is to cover 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23, so we need to be about our business. Our theme this week, remember, is seeing that what God has purposed will surely come to pass; what God has planned will not be thwarted, because He is God. (See Isaiah 14:24, 27) Now as we come to Isaiah chapter 21, remember this is the oracle, this is about the wilderness of the sea and this power that is coming up through this wilderness, through this desert, and it is a harsh vision. It is a vision that causes great pain and consternation to the prophet, (See Isaiah 21:2-4) because he has to deliver this vision. He thought it wasn't going to be quite as bad, but now he is full of anguish. It says in verse 4 of 21, **"My mind reels, horror overwhelms me; the twilight I longed for has been turned for me into trembling."** (Isaiah 21:4) And then he talks about what people are doing. **"They[re setting] the table..."** they're putting things on the table, **"...they[re] spread[ing]...the cloth, [they sit down and] they eat, [and] they drink..."**; and they carry on. It's like nothing's going to happen. And it says, **"...Rise up, captains, oil the shields."** (Isaiah 21:5) "Get up! It is a time of battle, it is a terrible time that is coming, and you are not ready, you are just sitting there." He says, **"For thus the Lord says to me, 'Go, station the [outlook], let him report what he sees. When he sees riders, [and] horsemen in pairs....'"** (Isaiah 21:6-7) Now they would come in pairs because what they would do was, they would ride one horse,

have another horse attached to that, but not riding him, so that when they came into battle they would switch horses, and get on the horse that had not carried the load, the better of the two. And he says, “Look and see.” **“When he sees riders, [and] horsemen in [pair], a train of donkeys, a train of camels, let him pay close attention, very close attention.”** He says, **“Then the lookout called, ‘O Lord, I stand continually by day on the watchtower, and I am stationed every night at my guard post.’” (Isaiah 21:7-8)** I am faithful. I am there on the watchtower. At night, I am there on the guard post. He says, **“‘Now [here] behold ...comes a troop of riders, horsemen in pairs.’ And one said, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon....’”**

Babylon’s fallen. **(Isaiah 21:9)** They were trusting that Merodach Baladan would in turn conquer Assyria. Their enemy would be taken care of so that they could eat and so that they could drink, instead of, “Rising up O captains, and oiling your shields.” The shields were made of animal skins and they had to be oiled. And it says, **“Now...one [is saying] ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon...all the images of her gods are shattered on the ground.’”**

(Isaiah 21:9) Babylon has been brought low. Now watch what he says, **“[O] O my threshed people ...my afflicted of the threshing floor! What I have heard from the LORD of hosts...[that] I [have made] known to you.”**

He’s telling them what is going to happen. **“...What I have heard from the Lord of hosts... [that] I make known to you.” (Isaiah 21:10)** “And what I’m telling you is this: You’ve been relying on the arm of flesh, and it is not going to deliver you. Babylon is not going to deliver you. Babylon, you think is going to triumph, and they’re going to be conquered by Assyria. And so this is the news. And what is God’s word for you and for me today? You and I are studying the Word of God. You and I are poring over this. You make a date with me every single day, and if you don’t get me here, you go to <oneplace.com> or <lightsource.com> and you pick up the program. And you’re downloading the free study guide by going to <preceptsforlife.com>. And you and I are studying together. This is not a

program to tickle your ears. This is not a program that is telling you all these neat stories so that you can be excited. This is a program raised up by God to establish people in God's Word **"...as that which produces reverence for [Him]."** (Psalms 119:38) That causes us to fall on our face. This program has been brought into being by the grace of God. It is sustained by your gifts. That's the only way that we can stay on the air is to have you come along and say, "I believe in this program. I believe it's necessary that people know the Word of God, book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse and I wanna support it, and I want people to be established in God's Word. That's why we're here. We're here so that what we hear from the Lord of hosts, we can tell others. And so what is God's Word for us out of this 21st chapter? And I want you to write it down: Sometimes you have to tell a harsh vision. Sometimes you have to say, "Yes. God was behind the Tsunami." Sometimes you have to say, "I know that war is hard, and war is hell. And my heart aches and it grieves for you that your son died, that your daughter died, and I am so sorry, and I hurt for you. But I can tell you this, that God numbered your daughter's, your son's days before there was yet one of them. (Psalms 139:16) And I can tell you this: that this is harsh and this is painful, but if your child knew the Lord, they are **"...absent from the body, ...[they are] present with the Lord."** (2 Corinthians 5:8, KJV) They are far better off than they are here because, and as Isaiah, you will see it later; they don't understand that this one has been taken away from what is to come and they have been spared. (See Isaiah 57:1) We think of death as the end of it all. Death for the Christian is, "Welcome home!" **"...To be absent from the body [is] to be [present] with the Lord."** (2 Corinthians 5:8, KJV) And Paul says that's far better. You say, "But my child did not know God." And I can tell you, Precious One, and it may sound harsh, but I can tell you the truth on the authority of the Word of God, that if they had lived for two millennia, they still would not have known the Lord. God does not lose His people. (John 18:9 & 17:12; Luke 15:4) And so this is what I

want you to see. People don't want to hear it. They don't want to know it because it is a harsh vision. But you have to say, **"...What I have heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I [am making] known to you."** (Isaiah 21:10) And so you give the vision and you share the vision. People think that they can overcome in their own strength. They think that somebody will come, some human being, and that the arm of flesh will deliver them, but the arm of flesh is an arm of flesh. And they need to look to the arm of God. (See 2 Chronicles 32:8) So this is what you need to do, and you need to know that you need to be a faithful watchman. Now watch his next word: **"The oracle concerning Edom..."**, or Dumah (Isaiah 21:11) And Dumah is like east of of Edom, it's in that wilderness and there from Mt. Seir they are looking, "Is the enemy coming? Are they going to get us?" And so it says, **"...One keeps calling to me from Seir, 'Watchman, how far gone is the night...?'"** "Is this almost over?" **"'Watchman, how far gone is the night?' [And] the watchman says, 'Morning [will come] but also night....'"** Darkness is still coming. And it says: **"...If you would inquire, inquire; Come back again."** (Isaiah 21:11-12) Yes, morning is coming, relief is coming, but night is still coming. If you wanna know, come back again. And God says, "You wanna know? Come back to the Word and I will teach you and I will show you." Then we come to: **"The oracle about Arabia...."** It says. **"...In the thickets of Arabia you must spend the night, O caravans of Dedanites. Bring water for the thirsty, O inhabitants of the land of Tema...."** This is like a desert area in Arabia. It says, **"...Meet the fugitive with bread. For they have fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow and from the press of battle. For thus the Lord said to me..."** now listen carefully, **"...'In a year, as a hired man would count it..."**, in other words, he counts every single day, **"...all the splendor of Kedar will terminate."** (Isaiah 21:13-16) Here was this beautiful oasis in this part of Arabia, and it is going to "terminate," it is going to be gone. He says, **"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.” (Isaiah 21:17) What does it mean? We’ll talk about it in just a minute.

PART TWO

In Isaiah chapter 21, we have three oracles. We have the oracle of the Wilderness of the Sea, a very, very harsh vision that brings great pain upon Isaiah. (See Isaiah 21:1-3) And yet, like a faithful watchman, he says: **“...What I have heard from the LORD...,”** that I have to speak. **(Isaiah 21:10)** Then we have the oracle concerning Edom, or Dumah which is east of Edom in that desert range. And we have them [calling to the watchman, “Watchman, what of the night? What of the night? How far is the night gone?” And he says, “The night is—morning is coming, but the night is also coming.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 21:11-12) And then we have the oracle to those in Arabia that we just looked at. Now when you look at these oracles, none of them are pleasant messages. And yet they are messages that must be delivered. When you think of Arabia, I want you to get a grasp of what Arabia is today. Arabia is this huge piece of land that is the birthplace of Islam. It contains two of its holiest sites, and that is Mecca and Medina. When you think of Arabia, the modern Saudi state was founded in 1932 by Al Saud. He unified the country after a 30-year campaign to establish, now listen, “a true Arabian country.” So true that although they court other economic enterprises and although they allow the American military to go in there, they isolate them in their own compounds. They forbid them to share their faith because they want a truly Arab nation. Now when you think of Arabs I don’t want you to think that Arabs—all Arabs—are Muslim, because there are Christian Arabs; there are Muslim Arabs. Now just as there are Christians in the United States that carry the title “Christian,” but are not necessarily Christian, it doesn’t mean that the Christian Arabs, all of them, believe in Jesus Christ. It means that they were born a Christian Arab,

or they were an Muslim Arab. But what you see in that country is, this is a country that is Arabic from stem to stern. Ninety percent of the country speaks Arabic, and the official language is Arabic. They own 25% of the world's petroleum. Now what is he saying to them? He is saying to them, "Look, you're looking for help and you are going to be taken. You are going to be judged. **"...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;"** The Lord God of Israel. Here's a nation that is at peace with Israel, but many of the people despise Israel, and so He says, "He has spoken." This is where women live under Sharia law. This is where they are behind the veil. This is a country that is strictly, Arab and it's Muslim in faith. And so what you have is, you have Israel surrounded by its enemies, and looking to the arm of flesh, and God is saying, "Oh no. Look to Me." So then you come to chapter 22: **"The oracle concerning the valley of vision...."** It says, **"...What is the matter with you now...?"** "What is the matter with you now? **"...That you have gone up to the housetops?"** (Isaiah 22:1) Why are you on the roof of your house looking out to see what's happening? He says, **"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 [them] 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...."** This is the prophet speaking. This is the messenger of God. He says, **"...Do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people."** (Isaiah 22:2-4) He says, "You are up on the roof, you are looking out, and you were down in your houses partying." You were an exultant city, you were a jubilant city, you were a boisterous city. You were carrying on as if nothing was going to happen." And he says, "Now you're on the housetop and I want you to know, that I look at you. I look at you. Turn away from me,

don't look at me because I'm weeping bitterly for you." Why? He says, **"...Do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people."** (Isaiah 22:4) Remember we're marking "destruction" with a red kind of fiery, fiery line. And it says, **"For the Lord GOD of hosts....,"** now listen carefully, **"...has a day of panic, subjugation and confusion in the valley of vision...."** (Isaiah 22:5) What is the "valley of vision"? Well as you keep studying you're going to see that it is Judah, but what is this "valley of vision"? Well when you go to Jerusalem and if you stand and and you're looking at picture of of the Dome of the Rock, the golden dome, you're standing on the Mt. of Olives and there is a valley in between. It's the Kidron Valley. And it's **"Multitudes, multitudes....,"** as Joel says, **"...in the valley of decision...!"** (Joel 3:14) It's a valley of decision, it's a valley of vision, and he says **"...a breaking down of walls...a crying to the mountain. Elam took up the quiver with the chariots, infantry and horsemen; and Kir uncovered the shield. Then your choicest valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen took up fixed positions at the gate...He removed the defense of Judah...."** (Isaiah 22:5-8) And what he's talking about, possibly, is when Sennacherib from Assyria came down and laid siege to Judah; took the cities around Jerusalem, and then came and camped outside the city walls, and told them that they would be eating their own dung and drinking their own urine if they did not surrender to Assyria. (See Isaiah 36:12) You're going to read about it, you're going to see it when we get to the historical section again of Isaiah, when we come to those final, final chapters that come just before the break in the book. But this is what it says, it says, **"And He removed the defense of Judah. In that day....,"** now watch the word "depended," **"...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."** (Isaiah 22:8-9) You were getting ready for a siege. **"Then you counted the houses of Jerusalem and [you] tore down houses to fortify the**

wall...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...,” and here it is again, the theme of our week: “...[He who] **planned it long ago.**” (Isaiah 22:10-11) It’s all right to take care of the walls. It’s all right to take care of the water. It’s all right. But what are you depending on? You’re depending on what you do instead of God. You’re not turning to God, God “...**who planned it long ago.**” (Isaiah 22:11) Remember the calamity that came to Egypt was to bring them to healing so that they would return to the Lord. And in this opportunity, they’re partying. They’re rejoicing (we will see it in the next lesson). They’re rejoicing instead of weeping and they’re not depending on God. Don’t you be guilty of the same thing.