

# Isaiah 21:1-10

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[ 0 : 00 ] I mentioned earlier in the service, so we're unusually perhaps taking the same passage both morning and evening, albeit taking different sections of it.

Of the three prophecies or burdens that you might say that are detailed in this chapter 21 of Isaiah, each refer to three different places and three different stages of fulfilment.

The last section, verses 13 to 17, the burden upon Arabia, being the one which in fact would be fulfilled first. The other two prophecies, verses 1 to 10 and verses 11 and 12, these both are events which came to pass over 150 years after the days of Isaiah.

But of the burden of Arabia, we read at verse 16, that it would come to pass within a year. However, to avoid confusion rather than deal with the one that will happen, would happen earliest.

First and then get everything out of sync. To avoid confusion, we'll deal with the three prophecies in the order in which they appear. We'll deal with the first one this morning. And Lord willing, we'll deal with the other two this evening.

[ 1 : 13 ] So first of all then, verses 1 to 10, the burden of the desert of the sea. Now, though not immediately apparent, the first prophecy is a judgment upon the city of Babylon, whose rise to power was still at this time very much in the future, and whose overthrow, prophesied here, was even further distant.

A previous burden upon Babylon had already been prophesied. If you were to turn back to chapter 13, you would see there the burden of Babylon, which Isaiah, the son of Amoz, did see, and so on throughout that chapter.

But here is another. The burden of the desert of the sea. Now, that appears initially to be a contradiction in terms. You know, how can you have a desert and a sea at the same time?

But in fact, it's a reference to the plain in which the city of Babylon was built. In ancient times, the Euphrates River simply spread over this whole flat plain area, like one gigantic marsh, a vast sea, one might say.

But an ancient Babylonian king dug, or arranged to be dug, a single deep channel, dammed up all the other little tributaries and streams and rivers which spread out from the Euphrates and caused it to run deep and strong in this one single channel that he had created.

[ 2 : 45 ] And this then, in turn, both acted as a defence for one side of the city. The river ran along one side, so he was defended on that side.

And it simultaneously turned the former sea, the widespread marsh, into a desert. Because it drained off all that land and focused it all in the single channel.

So we have the desert of the sea in that sense. And one reason how the Medes finally captured Babylon was that they broke the dams and the dikes holding in the Euphrates.

And so they flooded the plain again. And that caused the main channel to dry up, because it wasn't getting fed by all these tributaries and marshes and so on. So the main sort of channel dried up.

They were able to cross it, dry shod, and get into the city that way. And so take it and capture the city. The desert became a sea again.

[ 3 : 46 ] This is Babylon. That's what it's a prophecy about. And this prophecy, so far ahead of its time, was needful for the Israelites. Remember that in that, it came to pass until 150 years after the days of Isaiah.

Now, that would mean that if Isaiah had been prophesying something that was going to happen like this year, then he would have been doing it in like 1867 or thereabouts.

So it's that far away, that distant in terms of fulfilment. But it's so far ahead of its time, it's still needful, because it was important for God's people to understand the ultimate destiny of Babylon and have it repeated to them.

Because although Babylon was to become a vicious enemy and a great oppressor of Israel, she originally posed as a friend. And if you turn to chapter 39 in Isaiah, you'll see there how after King Hezekiah got sick, that representatives came from the king of Babylon to ask after his welfare and had to see who was okay, showed them all his treasure house and he showed them all his city and all his defenses and everything.

And at that time, remember, Babylon was just a very minor little kingdom. It was no threat to anybody. And this was just almost, you might say, with a scouting trip or just building up diplomatic relations.

[ 5 : 12 ] But Isaiah, at the end of that chapter, he warns Hezekiah and says, you've shown them everything. Now, the time will come when everything that you've shown these people will be carted off into Babylon in captivity.

It would be far in the future, but it would happen. And so Babylon posed initially as a friend, but it would in due course become a vicious enemy. And obviously parallels with the world and all its bedazzling powers and so on should be coming into our minds at this point.

The world poses as a friend, particularly to the Christian. It can sort of dazzle you into thinking, yeah, the world wants your friendship. Yeah, the world wants to respect you.

It wants you to respect them, of course. So if you become as much like the world as you can, then they will be your friend. And they will approve of you. And you won't be like these nasty, bigoted, fundamentalist kind of Christians.

You'll be a friend to the world. It'll be a friend to you. But really, all it wants is power over you. All that Babylon wants at the end of the day is to control Israel and the rest of its empire.

[ 6 : 16 ] It poses as a friend, but it becomes a vicious persecutor. And we see, even in our own land, the extent to which Christians are persecuted and marginalized and attacked or ridiculed, and so on, as we see in every suite of life.

And of course, the persecution is far more overt in other countries. But the message was that the Lord's people should be neither taken in by Babylon's friendship, nor afraid of her enmity, because her ultimate destruction had been decreed, and now, in this chapter, foretold.

The overthrow of Babylon came to pass in the days of Belshazzar, the king of Babylon. If you look at Daniel, chapter 5, then you see there the night in which Babylon fell. And what were they doing, of course?

They were feasting and eating and drinking and having a party right up to the last minute. So that describes the occasion in which Babylon fell. Far in the future from Isaiah's day.

But we see the parallels of the power of the world in Babylon. It poses as a friend. It becomes an enemy, but God has the measure of it from the very beginning. You shouldn't be either taken in by its friendship, nor fearful of it as an enemy, because it's destruction.

[ 7 : 30 ] It's final destruction of the world and everything in it. Peter has foretold us this, and the other apostles and so on, how this world is going to come to an end. The Lord has it all under his control.

The overthrow of Babylon did come to pass. And now, to us, it's like ancient history. But to the people then, it's far, far distant in the future. And we read it as a whirlwind.

As a whirlwind in the south pass through, so it cometh in the desert, from a terrible land. Whirlwind in the desert, like a sandstorm, you might say. So would the Medes and the Elamites that were described in verse 2.

You know, go up, O Elam, besiege, O Media. All the sighing thereof have I made to cease. They would come blazing through the land from their own deserts and their scorched rock mountains in what is now northern Iran.

That is where they originally came from. Their own was a terrible and inhospitable land, which was fierce to strangers and bred tough soldiers. The vision is fearful.

[ 8 : 33 ] It's dreadful even for an Israelite prophet to behold. It talks about the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously. This would, well, this would Babylon because it would be Babylon because it's how it dealt with others.

And this too would be her own downfall. Some translators have it. The treacherous dealer has found one who deals treacherously and the spoiler one who spoils.

Now again, this is what happens in the world. The kind of standards that it seeks to bring into its operation as it seeks to leave behind the Christian values of which our own society, for example,

was built, it begins to implode.

And the kind of tactics that are used initially against the old establishment or Christian ways of doing things, picking them apart and so on, that then gets done to them in time by others. Because when you've taken away all the restraints and all the values and all the God-based laws, what have you got left but effectively, you know, political cannibalism? That's what we've got just now and that's what was happening in these ancient days.

[ 9 : 40 ] One empire rises up, another empire comes and gobbles it up. You deal treacherously with one set of people, somebody else deals treacherously with you. Isaiah 33, of course, spells this out.

Woe to thee that spoilest! And thou wast not spoiled! And dealest treacherously! And they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled!

And when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee!

Now, ordinary history, secular history, tells us that two town court officers of the king of Babylon defected to the Median army and led them up the various streets and avenues straight to the place where Belshazzar, the king of Babylon at the time, was slain.

And the city was spoiled and plundered, even as Babylon had done to others. The sign which is made to cease, verse 2 there, is the sign of her captives, her slaves, her oppressed.

Psalms 12, verse 5, says, For the oppression of the poor, for the sign of the needy, now will come to rise, saith the Lord. I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

[ 10 : 54 ] Babylon was great, but nothing, not even brutality and oppression, lasts forever.

Eventually, you upset or you oppress so many people that others rise up against you.

Nothing lasts forever. No political power, no empire, no force, however great, lasts forever. And you can think of any of the great empires of the past, you can think of any of the great political powers, you can even see, you know, again, in our own country, it goes cyclically.

There are times when you think one party, oh, they're in an absolutely unassailable position, and then a few years later, they're down to nothing, and somebody else is up. And then other people take over again.

You know, just look at the political revolution, don't mean in terms of violent revolution, but revolutions in the sense of turning of the wheel. If you compare 20 years ago, 1997, the Labour landslide, and then later on, you've got Labour coming down with one seat in Scotland, same as the Toys, same as the Labour Gems, you have the SNP coming up, and then the SNP beginning to lose seats again as the others come back again.

So nothing lasts, whatever the different political powers, whatever the forces are the powers, and at the moment, America's the only world superpower we live, but Russia's coming back up again, China's another one.

[ 12 : 16 ] You know, nothing is lasting. No empire, no strength, no power is going to last permanently. Even brutality and oppression like that of Babylon and that of the Medes and the Persians and so on, it passes away.

The Roman Empire lasted for hundreds of years, it passed away. British Empire, it passed away. Nothing is going to last forever, however strong they may seem for a time. Only God is eternal.

And this is one of the reasons why this is being prophesied in advance to the Israelites, to let them see this little distant kingdom that is soon going to send messengers to your king.

They're going to rise up and become a great empire. They're going to oppress you. They're going to grind you down. They're going to burn your city to the ground. They're going to destroy Jerusalem. They're going to be the first people ever to seriously capture it and destroy it.

And they will completely take you into captivity and destroy you. But they won't last forever. They too will be destroyed and you'll be brought back again. Now, this, people would say, yeah, but Isaiah can't possibly prophesy this in advance.

[ 13 : 23 ] Skeptics will say, it must be written after the event. References in verse 2, as you see there, to Media and Elam, the Medes and the Elamites. We tend to think of them later on in Bible history as the Medes and the Persians.

But in fact, we have here proof of the authenticity, the genuineness of this prophecy as being from Isaiah in his time. Not some later forgery subsequently dubbed into the Old Testament as some liberal scholars would have us believe.

There are those who consider the detailed accuracy of Isaiah's prophecies to be just too much to swallow. It couldn't possibly be genuinely from Isaiah in his day.

He couldn't possibly have all these details which we later learn actually happened. And just pretending, somebody else should have done it just pretending to be from the pen of Isaiah. It must have been written after the event just pretending it was Isaiah. But if that were the case, the writer would think like us in terms of Medes and Persians.

[14:28] He wouldn't talk about Elamites in that sense. But in Isaiah's day the term Persians, a term which means horsemen, it's a sort of name applied to a nation focused on cavalry, was unknown.

These ancient peoples were referred to as Elamites until after the time of the exile to Babylon. And if you check, you'll notice that only the biblical, the only biblical references to Medes and Persians are in the exile prophets.

I mean, Daniel and Ezekiel and Esther, for example, those whose position in history is after the exile, after the fall, after they've been taken into Babylon and the Persians have taken over them. So they're the only ones that know about Persians, Isaiah doesn't know about Persians. He only knows about Elamites. Just to give you a wee example, a couple of years ago, some of you may have heard me use this example before, in which case I apologise, having a conversation with a Christian lady at the dinner table about somebody who'd been a missionary in Rhodesia. And two young Christian people at the table, perfectly intelligent, nothing wrong with their knowledge, looked at it as wide and said, where's Rhodesia? Now, for those of a certain generation, myself or older or whatever, you'll think, I did not know anything about Rhodesia once.

[15:46] They didn't know because it was like 35, 36 years since that country's name had been changed to Zimbabwe. They didn't know where Rhodesia was.

Now, people of my parents' generation would probably think mentally of it in terms of southern Rhodesia rather than Rhodesia itself because it's a different name for the same piece of land, different name from like the 1890s to the 1960s.

People of my own generation think in terms of Rhodesia, maybe then Zimbabwe, Rhodesia and also conscious of, yes, when it becomes Zimbabwe, well, we know what Rhodesia is.

They didn't know because their generation didn't even think in those terms because the name had changed. Likewise, if somebody were in the 1960s talking about Sri Lanka and you would think, well, why are they, what's that country they're talking about?

Because in the 1960s, it hadn't changed to Sri Lanka as Ceylon. Everybody talked about Ceylon.

That's where it was, like where the T comes from and so on. So all of these, they changed their names and their designations and the fact that Isaiah doesn't know about Persians indicates that he is talking in his own genuine period of history.

[17:00] The understanding, the terminology hasn't changed yet. He still thinks in terms of Elamites and also media and so on. This is indicative of the genuance of its prophecy in its day.

And we think, okay, well, fine, you've established that but what does it have to do with us? Look again at where the prophet is kind of thinking himself now, verses 3 to 5, into the position of the king of Babylon on the night when Babylon falls.

Pangs have taken hold of me. My loins are filled with pain. Pangs of the woman at Treveler. I was bowed down at the hearing of it. I was dismayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted.

Fearfulness affrighted me. The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me. Now, this is literally fulfilled in what happens to Belchis the night when Babylon falls.

Daniel chapter 5, verse 6. Then the king's countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another.

[18:06] And again, in verse 4, as we said, no, the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear. Surely this is true. But the king also in the night of the feast, he's having a party. He's bringing out all the gold cups.

They're feasting away and drinking their wine in all the cups of the Lord from his temple and all the other gods of their different countries of the empire. Mirth, gaiety, indulgence, intending when the time came to arise then and be ready to war.

You know, it says, the night is turned into fear. Prepare the table. Watch in the watchtower. Eat, drink, arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield. In other words, keep having your party, but when the alarm comes, when the time comes, then get up, then anoint the shield, then get ready your armor, and then be ready to meet the foe.

It's too late then. By the time the battle comes on you, you can't be preparing for it then. It's too late then to make sure that your shield is all well oiled and that your sword is sharp and so on. But that's what they're doing. Partying right up to the last minutes. The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear. Prepare the table. Watch in the watchtower. Eat, drink, arise, ye princes, anoint the shield when the time comes.

[ 19 : 21 ] But for now, let's just carry on with our party. This is the state in which Babylon was found. They were having mirth and gaiety and indulgence and feasting and tending when the time came.

Well then, then we'll be ready for war. Then we'll get ready. Just like the five foolish virgins who one day we said, oh, well, when the bridegroom comes, then we'll get oil for our lamps then. Then we'll make sure that we're all filled up.

Well, that won't be any used to. It'll be too late then. How many of us think like this? Like the king of Babylon here. When we see the signs, when we hear the alarm, then it's time enough to stir ourselves to seek the Lord.

For now, there's so much today. We've got, we've got partying to do. We've got things to enjoy. We've got a life. We want the world. We want the world and all its enjoyment and all its, all its good things.

And it's time and after, you know, if we, if we hear a thunder in this, in the east and we see the sign of the Lord in heaven, we'll quickly time then to go and start reading my Bible. Quickly time then to fall on my knees and pray for the Lord's forgiveness.

[ 20 : 24 ] No, there isn't. By the time you see the sign of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven. It's too late there. Then time has come to an end. We have to be ready beforehand.

Just like the Babylonian shuman ready beforehand. Just like we have to be ready beforehand. Yes, there's a place for a measure of eating and drinking and getting our strength, but we can't expect to live our lives right up to the wire as though this is not going to happen and then at the last minute say, okay, okay, let's all get ready now.

No, get ready now. Be ready now so that when it comes it will not take you unawares. We ourselves must be watchful upon the Lord's call.

This is what Jesus said in Mark's account of the gospel, chapter 13. Read from verse 32. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man. Know not the angels which are in heaven neither the Son but the Father.

Take ye heed, watch, and pray. For ye know not when the time is. For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey who left his house and gave authority to his servants and to every man his work and commanded the porter to watch.

[ 21 : 33 ] Watch ye therefore. For ye know not when the master of the house cometh at evening or at midnight or at the cock crowing or in the morning lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping and what I say unto you I say unto all watch.

Now that's the words of Jesus. What I say unto you I say unto all watch. It's not just the king of Babylon who's going to be caught out there when he sees the Elamites and the Medes coming against him.

It's not just them who can be foolish and think ah time to party time to eat and drink plenty of time plenty of security and safety. It says in Daniel chapter 5 that very night Belgezar was slain.

Jesus says in his parable about the rich fool you know thou fool this night thy soul shall be required of thee then who shall these things be which thou hast laid up for thyself.

So we see in verse 7 the watchman is set you see that the watchman sees a chariot he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen a chariot of asses and a chariot of camels and he hearkened diligently with much heat.

[ 22 : 41 ] Now perhaps more accurately where it says a chariot the word chariot can also be translated as a column of two a pair coming towards you two abreast the same term could be used either for that a column of two two abreast or for a chariot with two attending horsemen now doubtless the reference to horsemen remember how he said Persians means horsemen it could be a reference to those leading Cyrus of the Persians when the time came when that was fulfilled but another column two abreast of asses or mules as favoured by the Elamites they were great into their donkeys and mules and so on so this will be a symbolic viewing by the watchman seeing the mules or the donkeys the asses coming and then camels those favoured by the Medes it's a these animals are being taken as sort of symbolic of the nations just as if you think of if you ever see a

royal coat of arms you've got a lion on one side and a unicorn on the other what are these animals symbolic of the lion is symbolic of England the unicorn is symbolic of Scotland if somebody was to say oh well

I saw this there was this bed of earth and in this bed of earth there was four kinds of plants growing there was daffodils and there was shandlocks and there was thistles and there was roses now anyone would think oh yeah that's our four emblems that's the shamrock of Ireland the daffodils of Wales the thistles of Scotland the rose of England yeah that means our four nations that means something to do with the United Kingdom now somebody from completely elsewhere wouldn't think these plants associate these things but we would know we would say well these are the these are the particular emblems of our country so likewise in Isaiah's day the horsemen the asses the camels these indicate these particular nations the Medes the Elamites and almost certainly the Persian leaders at the front there so it's a clearer picture of the nationalities that will be involved in the invasion and the overthrow of Babylon and it could hardly be found all of this is far in the future it couldn't be clearer for the people of that day now when he says a lion my lord

I stand continually upon the watchtower a lion is renowned apparently biologically with very short eyelids they have short eyelids that don't you know don't come down that far over their eyeballs apparently maybe all cat groups do I don't know but because of their short eyelids they're taken often as a symbol of watchfulness that's one reason why you know you often get statues of lions symbolically guarding temples or important buildings the lions are facing outward couched or sitting up always awake you don't have statues of lions lying down asleep you've got them sitting up alert or watchful you know couched looking out guarding as it were because they are watchful short eyelids a watchful creature my lord a lion I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime and said in my word whole nights and behold here cometh a chariot of men with a couple of horsemen and he answered and said babylon is fallen is fallen now the couple of horsemen the chariot of horsemen again symbolizing the commander in chief coming into babylon itself once babylon is breached once its walls are breached it's kind of like breaching the hull of a ship breaching the titanic at the front nobody's going to be daft enough to say well it's okay it's just a wee hole at the front of the ship you know we're back we're fine here back at the stern once the hull is breached the water is going to come pouring in once the city wall is breached the enemy's going to come pouring in here cometh a chariot of men with a couple of horsemen he answered and said babylon is fallen is fallen repetition in the bible remember means emphasis jeremiah 51 verse 31 says one post shall run to meet another one messenger running to meet to catch up with another to show the king of babylon that his city is taken at one end once in the defence is effectively over it could be the charioteer who answers the prophet but most likely it is the lord himself saying babylon is fallen is fallen her useless idolatry is shown for what it is now the knowledge that babylon is taken as being symbolic of iniquity of sin of idolatry in general we find that of course in the new testament in revelation where you've got a repetition an echo of this very verse chapter 14 at verse 8 there followed another angel saying babylon is fallen is fallen that great city because she made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication because the city is punctured at one end it's no use the king saying that's okay

I'm at the other end I'm far away from where the damage is coming in no once they pour in it's only going to go one way now we have to in terms of spiritual terms defend ourselves on all sides against the evil but it's no use saying well almost all of my life is given to the lord but this wee bit here this wee bit isn't given to the lord this bit I'm keeping for myself that's where the devil will get in that is where his hordes will pour in his spirit will get in his attacks will be upon you the soft thunder belly where the lord is not guarding you where his armour of god is not protecting you because you have kept that bit from being brought under the sovereignty of god's protection now that is the danger for every one of us that we may think that well you know nine tenths of my life is given to the lord but this bit no I want to keep that for myself you know this much of the lord is for the lord this much this this and this I'll do the lord's way but this bit is going to be my way this bit is for me the devil is not going to attack the strong bit where the lord is in control he's going to attack the soft bit the easy bit where you are in control and that's where he will bring in his attacks that's where your wall will be breached that is where the enemy will come in like a flood

Babylon is fallen is fallen and all the graven images of our gods he had broken onto the ground Babylon is taken as being the mother of all idolatry if we think back to Genesis 11 the Tower of Babel and that's literally what Babel is a reference to Babylon it's the ancient name of Babylon the

Tower of Babel the essence of idolatry is not images and statues of gods and deities the essence of idolatry is to put man in the place of God I'll say that again the essence of idolatry is to put man in the place of God that was the temptation remember in the garden was it not oh you'll be like gods you eat of this fruit and you'll know everything God knows that's the temptation and when man gives in to that temptation then sin is in there and then the destructive process begins idolatry man seeking to be in the place of God and all false religion if you think about it you think of any kind of religion you can think of other than biblical

[ 30 : 19 ] Christianity and you will find that it focuses on the place so man that man has to be able to pay for his own sins and climb his way up to heaven he's going to be able to do the things do the good deeds pay the amounts and earn his salvation so he can say he's righteous at the end of the day how it's not fair if God should have this free grace of election because what about if we've done our best what about if I've done this this and this false religion will say yes do this do that do the next thing and you will get to God's heavenly paradise false religion puts man at the centre and the control centre of his own destiny true religion puts God at the centre of the heart the soul the life the experience of the universe true religion has God at the heart false religion idolatry puts man where God should be and it doesn't matter whether that false religion wears a supposedly

Christian face it doesn't matter whether it wears a pagan face or another world religion the end result is always the same put man at the centre instead of God that is the essence of idolatry all the rest all the statues of the false gods and all the fastings and pilgrimages and so on are just the inventions of men's evil hearts and empty heads to replace God with something else oh my threshing verse 10 the corn of my floor that which I have heard of the Lord of hosts the God of Israel have I declared unto you now in the first instance Isaiah is saying look I'm telling you what the Lord has told me to say that which the Lord of hosts the God of Israel has given me I declare to you now Paul makes the same statement if you think about every time we have the Lord's supper we take the authority from 1st Corinthians 11 and often many a minister begins at verse 23

I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread and so on Paul was stating I didn't make this up I received this from the Lord Jesus Christ himself that's why I'm telling you Corinthians that's why I'm telling the other churches and this is what Isaiah is saying I have heard of the Lord of hosts the God of Israel and I have declared it to you now when he says my threshing in the cord of my floor it sounds as though God has beaten his people with a threshing instrument and beaten them very low and certainly they are afflicted they are afflicted by beating threshed with the flailing rod till they lie bruised and crushed upon the floor so it sounds and so it may look particularly when you look at the level of persecution against Christians throughout the world and it doesn't matter who their enemy is it doesn't matter whether it's atheistic communism or whether it's

Buddhism or Hinduism or Islam or humanism in the west whatever it may happen to be they all have the same enemy wherever they are coming from they all have the same enemy and that same enemy is Christ and his people because the world instinctively recognize that which is not the world so yes you can say oh my threshing in the corner of my floor as if the Lord's people are getting battered and flailed and thrashed and so on and they are just lying bruised and broken on the threshing floor and certainly they are very afflicted but what is the Lord really saying here what is the end result when you have threshed the corner it means that what you have is no longer chuff it means that what you gather on the corner of the floor is pure corn the kernel the best of the wheat the farts of the wheat that is what the threshing produces the chaff is thrown up into the air and blown away all the excess is torn away that which endures the hard solid kernel that which is the finest of the wheat is that which is left when the

Lord has finished his threshing when he has finished the purifying like silver what he is really saying is that Israel the chosen of God the church of Jesus Christ in every age are made to become even if they wouldn't choose that threshing for themselves are the finest of the wheat they are God's chosen the carnals of the threshing floor as opposed to the chaffer that went this is spoken for their comfort he has declared what he will do the truth from the Lord's mouth as the prophet uttered as solemn and certain as the authority of God himself that which I have heard of the Lord of hosts the God of Israel have I declared unto you now it's not just about an ancient overthrow of an ancient empire father what applies to Babylon physically in the distant future in Isaiah as they soon became the distant past just as it is for us now the fall of

[ 35 : 42 ] Babylon is ancient history to us in physical times but the reality of Babylon in spiritual times its downfall is prophesied just as surely as physical Babylon's we read it there in Revelation Babylon is fallen it's fallen it is going to be overthrown just now it is still at war with the Lord's people just now the war is still going on but none of us can say we have not had warning this was the message for Isaiah as they were then so far in the future this is the message for our times the fulfillment may be well nigh upon us when God speaks he always speaks the truth that which I have heard of the Lord the host the God of Israel have I declared unto you he has revealed his very self and that is what he says if we go back again to the last book in the Bible when it prophesies the falling of the true Babylon the spiritual

Babylon how does that book the book of Revelation begin this is how it starts the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John who bear record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein for the time is at hand this is not just some dim and distant prophecy of a far away affliction or a far away conflict this is a prophecy for our time of the true Babylon of how it will be overthrown and how the Lord is revealing this to us and making it known to us and yes we may be threshed in the process but if he is giving us a threshing it is because he desires us to be the finest of the wheat at the last blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein for the time is at hand for the time is at hand