

Isaiah Chapter 13/ 2 Nephi 23

Isaiah's Words, [Old Testament/Book of Mormon Student Manual](#), [Micah's Additions](#)

1 The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

We learned in the previous chapters, of the Assyrian, as a history lesson, what do we learn? We learned that the burden of the Assyrian was taken off of Ancient Israel due to Babylon being a scourge to the Assyrian. As far as things to come we know that the Assyrian will cause problems even to the neck of New Jerusalem and once the anointing takes place the Lord will go on the offense. Babylon appears to once again take control or resume the reign over the Assyrian. This chapter starts off by identifying that the burden moving forward is that of Babylon, not the Assyrian. It's also interesting to note that Babylon refers to the world generally which might mean that the Assyrian was a local problem to just America and the New Jerusalem and when the Lord goes on the offense it's not just simply in the area around New Jerusalem it is worldwide.

2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones, for mine anger is not upon them that rejoice in my highness.

4 The noise of the multitude in the mountains like as of a great people, a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, the Lord of Hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle.

We have already identified that this "banner" or "ensign" is Joseph Smith, the 144,000 and the Church of the Firstborn are the "mighty ones" and "sanctified ones". Some erroneously claim that this is referencing all Latter-Day Saints, this is false. We learn clearly from the study of the previous chapters as well as D&C and other sources that the Lord visits His own church first in his anger. This event of the Lord visiting His church first, is identified in a multitude of ways, the most common of which is the wheat and the tares. Both are allowed to grow up together, side by side, in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, but eventually they will be separated in the Lord's anger. President Nelson in his April 2020 Ensign article stated, "The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1-7)." What is D&C 86:1-7? It is the Lord explaining the wheat and the tares. In Isaiah the Lord says his anger is not upon those who are with Him. He also refers to those people as "mighty ones" and "sanctified ones." These are the 144,000 and the Church of the Firstborn. Verse 4 above is Revelation 7:9-17:

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Once again, these verses confirm a number of things. 1. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Days Saints is visited first in the Lord's anger. 2. There is a period of great tribulation (D&C 88:91) in which the Church of the Firstborn, those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb are created. 3. The 10 tribes return and 12,000 from each tribe are chosen for the 144,000 (verses 1-8 of Revelation 7). 4. During this period of tribulation the Assyrian shows up and gets even to the neck of New Jerusalem. 5. The anointing takes place at New Jerusalem (verse 9 or Daniel 7:13-14 or D&C 88:92). 6. The 7th seal is opened and there is silence in heaven even for about the space of half an hour (Revelation 8:1, D&C 88:95) before the Great and Dreadful Day.

5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, yea, the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

To get a clear understanding of what is happening in this verse you need to once again reread D&C 88:91-95. Looking at the order of the events discussed above, rereading D&C 88:91-95, we learn that there is another event that takes place at or around the opening of the 7th seal (#6), and that is, "And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together" (D&C 88:93). Of the events leading up to and including this sign, what did Joseph Smith say? "There will be wars and rumors of wars, signs in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, the sun turned into darkness and the moon to blood, earthquakes in divers places, the seas heaving beyond their bounds; then will appear one grand sign of the Son of Man in heaven. But what will the world do? They will say it is a planet, a comet, etc. But the Son of man will come as the sign of the coming of the Son of Man, which will be as the light of the morning cometh out of the east" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p.286-287).

It's also explained in verse 5 that the Lord's coming (the Great and Dreadful Day) is made manifest by this sign when it says "yea, the Lord." It also says that the weapons of his indignation are coming from this same location, "the end of heaven." So where are the majority of the Lord's plagues and pestilences coming from at this point in time (ie. Wormwood)? Space ie. meteors, asteroid etc. including Wormwood. This leaves us with the question, who are the "they" that are coming as well from the "end of heaven"?

One of Joseph Smith's close associates, Wandle Mace, claimed that the Prophet said that this sign would be the return of the city of Enoch (cf. Moses 7:62–63). We have a quote from Joseph Smith recorded by Wandle Mace, "When Enoch and his city was taken away, a portion of earth was taken and would again be restored."

"I will introduce a poem upon this subject, by Sister E. R. Snow, as it was published in the Millennial Star 1851, pg. 272 entitled:

An Address to the Earth

Thou, earth, wast once a glorious sphere of noble magnitude,
And didst with majesty appear, among the worlds of God.
But thy dimensions have been torn asunder, piece by piece,
And each dismembered fragment borne abroad to distant space.

When Enoch could no longer stay amid corruption here,
Part of thyself was borne away to form another sphere.
That portion where his city stood He gained by right approved;
And nearer to the throne of God His planet upward moved.

And when the Lord saw fit to hide the "ten lost tribes" away,
Thou, earth, was severed to provide the orb on which they stay.
And thus, from time to time thy size has been diminished, till
Thou seemest the law of sacrifice created to fulfil.

The curse of God on man was placed: that curse thou didst partake,
And thou hast been by turns disgraced and honored for his sake.
The vilest wretches hell will claim now breathe thy atmosphere,
The noblest spirits heaven can name have been embodied here.

Jesus the Lord thy surface graced; He fell a sacrifice;
And now within thy cold embrace the martyred Joseph lies.
When Satan's hosts are overcome, the martyred princely rare,
Will claim thee their celestial home thy royal dwelling place.

A "restitution" yet must come, that will to them restore,
By the grand law of worlds, thy sum of matter heretofore.
And thou, O earth, will leave the track thou hast been doomed to trace

The Gods with shouts will bring thee back to fill thy native place.”

This poem also appeared in the early church hymnbooks but was eventually removed, not due to doctrine but hymnbooks change. This happens often, for example the hymn “Come Thou Font of Every Blessing” was in the hymnbook, was removed and is now coming back.

Joseph Smith when describing the sign was reported to have also said that while the wicked will not understand its true significance—attributing it to a natural cause—the righteous will know what it means. And the coming of the Son of Man will be like the dawning of the morning sun that moves along gradually from the east until it reaches unto the west. In a manner similar to the sun, this sign will be small at first but will gradually increase until it is “all in a blaze” and every eye sees it. (The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet, p.181)

So what have we learned?

1. The 7th seal is opened
2. The sign of the Son of Man appears, which is the city of Enoch returning
3. The sign will get brighter and brighter as it gradually approaches
4. When the silence in heaven ends the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord will occur. At such event, the Saints of God will be caught up from the earth (all living and dead) and will meet the people of the City of Enoch coming down. The world will be made whole and all telestial destroyed.

Does this jive with the scriptures? Yes. In Moses chapter 7:59 Enoch asks the Lord, “wilt thou not come again upon the Earth?” The Lord answers him in verse 60, “as I live, even so I will come.” The Lord then says but before the Great and Dreadful Day when the earth will rest, some events need to happen:

1. “The heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth: and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve.” (Moses 7:61)
2. “Righteousness will I send down out of heaven” (Moses 7:62) This is referencing Joseph Smith being resurrected
3. “Truth will I send forth out of the earth” (Moses 7:62) We know that Joseph Smith will call the 10 tribes home. The Lord here says that they will come forth “out of the earth.” Whether or not they will be literally coming from inside the earth or simply “being revealed” we don’t know. We do however know that they are to this day hidden and that they will be revealed.
4. “And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City...called Zion, a New Jerusalem.” (Moses 7:62) *Once again, this confirms that Joseph Smith has to return and that he is the righteousness spoken of because the New Jerusalem has not been built upon the American continent yet.
5. The people in the New Jerusalem prepare for the Great and Dreadful Day (Moses 7:62)

6. The Great and Dreadful Day occurs after the half an hour of silence. “And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other” (Moses 7:63)

6 Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, every man’s heart shall melt;

8 And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

9 Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

11 And I will punish the world for evil, and the wicked for their iniquity;...

All these verses make reference to the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord. We have just gone through the events at Adam-ondi-ahman, and New Jerusalem, the 7th seal has been opened, the “silence in heaven for half an hour” before the G&D day has begun, the sign of the Son of Man had appeared as a countdown and the “sanctified and mighty ones” (144,000) have been sent off into the world. During this time period (possibly 21 years) many events need to take place including the events in Old Jerusalem eg. Building temple, Battle of Armageddon etc. These verses in Isaiah convey the seriousness of the situation of the world; the sense of urgency, feeling of dread as the countdown to the G&D day of the Lord has began and the Day is nigh at hand. These verses constantly make use of the word “shall” or “cometh” all future tense.

11...I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay down the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

This is making reference to the time period discussed previously (Isaiah chapter 3) where plural marriage comes back into the Church. If you still are on the fence on believing that, here is another set of scriptures that deal with the “haughtiness” being humbled and righteous men being more precious than fine gold (ie. 7 women will cling to one man). The manual says this:

(14-7) Isaiah 13:11–12. What Was Implied by a Man Being More Precious Than Gold?

In chapter 13, verses 11–12, Isaiah repeats a refrain used earlier (see Isaiah 4:1), that righteous men will become as difficult to find as precious gold and will be treasured as highly. The wicked will be cleansed from the earth, and the worthy righteous will remain to become the precious jewels in the royal diadem of the Lord (see D&C 60:4; Isaiah 62:1–3). Indeed, the treasure of “the golden wedge of Ophir” (Isaiah 13:12), the rich, gold-producing province of India, is insignificant compared to the worth of one righteous man (compare D&C 18:10).

We've already discussed in the JST that Isaiah 4:1 was moved to the end of Isaiah 3 by Joseph Smith. The manual at this time clearly identifies the one man as a righteous man, once again confirming that plural marriage has come back for if the 7 women were righteous and the man was righteous and plural marriage was not legally instituted again this whole scenario doesn't make sense.

13 Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

14 And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up; and they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.

(14-8) Isaiah 13:13. What Was Meant by the Heavens Being Shaken and the Earth Being Removed?

The prophecy has a literal fulfillment in the latter days. All things are to be restored. The heavens will flee as the earth is brought back to a condition it once enjoyed. The earth will then receive its paradisiacal glory. Its paradisiacal glory is not to be confused with the celestial state that is the eventual destiny of this sphere; it is, rather, the millennial condition wherein all life will enjoy continual peace. (See Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Signs of the Times*, pp. 34–38.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “this earth will be rolled back into the presence of God, and crowned with celestial glory.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.181) This is obviously a progression with the earth potentially moving from its current position to the presence of God just as it moved from the presence of God out.

Abraham 5:13

“Now I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning.”

At the time of Adam and Eve in the garden, the earth was in a position next to God. After the Fall, the earth was put into a new heavens and a new earth. After the flood the earth received yet another new heavens and a new earth.

2 Peter 3:3-8, 12-13

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Job also describes the change of the heavens and the earth after the flood.

Job 26:5-14

5 Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.

6 Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

9 He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.

10 He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.

11 The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.

12 He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.

13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent

14 Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

At the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord the earth will receive a new heavens and a new earth, possibly even the same location pre-flood. After the Millennium the earth will be rolled completely back into the presence of God to the same location as pre-Fall.

Brigham Young taught: “This earthly ball, this little opaque substance thrown off into space, is only a speck in the great universe; and when it’s celestialized, it will go back into the presence of God, where it was first framed.” He also said, “this earth, when it fell, went millions of miles from the presence of God, and when it returns back it will go millions of miles from its present position to where it came from.”

15 Every one that is proud shall be thrust through; yea, and every one that is joined to the wicked shall fall by the sword.

16 Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished.

17 Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver and gold, nor shall they delight in it.

18 Their bows shall also dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare children.

19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

20 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

21 But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

22 And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her day shall not be prolonged. For I will destroy her speedily; yea, for I will be merciful unto my people, but the wicked shall perish.

(14-9) Isaiah 13:14–18. What Was Meant by the Medes Destroying Babylon?

Isaiah declared that as the Medes, those of the higher mountainous country above Babylon, would descend upon the worldly gem of the Euphrates and decimate it, so in a spiritual sense a higher power, not interested in wealth, would come upon the Babylon of the latter days and destroy its proud, its wicked, and its confederates (see 2 Nephi 23:15).

2 Nephi 23:13–22. Judgments Predicted for the Wicked

The Lord said, "I will be merciful unto my people [the righteous], but the wicked shall perish" (2 Nephi 23:22). Those who oppose the Lord will witness great devastation prior to and at the Second Coming. Those "joined to the wicked shall fall by the sword" (v. 15), and "their houses shall be spoiled" (v. 16). Their children and wives will also suffer greatly (see vv. 15–16). This is Isaiah's depiction of the great judgments that John the Revelator later saw (see Revelation 9, 11, 16–18). Remember that the name Babylon has both literal and spiritual meaning (see 2 Nephi 23:19–22). As is the case with many of Isaiah's prophecies, there is a dual fulfillment for this prophecy. Babylon became one of the most glorious cities of the world during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, around 600 B.C. It fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C. and began a long decline. By the time of Christ, Babylon was inhabited only by a few Jews exiled by Roman decree. A hundred years later it was totally desolate and has remained uninhabited to this day. Babylon is also the name for Satan's kingdom, or the world (see D&C 1:16). In the great judgments that will immediately precede the Second Coming, spiritual Babylon, also known as the church of the devil or the great whore of the earth (see 1 Nephi 14:10, Revelation 17:1–5), will be destroyed and remain in utter desolation during the Millennium.

What events in Revelation 9, 11, 16-18? The events surrounding Old Jerusalem. Isaiah's verses 15-22 go over the time period of Old Jerusalem, including the Battle of Armageddon.