

## QUOTATIONS

“The preceding section (chapters 6–12) painted a Zion-centred picture of history and the present chapters seek to justify this in the actual historical situation. In particular, the divine procedures for ordering history stated in 10:5–15 are demonstrated in practice. The whole cycle takes the principles, blessings and warnings of chapters 7–11 on to the next stage, in particular seeking to affirm that the Lord is really and truly ruling history and guiding it to his predetermined end. Throughout, Isaiah deals with the present, the impending and the eschatological. For example, in the Babylon oracle, although Babylon is addressed as a present power, the setting of the whole is eschatological (there are references to a gathering of the Lord’s forces [13:2–3], a universal objective [verse 5], the day of the Lord [verses 6–8] and cosmic as well as world-wide results [verses 9–11]). In case the remote should appear unreal, Isaiah offers an interim fulfilment for which people can watch and which, when they see it, will guarantee that the greater purpose will also come to pass. The interim fulfilment is the overthrow of Assyria, which is an earnest that the hand which mastered Assyria masters the earth (14:24–27)” (Motyer 1993: 135).

Concerning 14:1-2: “Although it may be tempting to interpret these promises as a description of the Israelites’ return from Babylonian captivity with the aid of the Persian king Cyrus, a reading of Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah demonstrates that this prophecy in Isaiah is talking about something far more wonderful than what happened in the post-exilic era. This prophecy should be connected to God’s grand eschatological transformation of the hearts of mankind (2:1–5; 11:10–16; 19:18–25), not a minor post-exilic fulfillment that failed to demonstrate the characteristics of welcoming foreigners into the community of Israel (Ezra 9–10; Neh 9:1–2; 10:28–30; 13:23–27). God wants his people to include foreigners in his kingdom, even those who had previously been their enemies. Later prophecies will expand on these eschatological hopes (45:14–17; 49:22–23; 60:1–8; 61:5–7; 66:20)” (Smith 2007: 307).

“The *yom YHWH* describes not a twenty-four-hour day but rather a period of time in which God works his purposes in a particularly distinctive way in the heavens and on earth. The day of the Lord includes three elements, though different elements are stressed in various usages: God’s judgment against unbelievers, the cleansing and purging of God’s people, and the salvation of God’s people” (Beyer 2007: 98-99).

## ISAIAH 13: THE DAY OF THE LORD

### OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 13-14

- A. The Day of the Lord (Ultimate Judgment on Ultimate Babylon) (13:1-16)
- B. Immediate Judgment on Present Babylon (13:17-22)
- C. The Messianic Kingdom of Israel (14:1-2)
- D. Ultimate Judgment on Ultimate Babylon (14:3-23)
- E. Immediate Judgment on Present Assyria (14:24-27)

### ISAIAH 13 AND JOEL 2

Isaiah	Joel
day of the Lord is near (13:6)	day of the Lord is coming (2:1)
on a bare hill raise a signal (13:2)	sound an alarm on my holy mountain (2:1)
my mighty men to execute my anger (13:3)	a great and powerful people (2:2)
they will be in anguish like a woman in labor; they will look aghast at one another (13:8)	peoples are in anguish; all faces grow pale (2:6)
the sun will be dark at its rising and the moon will not shed its light (13:10)	the sun and the moon are darkened (2:10)
I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken out of its place (13:13)	the earth quakes before them; the heavens tremble (2:10)
the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light (13:10)	the stars withdraw their shining (2:10)

Concerning 13:6: “*Near (qārôḇ)* is ‘close by’ rather than ‘imminent’. It speaks not of necessary proximity in time or necessary tarrying but of the total preparedness of that day to dawn whenever the Lord declares that the time has come” (Motyer 1993: 137-38).

## REFERENCES TO THE “DAY OF THE LORD”

Isaiah 13:6 “Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come!”

Isaiah 13:9 “Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it.”

Isaiah 58:13 “If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;”

Jeremiah 46:10 “That day is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge himself on his foes. The sword shall devour and be sated and drink its fill of their blood. For the Lord God of hosts holds a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.”

Ezekiel 13:5 “You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of the Lord.”

Ezekiel 30:3 “For the day is near, the day of the Lord is near; it will be a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations.”

Joel 1:15 “Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.”

Joel 2:1 “Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near,”

Joel 2:11 “The Lord utters his voice before his army, for his camp is exceedingly great; he who executes his word is powerful. For the day of the Lord is great and very awesome; who can endure it?”

Joel 2:31 “The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.”

Joel 3:14 “Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.”

Amos 5:18 “Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is darkness, and not light,”

Amos 5:20 “Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?”

Obadiah 15 “For the day of the Lord is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head.”

Zephaniah 1:7 “Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests.”

Zephaniah 1:8 “And on the day of the Lord’s sacrifice— “I will punish the officials and the king’s sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire.”

Zephaniah 1:14 “The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there.”

Malachi 4:5 “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.”

Acts 2:20 “the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.”

1 Corinthians 5:5 “you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

1 Thessalonians 5:2 “For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.”

2 Thessalonians 2:2 “not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.”

2 Peter 3:10 “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.”

## A DIFFERENT, BUT COMMON, VIEWPOINT

“God will defeat his enemies on every occurrence of the Day of the Lord. When God wipes out a nation for its sin, the Day of the Lord happens for that group of people. Amos 5:20–21 predicts the coming Day of the Lord for the nation of Israel, which happened when it was defeated in 721 BC. Zephaniah 1:14–18 describes the Day of the Lord for Judah, which eventually took place when the Babylonians destroyed the city of Jerusalem in 587/586 BC. At the end of human history the final Day of the Lord will take place when God defeats all his enemies, sets up his glorious kingdom, and reigns over this world as King” (Smith 2007: 297).

## SOURCES CITED

Bryan E. Beyer, *Encountering the Book of Isaiah*, 2007.

J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 1993.

Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, New American Commentary, 2007.