

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Part 2

Last week, we looked at the use of **Isaiah 7-12** in the first narrative of the Gospel of Matthew (**Matt. 1-4**). In **Matthew 16:13-28**, we see another prophecy from Isaiah (**Isaiah 22:15-25**) that has applications to Jesus and His purpose on earth.

The prophecy in **Isaiah 22** is against Jerusalem, especially those with a fatalistic attitude that if Assyria is going to take them, then they might as well have a big party before the end comes (**v.12-13**). They lacked fear of God and did not believe in a resurrection. Paul quotes this in **1 Corinthians 15:32** and applies it to others who do not believe they will be raised. Shebna, who held a similar position in Judah's government that Joseph did in Egypt's government many years earlier, is singled out. He used his access to wealth and power to prepare a tomb that would rival that of the kings of Judah (going out in style!—**v.16**). He was not a faithful steward for Jerusalem, so he would be removed (**v.19**) and die in a foreign land (**v.18**).

The prophecy warns Shebna that his official robe and sash would be placed upon Eliakim. He would be given authority to be properly used as a father over Jerusalem (**Isaiah 9:6**). The key to the house of David would be placed on his shoulder (**Isaiah 9:6** again!). With this key, only he could open and shut without anyone able to oppose or overrule his actions (see **Revelation 3:7**). He would be like a tent stake necessary for holding up the tent, and this stake would also be a seat of honor (or throne) for his father's house. The tent stake becomes a peg in the wall where many valuables of the house would normally hang (but here all vessels would be supported). The peg would suddenly be cut off, along with the burden he was bearing.

His replacement would be Eliakim ("raised up by God"). God says, "*In that day I will summon **My servant Eliakim**...*" The meaning of his name and the identifying description as the servant of the Lord points to Jesus.

Eliakim did become the steward and Shebna had been demoted to scribe by Hezekiah's fourteenth year (**Isaiah 36:1-3**). Shebna represented the Jewish leaders who would use their authority for their own advantage instead of righteousness (**Luke 11:52, Matt. 23:13-14**). Jesus is the **Servant** of the Lord to bear our sins (**Acts 3:26, Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:21-25**) and was "*raised up*" (**Acts 3:13-15**).

Matthew 16 contains a discussion of the necessity of Jesus fulfilling this purpose of God (**v.21-28**). Immediately preceding this discussion, Peter made the "good confession" that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (**v.16**). Jesus' response was His promise to build His church on "*this rock*." (**v.18**) Jesus also said that the **gates** of Hades would not prevail against it (an allusion to His resurrection—**Rev. 1:18**—the **gates** of Hades could not prevail, or hold Him in, because He had the **keys**!). Then He promised to give Peter the **keys** of the kingdom of heaven (**v.19**). Whatever he loosed or bound will have been loosed or bound in heaven. This is reminiscent of **Isaiah 22:22**, which is quoted in **Rev. 3:7** and applied to Jesus' authority. Obviously, He would delegate His authority to Peter. Later, the same authority was delegated to all the apostles (**Matt. 18:18**).

We can see the foretelling of the exaltation of Christ in **Isaiah 22:23-24**. He did become the One with all preeminence (tent peg of the tent, chief cornerstone of the temple, support of all the glory of His father's house, king [occupant of the **throne**] of the kingdom). This glory and preeminent position is based upon the foundation of God **raising up** Jesus.

Even the suffering of Christ is foretold. The same peg of honor would be cut off and fall, along with what He bore. Jesus the Messiah, or Christ, was "cut off" as Daniel prophesied (**Dan. 9:26**). What He bore when He died was also cut off—our sins (**1 Peter 2:24**).

I do believe there is an earlier, limited, physical fulfillment of **Isaiah 22:24-25**. The glory of Eliakim's family would end when Jerusalem would eventually fall into judgment by the hands of the Babylonians. However, this prophecy points ultimately to Jesus as the antitype of Eliakim. He bore our sins in His body when He was on the cross, and He removed the cloud of guilt for our sins when He died (**Romans 8:3**). Then He was raised and rules on His throne in heaven. We can be free from our sin when we are baptized into His death (**Romans 6:3-7**).