

God and the Nations

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 November 2011

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Isaiah chapter 13. We're going to read the entire chapter. An oracle concerning Babylon that Isaiah, son of Amos saw. Raise a banner on a bare hilltop. Shout to them, beckon to them to enter the gates of the nobles.

I've commanded my holy ones. I have summoned my warriors to carry out my wrath. Those who rejoice in my triumph. Listen, a noise on the mountains like that of a great multitude. Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms like nations massing together.

The Lord Almighty is mustering an army for war. They come from faraway lands, from the ends of the heavens, the Lord and the weapons of his wrath to destroy the whole country.

Wail, for the day of the Lord is near. It will come like destruction from the Almighty. Because of this, all hands will go limp. Every man's heart will melt. Terror will seize them.

Pain and anguish will grip them. They will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other. Their faces aflame.

[1:15] See, the day of the Lord is coming. A cruel day with wrath and fierce anger to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it.

The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. I will punish the world for its evil. I will punish the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless.

I will make man scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. Therefore, I will make the heavens tremble and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the Lord Almighty and the day of his burning anger.

Like a hunted gazelle, like a sheep without a shepherd, each will return to his own people. Each will flee to his native land. Whoever is captured will be thrust through. All who are caught will fall by the sword. Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes.

Their houses will be looted and their wives ravished. See, I will stir up against them the meads who do not care for silver and have no delight in gold. Their bows will strike down the young men. They will have no mercy on infants, nor will they look with compassion on children.

[2:42] Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians pride will be overthrown by God. Like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations.

No Arab will pitch his tent there. No shepherd will rest his flocks there. But desert creatures will lie there. Jackals will fill her houses. There the owls will dwell and there the wild goats will leap about. Hyenas will howl in her strongholds. Jackals in her luxurious palaces. Her time is at hand and her days will not be prolonged. Well, today we begin a new section of Isaiah's book.

So far we have been in a section often referred to as the book of Emmanuel because it's filled with prophecies that pointed us ahead to the coming of God's own son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, Savior, who had come from the line of David and would save his people from their sins.

And so we've just finished that section from chapters 1 through 12. And that section ended with that fitting song of praise that we had in chapter 12.

[3:59] Praise for so great a salvation. So today we begin to study the next section from chapter 13 of Isaiah through 23. And we might entitle it God and the nations.

God and the nations. Because over the next 11 chapters, one by one, the nations are shown to be under God's judgment. Starting with Babylon in the east that was just read for us.

And ending with Tyre in the west. Including Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Syria, Cush, Egypt, Edom, Arabia. Some 10 nations surrounding Judah are all found guilty.

And their destruction is portrayed in vivid terms just as you have heard read. God. That's the common theme throughout these 11 chapters that we're starting today.

God judging the nations. Now if you want a verse by verse study of these 11 chapters, there are commentaries that will do that for you.

[5:06] I'm not going to do that. I'm afraid if I spent the next three months preaching through these chapters, you would be all judged out by the end of one or two months of that.

Some can do that with profit. I'm afraid I could not. So my plan is going to be to treat this whole section together. They're all about the same thing.

God's judgment upon these nations. And I want to draw out of this 11 chapters lessons and principles that we can learn from and that we'll see apply to us.

I don't want you to think because we're taking this tact that these 11 chapters are unimportant. They are God's word. They are profitable.

Every one of them. And indeed, they draw out some of the lessons that are at the very heart of Isaiah's message throughout his book.

[6:07] So I want you to read through these chapters and read on them on your own. Chapters 13 through 23. You can do so in about 30 minutes.

But we will be drawing lessons then in a topic away from these chapters. So the nations, God and the nations. We need to start by realizing that out of all the nations of the world, God chose one nation to be his own special people.

Didn't mean that everybody in that nation was saved and went to heaven. Not at all. Never think that or you'll be deceived. Rather, it simply means that God chose Israel, which was the family of Abraham that grew and grew until it reached the size of a nation down in Egypt as slaves there. And so the Lord chose them, not because they were larger or more righteous or for any reason found in them. Just because he showed grace to this nation, he chose them to be his nation in a covenantal relationship with them.

That simply means he said of this nation, I will be your God and you will be my people. Now, God had that special relationship with no other nation on the earth.

[7:34] He has had that relationship with no other nation. And it was Israel that he entered into that covenant relationship with. Now, that meant there were certain privileges and responsibilities that were theirs in a special way.

He gave them the special promises, the greatest of which was that through their nation, a savior would one day be born to save his people from their sins. So Jesus would come.

The Messiah would come through this chosen nation. He gave them his word. He gave them his laws to keep. And demanded their exclusive loyalty and love and worship.

To remain in covenant with him. And he said, if you obey, there will be certain blessings of the covenant that will fall on your nation. But if you disobey and break the covenant, you will reap the curses of the covenant as a nation.

Well, they broke covenant with God. They worshiped other gods, other idols. And so they came under the curses of that covenant relationship.

[8:42] And that's why the first 11 chapters of Isaiah have been filled with so many judgments against Israel and Judah. They were unfaithful. They get the curses of that covenant that was made with God.

Now, the focus of the Old Testament revelation. You think about all that's found in our Old Testament. The focus of it all is upon this special nation of Israel.

In other words, the Old Testament doesn't give equal press time to all the nations. Just to read the Old Testament is to see that it's on the face of things.

You don't know as much about what happened in Babylon as you do what happened in Israel. No, Israel is the one who receives the spotlight in Old Testament revelation.

So that raises a question. Well, what about these other nations then? What about all the other nations of the world that do not have that special relationship with God that Israel had?

[9:44] How do they relate to God? Do they have any relationship with God? And if so, what is it? Isaiah will answer these questions in the next 11 chapters, at least some of them.

Now, these surrounding nations, the surrounding nations were a continual threat to Israel. To God's chosen nation. They were a source of temptation to them.

To fear and to anxiety. They were a source of temptation to compromise and to become like them. They were a test of Israel's faith. To see where they would put their trust.

With all the nations threatening around them. Where would they turn to for help? Would they turn to just another one of the nations? To come and help them against another nation? Or would they go to God? And trust in Him. To be their help and their salvation. Is God greater than all these nations?

[10:46] That's a question. Can He deliver us from these nations' threats? And their superior military power? Is God trustworthy? Is it enough just to put our trust in our God?

Without the aid of other nations? Is God truly sovereign and in control of history? If other nations defeat His nation?

And are the idols of these conquering nations greater than the God of Israel who is conquered by them? Well, these were questions crying out for answers in the minds of God's people in the 7th and 8th century before Christ.

And God's word through Isaiah answers them as we look then at God and the nations. And what we'll find is that these are not irrelevant questions and answers for us today.

So let's begin. And as I do, I want to give the big lesson of the next 11 chapters. It's this. Israel's God is the Lord of the nations.

[11:56] He's the Lord of the nations. The Lord reigns. And it's not just over Israel that He reigns. No, He reigns over Babylon and Assyria and Egypt and Edom and Moab.

Indeed, He reigns over all the nations of the world. So that's the point that's hammered home in the next 11 chapters. Indeed, until we get to the end of Isaiah's book.

Now, this truth that the Lord, Israel's God is Lord of the nations is seen in different ways. We're going to notice two this morning. We can see that Israel's God is Lord of the nations in the first place because He judges all the nations.

He judges all the nations. Just to read these chapters. We read the first one today. Chapter 13 is to be confronted with this reality over and over.

God judged the Babylonians. And we're going to see He judges all these nations. So though the other nations did not have the same relationship with God as Israel did, yet they're still accountable to Him.

[13:09] They're still under His power and His reign and His control. Their destinies were in His hands and He was their judge.

Now, to think of Israel's God as being Lord over all the nations, well, that was a big pill to swallow. In the first place, because Israel was an insignificant nation in the eyes of the nations.

Who are they? Well, they're just a handful of people descended from Abraham. And yes, they're growing, but they were a weak nation. And the other thing that made it hard to believe was that was the whole way that the nations looked at spiritual things.

The prevailing view of the spiritual world was that each nation and locality had their own gods. It'd be kind of like the mascots of each school today being the gods.

So in Bremen, the lion god ruled, but he only ruled here at Bremen. And in Warsaw, the tiger god ruled, but he only ruled there.

[14:23] And in Napani, the panther god ruled. And you get the idea that each locality had their own gods and he ruled over those localized dominions.

And so it was thought that Israel's God, Yahweh was his name. We're not sure how to pronounce it, but all caps, L-O-R-D, the Lord. Yahweh was just like one of these other localized nationalistic gods.

That he ruled there in that little parcel of ground called Palestine over his people Israel. And then when they divided into Israel to the north and Judah to the south, he ruled over them.

But that's all he is. Just one of the many gods. Now, those who made the mistake of thinking Yahweh was just the little nationalistic god of Israel often had to learn the hard way that that wasn't so.

That indeed he is lord over all the nations, not just this one nation that he's drawn into special relationship with him.

[15:28] So consider three of these ten nations that are mentioned in the next 11 chapters. The way that it is seen that God is in control and lord over them is seen in the way that he judges them all.

Consider Egypt, the Philistines and Assyria. First of all, Egypt. You remember, they held Israel in slavery for many years. And Moses and Aaron were called by God to go to Egypt's Pharaoh and to

say to him, This is what the Lord, Yahweh, the God of Israel says.

Yes. So you have the God of Israel speaking now to another nation, to Egypt. Let my people go.

Well, how do the nations think of Israel's God?

Well, listen to what Pharaoh said. Who is the Lord? That that I should obey him and let Israel go. I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go.

Pharaoh, he may be your God, but he's certainly not my God. So I don't have to answer to him. I can safely dismiss him and ignore him and his commands.

[16:41] So Pharaoh gets a crash course in who Israel's God is and why he should obey him. Ten lessons, ten plagues of judgment from the Lord.

He is Israel's God, but he is God over all the nations, Egypt included. And none can safely ignore him and his commands.

He's judge of all the earth. And then there were the Philistines and they had their God, Dagon. And so when the Philistine army won a great battle over Israel, killing 30,000 of them and capturing the Ark of the Covenant, that little box where God's special earthly presence dwelt in the midst of his people, they captured the little box as well as destroying 30,000 Israelites.

They took the little Ark of the Covenant and they put it in their temple to Dagon. And there stood the idol Dagon, the Philistine idol, and they put the box at his feet.

What were they saying? They're saying our God is stronger than your God. We have our God. You have your God. We won. Our God is stronger than your God.

[18:01] Well, in the morning, they found Dagon had fallen flat on his face before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of Israel. Oh, it created quite a stir in the temple of Dagon.

They propped him back up and dusted him off and saying again, Our God is greater than your God. In the morning, the same thing had happened.

Only this time, he fell so hard, he broke his hands and head off of his body. And so he shattered there before the Ark of the Lord of the God of Israel.

And then thereafter, they said, Let's get him out of here. And they got the box out of the temple to Dagon. And wherever they took the Ark of the Covenant of the God of Israel, people started dying of a plague.

Finally, they said, Send it back to Israel. We cannot live with this Holy One of Israel. Well, they learned that God is not just God of Israel.

[19:03] He's God over the Philistines as well. He's Lord of all the nations. And so then there was Assyria. And all these nations are listed in the next 11 chapters as you read through.

And Assyria, you remember, was an instrument that God picked up to chastise his people Israel. When they were disobedient to God's covenant, he raised up the Assyrians as the rod of his anger to come and to chasten Israel.

And so they came down into Israel. They took the whole northern kingdom and destroyed it and took them off into captivity. And then they continued to sweep on down south into the nation of Judah.

And they took many of their cities along the way. And they came right to the walls of Jerusalem, the capital of Judah. And there the commander of the Assyrians starts to threaten Jerusalem.

And he shouts to the Israelites, shaking his fist. Do not let Hezekiah, your king, mislead you when he says that the Lord will deliver us.

[20:17] Has the God of any nation ever delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim?

Have they rescued Samaria from my hand? Who of all the gods of these countries has been able to save his land from me? How then can Yahweh deliver Jerusalem from my hand?

Well, this field commander is right in that they were on a roll. And wherever they went, the great Assyrians were just winning and conquering people after people along with their idols.

But the Assyrians made the fatal mistake of assuming that Israel's God was just as impotent as the gods of the nations. They saw them all as just in the same category.

He's just one of the many gods. We defeated all of them. He'll be no different. Don't trust in him.

Well, the Assyrians learned the hard way.

[21:23] And we'll see that later on in the book of Isaiah when we come to chapters 36 and 37.

They learned that he is indeed not like the gods of all the nations, made of wood and stone.

He's the only true and living God. And he not only rules over Israel, his special people, he rules over the Assyrians. And with a wave of his hand, they can be wiped away.

Whether or not these nations acknowledged him as God, he still is God.

Now, this critical lesson then is pounded home in these 11 chapters of God's judgment upon one nation after another. It's a lesson that every nation of the world needs to learn and learn well, not the least of which is our own nation.

No one, no nation, no individual in a nation can safely dismiss the Lord as if he is irrelevant to them.

[22 : 32] Yet nothing is more common today. Nothing is more common today. So today we have God's people, not the nation over in Palestine.

No, the nation of God now is his church. You are that holy nation. You are that chosen people. First Peter chapter two tells us. And so we have the church.

And where is she? She's scattered among the nations. And so we go to the nations with the word of our Lord. And what do we tell them? We say to the nations, the Lord reigns.

He will judge the peoples with equity. Psalm 96:10. And we're telling people our God reigns. He doesn't just reign over us.

He's his people. He reigns over the whole earth and he'll show it by judging every individual. That has ever lived. Jesus is Lord.

[23 : 31] All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him. He's the living God. He reigns. And his laws are to be obeyed. His gospel is to be believed.

He is judge of the whole earth. The father has committed all judgment to him. And you need to confess your sins to him. You need to repent from going your own way.

You need to come back and tell God what you've done in sinning against him. You were made for him. And you're living for yourself. And you need to repent and believe on him to save you from your sins.

Plead for his mercy. Trust in his grace. And what are we being told? Well, that's fine for you. That's good for you.

I mean, if you're into Jesus and you believe in him, well, good for you. But I don't believe in him. I'm not into him. He's not my God.

[24 : 31] It's just not my thing. If that's your truth, follow it. Good for you. But it's not my truth. I'll follow my truth. And that is to dismiss him.

Just like Pharaoh and the Philistines and the Assyrian commander did. Oh, he's Israel's God, but he's nothing more. It's to forget him.

It's to live your life like he doesn't even exist. Just go on your way. Isn't that what we see? Isn't that what we meet with? But, you know, he doesn't go away.

He's still God. And he's not only God over his people. He's God over all the earth, over all the nations. And they will face him in judgment. Because, you see, he made you.

He made you. And therefore, he has authority over you. He has the right to give you commands, to tell you how to live. Don't do this and do this. Why? Because he made you.

[25 : 37] And he made all the nations of the world out of one man that he made, Adam. And so he has the right to command nations. Don't do this. Do this. Live this way, not that way.

You were made to give thanks to God. And to live for his glory, not your own. You live on his estate. Every day you eat his food.

Every day you breathe his air. Every day you walk on his earth. Every day you receive blessings from him. And he expects you to worship him and to thank him. And to serve him.

To obey him. And one day he'll judge you. And what you've done with his commands. And what you've done with his gospel.

And what you've done with his gifts. What you've done with your life that he gave you. And he will assign to all men their eternal destinies of heaven or hell.

[26 : 37] And to him every knee will bow and every tongue confess. That Jesus Christ is Yahweh. Is Lord. To the glory of God the Father.

He's Lord of the nations. Now these 11 chapters in Isaiah show that. Because they'll show us page after page.

He judges the nations. He has that authority. He's Lord. Chapters 1 to 11 are filled with his judgments upon his own covenant people Israel.

And Judah. Chapters 13 to 23 are his judgments upon the surrounding nations of Israel. And chapter 24 is his judgment upon the whole earth.

God sending a message loud and clear to his world. I am Lord of the nations.

[27:41] The wicked shall be turned into hell. And all the nations that forget God. Not just Israel. America.

Egypt. Iraq. Iraq. All the nations. That forget God. So Isaiah is saying.

Judgment indeed begins with the. The household of God. The family of God. But it doesn't end there. God's judgment begins. Chapters 1 to 11.

With the family of God. The chosen people of God. But it doesn't end there. It spills out into the nations. And eventually. To the whole earth. So Peter.

Says. It's time for judgment. To begin with the family of God. And if it begins with us. What will be the outcome for those who do not obey. The gospel.

[28:38] Of God. And if. It's hard for the righteous to be saved. What will become of the ungodly. And the sinner. If God didn't spare.

His favored nation. Israel. From judgment. Why do you think. Oh nation. That he will spare you. Whoever you may be.

He is Lord. Overall. Indeed. The resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sends the same message. According to Paul. In chapter. Acts. Or chapter. 17.

Of Acts. Paul says. From one man. He made. Every nation of men. That they should inhabit the earth. And God now commands. All men everywhere.

To repent. For he has set a day. When he will judge. The world. With right. With justice. By the man. He is appointed. And he's given proof of this. To all men.

[29:32] By raising him from the dead. You see. The resurrection of Jesus. From the dead. Put a world on notice. That judge Jesus. Is alive and well.

He's coming. You'll stand before him. You thought he was dead and gone. He's alive. He's the true living God. And all judgment is given to him.

It's the message of Isaiah. It's the message. Of. The apostle Paul. The Lord's. Spokesman. God. Is Lord and judge.

Over all the nations. Now that's a. That's a lesson. That the nations. Need to learn. And every person. In those nations.

But it's also a lesson. That the Lord's people. Need. To learn. Afresh. Because after all. Though these prophecies. Are all about. These nations.

[30:28] Surrounding Israel. Who is this letter sent to? It's sent to God's people. That's how we have. Isaiah wrote this. And. And sent it.

To Judah. So that she could read. About God's judgment. About. Upon all these nations. This is a message. For God's people. As well as for the nations. Of the earth.

These chapters. Are first of all. For her benefit. Who. While she's wondering. Can God deliver us. From all these. Mighty nations.

Around us. Who are often. Attacking and pillaging us. Can he deliver us? Can he keep his promise. To restore us. Into a great people.

And a great nation. As he said. Right. So it's not just the nations. Of the world. That have this problem. Of thinking small thoughts. About God. Always just the. The little God of Israel.

[31:23] No. God's own people. Have that problem too. Of thinking that their God. Is just a little God. And that's why Judah. Was fearing the nations.

That's why she's turning. To. Assyria. Come and save us. From these other two nations. She's trusting in nations. To try. To save her. From other nations.

Why? They don't see God. For as big as he is. As Lord. Over all the nations. They're thinking too highly. Of the nations around them. And not highly enough.

Of God. So Isaiah. Is showing. The greatness of. Of their God. Against the smallness. Of the nations. Around them. Well you come to chapter 40.

You'll get it. Full blast. What are the nations. Compared to him. Well that's. That's where he's going. But he starts it here. In these 11 chapters. God announces. He's going to destroy. All these.

[32:17] Enemies of Israel. Around them. These nations. Will be brought down. To nothing. They'll be reduced. To a place. Where there's. Hools. Or hoots.

And howls. From wild animals. No one living there anymore. And so. If God. Rules over. And judges. And is Lord. Over all the nations. How foolish it is. To fear them. How foolish it is. To fear them. And how foolish it is. To put our. Our trust. In other nations. When we have the Lord. Of all the nations. To trust in. That's his message. So trust in the Lord. At all times. You people. He'll say later on. In chapter 51. I. This is God. Talking to his people. I. Even I. Am he. Who comforts you. Who are you. That you fear mortal men. The sons of men. Who are but grass. That you forget the Lord. Your maker. [33:09] Who stretched out the heavens. And laid the foundations. Of the earth. That you are. That you live in constant terror. Every day. Because of the wrath. Of the oppressor. Who is bent on destruction.

Have you forgotten me. That you live in such fear. Of this man. Who's nothing but grass. And I breathe on him. And he's gone. In a moment. So. Stop trusting in man. Who has but a breath. Up his nose. Chapter 222. And now again. The lesson. Stop fearing men. Who are nothing more. But grass. And a blast. From the Lord's nostrils. Will bring them to nothing. So we need to see. That it's the Lord. Who is ruling over the nations. And judging them. Yes. We have the same problem. Problem. That. Israel had. The same problem. That the nations had. [34:07] We think too little. Of our God. Our thoughts of God. I thought of this. Were. Are something like. Pizza dough. Have you made pizza lately?

Pizza dough. Like. Our thoughts of God. Keep shrinking. Do you know what I mean? You've got the. The wad of dough. And you put it on a well flowered. Countertop. And you take the. The instrument. The rolling pin. With both hands. And. And you start to flatten it. And what happens as soon as you lift it up. It. It shrinks back. And you got to keep pushing it out. More and more. It keeps shrinking back. So you keep applying fresh pressure. And. Eventually. You get it the size of your pan. I say our thoughts of God. Have a tendency. To keep shrinking. And we look around us. And we see the things that threaten us. And we get to being fearful. And we start thinking. Should I trust in this. [35:04] Then. Or that thing. Or this thing. Instead of seeing our God. For who he is. And so we need. The rolling pin of scripture. Constantly.

In touch with us. Stretching our minds out. To see just how big our God is. That we don't fear. Men. And nations. And neither do we trust. Men. And nations. Our. Men. Our leaders. Our nation. No. We trust in the Lord. That's where our hope comes from. From. And so not only. Does it need to be said. Among the nations. The Lord reigns. But we need to say it. To ourselves. Say among the nations. Yes. Say it to yourself. People of God. The Lord reigns. The Lord reigns. So that's the first. [36:00] Thing that we see. The Lord reigns. Over the nations. As seen. And is judging the nations. But also. And more briefly. We see it. Through his plans. His plan.

Controls. And shapes. The history of nations. Not only does he judge nations. But his plan. Controls. And shapes. The history of nations. Look at Isaiah. Chapter 14. And verse 24. This is the God of Israel. Yahweh Almighty. The Lord Almighty. Has sworn. Surely as I have planned. So it will be. And as I have purposed. So it will stand. In shorthand. That means that nothing happens. In God's world. That he hasn't planned. The rising and falling of nations. Is all according to his plan. And purpose. Now that's not the way it looks. And it's not the way it sometimes feels. These nations on. [36:55] Of the earth. Are strutting about. With their great power. On the stage of history. As if. As if they're the ones in control. So we have nations.

Pursuing. The big nuclear weapon. And they're boasting about. Their power. As if this is something. They have achieved. And as they strut upon. The stage of history. As if. They have accomplished this. We need to see. That behind. The scenes. There is a God. Who has a plan.

A blueprint. For the nations. And that's strutting. North Korean. Or that's strutting. Iranian. Or that's strutting. Whoever he be.

Is simply fulfilling. The purpose. And plan. That God has set. For the nations. Nothing happens. In. [37 : 51] The Lord's world. Except what he's planned. And what his invisible hand. Brings. To pass. So these nations. All had their. Own reasons.

Why they wanted to come on down. And scoop up another nation. Greed. And lust. For power. And all the rest. But behind it all. Was the plan. Of God.

In the hand of God. Directing it. So. Assyria. Yes. It. It. It. Wants. To add Israel. To. To her possession. But God. Was using her.

To spank Israel. But then God. Would raise up. Another nation. The Babylonians. To destroy. Her. And then. God. Would raise up.

The Medes. Which is what we read about. In chapter 13. To destroy. The Babylonians. And. So God's plan. You see. Is. What is being. Accomplished.

[38 : 43] And he does. This in a way. He announces it. Beforehand. So that when it happens. Everyone can see. That it is indeed God. The God of Israel. The God of that little nation.

Yeah. The God of Israel. Is the one who is controlling. The. The plan of history. Of all the nations. So he says. In verse 25.

And 26. Of chapter 13. I will crush. The Assyrian. In my land. I'm sorry. This is chapter. Four. Chapter 14. I will crush. Verse 25.

I will crush. The Assyrian. In my land. On my mountains. I will trample him down. His yoke. Will be taken. From my people. And his burden. Removed from their shoulders. This is the plan. Determined.

For the whole world. This is the hand. Stretched out. Over the nations. Isaiah. Isaiah. 14. 26. Notice two things.

[39 : 38] There's a plan. And there's a hand. God prepares his plan. For the whole world. For all the nations. And then his hand of power. Brings about that plan.

That's the order. He plans. And then his hand. Fulfills what he plans. His plan was to crush. The nation of Assyria. And to do it right there. In Palestine. That's what I'm going to do.

That's my plan. But think of the control. Think of the power. Think of all the variables. That he must be in control of.

To bring this to pass. I mean. What if the king of Assyria. Doesn't agree. To be wiped out. Well. The king's heart.

Is in the hand of the Lord. And he directs it. Wherever he wants. Like a water course. You see. When you and I make our plans. And have purposes. They're often thwarted.

[40 : 33] Because we don't control the variables. But God controls all the variables. He's Lord of. Of the whole earth. And so his plans.

Cannot be thwarted. His purposes will stand. His plans will come to pass. Because of his omnipotent hand. Look at it again.

In verse 27. Chapter 14. For the Lord almighty. Has purposed. Planned. And who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out.

And who can turn it back? And Daniel answers. No one. No one can hold back his hand. Or say to him. What have you done? And so he did crush Assyria.

He did trample him down. Just as he said. One time it was through an angel of the Lord. That went out and killed 185,000 of them. But then it was the Lord.

[41 : 27] Eventually. Behind the Babylonians. Who crushed and trampled upon this nation of Assyria. So God's plan shapes history. That's the lesson we see in these chapters.

God's plan is being worked out. He just whistles. And a nation shows up. To do his will. And to destroy another nation. He sets up kings.

He deposes others. He brings down nations. He raises up others. He gives the leaders of Egypt a spirit of dizziness. So that they don't rule well. That's his judgment.

He musters the mighty army of the Medes. As his warriors. To destroy Babylon. And so Babylon will be destroyed. And overthrown by God. Like Sodom and Gomorrah.

I will rise up against them. I will turn her into a place for owls in a swampland. I will sweep her with a broom of destruction. These are the things that I will do. Jehovah says.

[42:24] The God of Israel. And so at his command. At his plan. The nations of the world. Rise up. And destroy each other.

Is that the way you watch the news? Each evening? We need to. Brothers and sisters. That's why this is in our Bible.

That God's people might think of our world. In the right way. As we see the nations raging. They're fulfilling the higher plan. A purpose that cannot be thwarted.

History can look like a terrifying mess. With nations of the world. Plundering nations.

It looks like it's all out of control. Oh but Isaiah comes and tells us. No, no. It's all according to the plan. Every last bit of it.

[43:21] Is happening according to the plan. Of him who works out everything. According to the purpose of his will. Ephesians 1.11. Remember that when you're watching the evening news.

Seeing nation rising against nation.

Seeing nations coming apart at the seams. Seeing economies failing. Morality slouching towards Gomorrah. The Lord reigns over it all. He reigns.

It's all doing just what he planned for this world to do. That old spiritual is simple but true. He's got the whole world in his hands.

Not just Israel. No, he's got the whole world in his hands. And he's got you and me brother. In his hands. You and me sister.

And everything that concerns us. It's all in his hands. That's the message. That God is teaching his people. In a troublesome time in which they lived.

[44:23] And teaching us in our troublesome time. And he rules and reigns over all for the good of his people. We'll see that in subsequent lessons. For our good.

So that we can say with confidence. The Lord will fulfill his purpose. For me. Psalm 138.8. So we look at life.

And its problems. And the world. And its mess. And we come to despair. Someone said that the shortest bridge from despair. To hope. Is to say and believe.

That the Lord reigns. You see that takes us right from despair. Into hope. What's threatening you. What is the thing that you're being threatened.

That you could lose. The Lord reigns. He reigns over that threat. Just as much as he reigned over these nations. He reigns over that injustice.

[45:21] He reigns over that disappointment. Say among the nations. The Lord reigns. Say it to yourself. Say it to each other. The Lord reigns. And believe it brother.

Believe it sister. God has no plan B. He doesn't need any plan B's. No one can thwart his purpose and plan. For nations. For you.

His blood bought. Child. What his purpose will stand. And that goes for. What happens this afternoon. And tomorrow. And every tomorrow of your life.

What a pillow for our heads. What a source of comfort and rest. What confidence. We can easily be dazzled by the wickedness.

And the power of nations and people. And God cuts them right down to size. By showing us our God again. He's Lord. He reigns. Hallelujah.

[46:18] The Lord God omnipotent. Reigns. You know it was the same with his plan for the Lord Jesus. To bring him into the world. To crown him king and Lord of all.

And Psalm 2 tells us the nations of the world didn't like that plan. The nations are conspiring. The nations are plotting. They're scheming. Why? They don't want this man to rule over them.

The one who sits in heaven laughs. The Lord will have them in derision. They can't thwart his plan. And so the worst they can do. Is just to fulfill the father's plan.

Which was to bring his son into this world. To have him live the perfect life that we couldn't live. To have him go to the cross and suffer the judgment that we deserved. And would have faced for all eternity.

That we might be saved. The Lord's plan. For the nations. And we'll see that. Later as well. Was to gather even from these nations.

[47:20] A people. And so we can sing with joy. That the father's plan has been fulfilled. Our savior has come. He has been judged in our place. We have life in his name.

God of the nations. We bow in your presence. And recognize afresh. Just how great you are. Ask for our eyes to be opened. More and more to your glory.

And as we do. We see that we too. Had the same problem as the nations. We too said. We will not have this man to reign over us. We will have our way.

And not his way. And how we thank you. That you have not damned us all to hell. And given us what we deserve. As our judgment. But that this very savior.

That we didn't want to reign over us. You had go to the cross. And to bear the judgment. That we deserved. That repenting and believing on him. We might not perish.

[48:17] But have everlasting life. How can we thank you? We would take the cup of salvation. And drink it again. And sing. Praise us to your name. And send us on our way then.

With this good news in our lips. That the Lord Jesus reigns. And that he is working out his purposes on the earth. And he is coming again. And all eyes will see him.

And every knee will bow. And every tongue confess. That Jesus Christ is Lord. We confess it with joy now. Bring others to confess it.

Before it is too late. We ask in Jesus name. Amen.