

A Prophecy Against the Valley of Vision ~ Part 2

Yesha'yahu 22:12-25

In my last post, we began to learn of **A Prophecy Against the Valley of Vision ~ Part 1** in **Yesha'yahu 22:1-11**. In this post, we complete our examination of **A Prophecy Against the Valley of Vision ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'yahu 22:12-25**.

¹² That day Adonai Elohim-Tzva'ot called on you to weep and mourn, to shave your heads and wear sackcloth; ¹³ but instead, one sees joy and celebrating, killing of oxen, slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat, drinking of wine - "Let's eat and drink now, because tomorrow we'll be dead!" ¹⁴ Then Adonai-Tzva'ot revealed Himself in my ears: "You will not atone for this iniquity until you die." This is what Adonai Elohim-Tzva'ot says.

God called for mourning by shaving their heads and wearing sackcloth, but the people celebrated the lifting of the siege on the city. The people lived for the moment. The fact that the sin of the people would never be removed boded poorly for the future of the city.

The prophecy against **Yerushalayim** in the following verses concludes with an evaluation of two stewards. **Shevna** abused his office and would be replaced by **Elyakim**. **Elyakim** was competent, and **Yesha'yahu** praised him, but even **Elyakim** eventually failed. The message is that politicians cannot be relied on to solve problems that only God can answer. Oh, that we would hear that same message today, people!

¹⁵ Thus says Adonai Elohim-Tzva'ot: "Go and find that steward, Shevna, administrator of the palace, and ask him:

The office of steward was an important role, analogous to the chief of staff of a president. **Shevna** is known elsewhere as a high-ranking officer in the court of **Hezekiah** (Yesha'yahu 36:3,11,22; 37:2; 2 Kings 18:18; 19:2), though in those passages he is called a **secretary** which may indicate that he had been demoted.

¹⁶ 'What do you own here, and who gave you the right to cut yourself a tomb here? Why do you get such an eminent tomb? Why are you carving a resting-place for yourself in the rock?'"

Shevna was concerned more about himself and his glory than with the well-being of the city. Rock-hewn tombs from antiquity may be seen today all around **Yerushalayim**, but mainly east of the city. Archaeologists discovered a tomb near **Yerushalayim** that contained an inscription with the title of a person who was *"in charge of the palace."* However, there was no name on the tomb. Since he was demoted, it may not be **Shevna's**.

¹⁷ Look, strong man! Adonai is about to throw you out! He will grab you, ¹⁸ roll you up and toss you around like a ball in the open country. There you will die, with your fancy chariots, you disgrace to your master's palace!

Shevna not only exalted himself by the type of tomb he was building, but also by driving glorious chariots. (Is it just me, or did you picture a baseball game when you first read verse 18?)

¹⁹ "I will remove you from your office, I will snatch you from your post. Because of his vanity and self-promotion, God will replace him in his position as a Steward.

²⁰ When that day comes, I will summon my servant Elyakim, the son of Hilkiyahu.

Elyakim means *"May El establish,"* has been found on seal impressions from **Tell Beit Mirsim**, **Beth Shemesh**, and **Ramat Rahel**. He served as **Royal Steward** under **King Hezekiah** (see 2 Kings 18:18; 19:2; Isaiah 36:3), and therefore would have been expected to affix his official seal to many documents.

²¹ I will dress him in your robe, gird him with your sash of office, and invest him with your authority. He will be a father to the people living in Yerushalayim and to the house of Y'hudah.

The **robe** and **sash** were symbols of the office of **Steward**. As opposed to self-serving **Shevna**, **Elyakim** will function as a father, looking after the needs of his people.

²² I will place the key of David's house on his shoulder; no one will shut what he opens; no one will open what he shuts.

The key, whether literal or metaphorical, indicates the control the **Steward** had over the distribution of resources.

²³ "I will fasten him firmly in place like a peg so that he will become a seat of honor for his clan.

Elyakim will not be shaken like **Shevna** but will be a firmly implanted peg. The metaphor probably refers to a peg driven into a plastered wall to hold up shelves.

²⁴ They will hang on him all the weight of his clan, descendants, and offspring, as well as all the vessels of small capacity, from pitchers to cups. ²⁵ When that day comes, the peg fastened firmly in place will give way; it will be cut down and fall, and the weight that was on it will be cut off."
For Adonai has said it. ~ Yesha'yahu 22:12-25 (CJB)

Elyakim is compared to a shelf on which his family put a tremendous burden. The weight ultimately sheared off the peg, causing the shelf (**Elyakim**) to crash and its contents (his family's hardships) to break. The message of the prophecy seems to be that the people could not trust even a competent, moral person to resolve **Yerushalayim's** problems. Only God Himself can solve the problems facing humanity.

In my next post, we will learn about **A Prophecy Against Tzor (Tyre)** in **Yesha'yahu 23**.