

ISAIAH 22

Introduction

The Arena of Spectacles – Or Valley of Vision – Or Valley of Gehinnom or Hinnom:

A walk through the green and tranquil Valley of Hinnom, below Jerusalem's Old City walls, reveals beautiful views of the Holy Land – and some dark tales, too.

It's not easy to find something good to say about the Hinnom Valley in Jerusalem, whose bad press from biblical days has followed it down through the ages. After all, it was here, right around the corner from the First Temple, that the people of Judah offered their children to the fire god Molech and to Baal (Jeremiah 7:31; 32:35) – for which, Jeremiah warned them, they would pay with the destruction of the Temple and exile.

The full name of this low-lying land is the Valley of the Son of Hinnom – whoever that may have been. Knowing nothing about either son or father, we can only conjecture that Hinnom probably bequeathed his son some rather fertile farmland in this valley that surrounds old Jerusalem on the southwest. The valley's name in Hebrew is *Gei Ben-Hinnom* or simply *Gei-Hinnom*. In light of the sacrifices to the fire god, the latter name gave rise to the word "Gehenna," which over time became a synonym for hell.

Early Jewish sages saw Isaiah 31:9 – which says God's "fire is in Zion" and "furnace in Jerusalem" – as a reference to this valley, which they described as the gates of hell. The valley's other biblical name, Topheth, means inferno, adding to its image as a place of eternal torment.

On a more positive note, when the people of Judah returned from exile around 538 BC, according to Nehemiah they took up "living all the way from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom" (Nehemiah 11:30).

But, sadly, the bad news continued even after Old Testament times. In the New Testament, this was the place where the chief priests bought a potter's field with Judas Iscariot's infamous 30 pieces of silver. Not wanting to keep the money, they decided to use it to buy a burial place for foreigners. "That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day" (Matthew 27:6-8). The version of the story in Acts turns quite gory: "With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood" (Acts 1:18-19).

Bad press or not, the Valley of Hinnom is a big part of the history of Jerusalem.

This prophecy also concerns two individuals, which is a rare in Isaiah, for he dealt mainly with nations as a whole.

SHEBNA

In this case, God chose to bring to light broader principles by singling out a man who represented evil within the Jewish nation. The prophecy is against Shebna, the "grand vizier" or "steward" in the court of Hezekiah. Shebna was a wicked, deceitful, and proud man who, as some Jewish historians maintain, conspired with Assyria in the attack on Jerusalem. Shebna probably was elevated to his position as household treasurer during the reign of Hezekiah's father, Ahaz.

(What follows is from "Biblehub.com" and describes the work of Eliakim mentioned in this chapter.)

ELIAKIM

e-li'-a-kim ('elyaqim; Eliakeim, "God sets up"):

The son of Hilkiah who succeeded Shebna as governor of the palace and "grand vizier" under Hezekiah ([Isaiah 22:20](#)). The functions of his office are seen from the oracle of Isaiah in which Shebna is deposed and Eliakim set in his place ([Isaiah 22:15](#)). He is the "treasurer" (the Revised Version, margin "steward"), and is "over the house" ([Isaiah 22:15](#)).

At his installation he is clothed with a robe and girdle, the insignia of his office, and, having the government committed into his hand, is the "father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah" ([Isaiah 22:21](#)). The key of the house of David is laid on his shoulder, and he alone has power to open and shut, this being symbolic of his absolute authority as the king's representative ([Isaiah 22:22](#)).

One of Solomon's officials is the first mentioned as occupying this position (1 Kings 4:6), and this office was continued in both the Northern and Southern Kingdom (1 Kings 16:9; 1 Kings 18:3 2 Kings 10:5; 2 Kings 15:5). Its importance is seen from the fact that after Azariah was smitten with leprosy, Jotham his heir "was over the household, judging the people of the land" ([2 Kings 15:5](#)).

When Sennacherib sent an army against Jerusalem in 701, Eliakim was one of these Jewish princes who held, on behalf of Hezekiah, a parley with the Assyrian officers ([2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37](#) [Isaiah 36:3, 11, 22](#)). As a result of the invader's threats, he was sent by Hezekiah in sackcloth to Isaiah, entreating his prayers to Yahweh on behalf of Jerusalem ([2 Kings 19:2](#) [Isaiah 37:2](#)). Eliakim was appointed with others to treat with Rabshakeh, general of the Assyrian forces then besieging Jerusalem. ([2 Kings 18:1-19:37](#), [Isaiah 36:22](#))

ISAIAH 22

Verses 1-13 Poetry

Verse 14 Prose

Verse 15-19 Poetry

Verses 20-25 Prose

Verse 1

The Burden of The Valley of Vision:

(The prophecy concerning the Arena of Spectacles)

[\(An evil place - Jerusalem - See the Introduction\)](#)

What aileth thee now?

Verse 2

Thou art wholly gone up to the housetops,

Thou art full of stirs, (cheers)

Thou art a tumultuous city! (of revelry)

Thy slain men are not slain with the sword,

Thy slain men are not dead in battle!

Verse 3

Thy rulers are fled together,

Thy rulers are bound by the archers.

(Your rulers are captured without using the bow.)

All that are found in thee are bound together,

All that are found in thee have fled from far.

(All those of you left behind are caught easily before you can get away.)

Verse 4

Therefore said I:

A Look away from me,

B I will weep bitterly.

A Labor not to comfort me,

B (I will weep bitterly) because of the spoiling of the Daughter of
my People.

Verse 5

(For)

It is a day of trouble,

(and)

It is a day of treading down,

(and)

It is a day of perplexity, by the Lord God of Hosts in the

Valley of Vision (Arena of Spectacles),

It is a day of breaking down the walls,

(and)

It is a day of crying to the mountains!

Verse 6

(And)

(When) Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men and horsemen,

(and)

(When) Kir uncovers the shield (armor).

- Verse 7 (And) (Then) **it shall come to pass:**
- Thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots,
Horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate.
- Verse 8 (And) In that day it will be discovered (that Judea's defensive screen is removed,)
(and) Ye will look in that day to the armour of the house of the
forest. (You will look to the forest home as protection.)
- Verse 9 (When you saw) **the breaches of the City of David,**
that they (were) many:
- (and) **Ye** gathered together the waters, (conserved water)
Ye gathered together the waters of the Lower Pool.
- Verse 10 (and) **Ye** numbered the houses of Jerusalem,
(and) **Ye** broke down the houses to fortify the wall.
- Verse 11 **Ye** made also a ditch between the two walls,
Ye made a ditch for the water of the Old Pool,
(You built cisterns between the walls for the water from the Old Reservoir.)
- But,** ye looked not unto the maker thereof,
Neither, (did ye have) respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.
- (You tried to fortify Jerusalem, but only with materialistic endeavors.)
- Verse 12 (And) **In such a day:**
- (and) The Lord calls for weeping,
(and) The Lord calls to mourning,
(and) The Lord calls to baldness,
(and) The Lord calls to girding with sackcloth.
- (The Lord's people should be humble and contrite.)
- Verse 13 **But Behold:**
- (and) He sees joy and gladness,
(and) He sees slaying oxen,
(and) He sees killing sheep,
(and) He sees eating flesh,
(and) He sees drinking wine,
He sees (the attitude of), "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow
we shall die!"

Verse 14 (And) **It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts:**

“Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you ‘til ye die,” saith the Lord God of Hosts.

Verse 15 **Thus saith the Lord God of Hosts, go, get thee unto this**
(“this” – term of distance/ not “my”) **treasurer** (steward), **even**
unto Shebna, who is over the house (palace) **and say:**

Verse 16 (and) What hast thou here? (What are you up to?)
 Whom hast thou here? (Who do you think you are?)

(This Shebna should have been the steward of the physical House of David, but he did not do his job and would have allowed Jerusalem to be overtaken by idol worshippers.)

(that) Thou (Shebna) hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here,
 (as) Thou (Shebna) hast hewed thee out a sepulchre on high,
 (and) Thou (Shebna) hast graven an habitation for thee in a rock.

(Shebna made himself a splendid tomb on a high hill – carving his tomb into rock for the future – The Lord is mad that he has thought carefully of his own future and not done his job in the present to protect Jerusalem.)

Verse 17 **Behold:**

Verse 18 (and) He will surely violently turn thee,
 He will surely toss thee like (a spinning top) into a large (open)
country.
(The Lord will hurl you away as an athlete hurls a missile; he will make you soar like a dart.)

(and) There shalt thou die,
 There the chariots (conveyance) of thy glory shall be the shame
 of thy Lord’s House.

Verse 19 The Lord will drive thee from they station (office),
 From thy state (post) shall he pull thee down.

Verse 20 (And) **It shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my**
Servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah:

Verse 21 (And) I will clothe him with *thy* robe,
 (and) I will strengthen him with *thy* girdle,
 (and) I will commit *thy* government into his hand.

(and) He shall be a father to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem,
 (and) He shall be a father to the House of Judah.

Verse 22 (And) **The key of the House of David will I lay upon *his* shoulder:**

(so) **A** He shall open,
(and) **B** None shall shut.

(and) **B** He shall shut,
(and) **A** None shall open.

Verse 23 (And) I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place,
(and) He shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.

Verse 24 (And) **They shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house:**

The offspring and the issue,
The vessels of small quantity; from the vessels of cups,
even to all the vessels of flagons.

(Here we see that Eliakim is taking on the role of a Righteous Servant of God and is described as a Righteous King in Israel is described or as the Messiah is described.)

Verse 25 **In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts:**

The nail that *was* fastened in the sure place shall be removed:

(Shebna, - "The Idol Shepherd" - shall be removed)

(and) It shall be cut down,
(and) It shall fall,
(and) The burden that was upon it shall be cut off, for the Lord hath spoken it.

