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Sermon Notes

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When God Calls You to Mourn for Sin, Don't Party Instead

Isaiah 22:1-25

Resuming a series in Isaiah after a four-year hiatus...

Nothing wrong with the yearning to be happy... to celebrate... to eat and drink and be merry!!

Jesus did this in His ministry:

Luke 5:29-32 Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" ³¹ Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Matthew 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."

He told a parable which described an aspect of our heavenly joy being like sitting at a lavish feast spread by a King:

Matthew 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.

Matthew 22:4 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.

Amazingly, the great sin of the people is to NOT come to the banquet:

Matthew 22:5 But they paid no attention and went off-- one to his field, another to his business.

So... the desire to "EAT, DRINK, and BE MERRY" is not a bad thing... if it is sought in the hands of God

But Jesus was also called a MAN OF SORROWS AND ACQUAINTED WITH SUFFERING... the paradox of the Christian faith is this: it is only by dealing properly with sin that we can truly feast with God

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

So, the yearning for happiness is built into the human soul:

All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves."

Blaise Pascal

This sermon is not AGAINST HAPPINESS... I am not saying that the desire to EAT, DRINK, and BE MERRY is sinful in and of itself... rather, the Scriptures point us to a HIGHER FEAST... a heavenly banquet of joy in the presence of a HOLY GOD; and because this God is holy and we are sinful, the only way we can gain entrance to the banquet hall is by full atonement from our sins

And Scriptures say that full atonement is only through the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross

BUT for us to access that atonement, we must REPENT and BELIEVE the good news:

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Repentance always involves a genuine SORROW for SIN... so in effect, Jesus' blood is mingled with our tears to produce access to the banquet table of heaven... our tears are not of equal value with Jesus' blood... but when the Holy Spirit produces faith, an aspect of that faith is sorrow for sin

In Isaiah 22, we have pictured some people who want to feast and celebrate on earth rather than in heaven...

Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

The lesson Isaiah the prophet gives us is, in 21st century language:
"When God calls you to mourn for sin, don't party instead!"

I. Jerusalem Besieged Like Any Other Sinful City (vs. 1-8a)

A. Context: God's Sovereign Power Over All Nations

1. Isaiah presents a Sovereign God who rules over all nations on earth

Isaiah 40:15-17 Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust. ¹⁶ Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires, nor its animals enough for burnt offerings. ¹⁷ Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing.

Isaiah 34:2 The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their armies. He will totally destroy them, he will give them over to slaughter.

2. Isaiah 13-35: God as the Master of the Nations: One oracle after another of God's judgments on Gentile nations
 - a. Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, Egypt all receive oracles of judgment
 - b. Isaiah 21: Three oracles in a row—Babylon, Edom, Arabia... God's wrath against the sinners of every nation
3. Such a view of an all-powerful God, a fierce monotheism... One God ruling over all nations of the earth... was new and foreign... Back then, every nation had its own "patron god or goddess"
4. Such a view of the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob—the God of the Jews—wrath-filled toward the wicked pagans of the earth would have brought delight to any patriotic Jew

B. Bitter Surprise: Judah and Jerusalem No Different Than Gentiles Sinners

1. Isaiah 22: God turns His oracle against the Jews of Jerusalem!!!
2. In effect, in one sense, they are no different than all the other Gentile sinners
3. In another very real sense, though, they are MUCH WORSE!!

C. The Valley of Vision: Jerusalem More Accountable Because of Prophets

Isaiah 22:1 An oracle concerning the Valley of Vision...

1. This striking phrase... taken as the title for a popular book of Puritan Prayers... refers to Jerusalem: the "City of the Great King" where God had put His name

2. “Valley”: Jerusalem built on a mountain and surrounded by three deep valleys: the Hinnom, the Kidron, and the Tyropoen Valleys; also, however, Jerusalem is lower than the mountains that surround it: the Mount of Olives looms over it; it is a “Valley” then because of its humiliation, its lowliness
3. “Valley of Vision”: this refers to the special gift of prophecy that the Lord had lavished on the Jewish people; God has spoken to this people again and again through the visions of the Prophets
4. This means they are MORE ACCOUNTABLE than the Gentile nations for their sins

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Acts 7:51-52 "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!"⁵² Was the

D. The Siege Described

Isaiah 22:1-3 What troubles you now, that you have all gone up on the roofs,² O town full of commotion, O city of tumult and revelry? Your slain were not killed by the sword, nor did they die in battle.³ All your leaders have fled together; they have been captured without using the bow. All you who were caught were taken prisoner together, having fled while the enemy was still far away.

1. The city is filled with tumult and revelry: a city of laughter and lust... of eating, drinking and making merry... a city of bloodshed, and covetousness and greed; a city of sexual immorality and idolatry
2. This was a PARTY CITY... but no longer; now it is a city of the dead... and the dead have died not through valiant struggle in BATTLE... NO, they have died by famine and plague as in a siege
3. A city in which the leaders of the people have fled from the outlying towns and villages of Judah: these “mighty men,” these leaders of the people ran for their lives!!! Their arms trembled too much to hold a bow and fire an arrow... they dropped their weapons and ran to the citadel of Jerusalem to save their lives
4. But now the invaders have come and surrounded Jerusalem and there will be no escape
5. Verse 5: The “Day of the Lord”: a small picture of Judgment Day

Isaiah 22:5 The Lord, the LORD Almighty, has a day of tumult and trampling and terror in the Valley of Vision, a day of battering down walls and of crying out to the mountains.

- a. The Lord has “A DAY IN STORE” for sinners
- b. These wicked people laughed and pursued their lusts and idolatrous pleasures while there was time
- c. But they were storing up wrath against themselves:

Romans 2:5-6 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done."

- d. It is a day of TUMULT, TRAMPLING, and TERROR
- e. It is a day of BATTERING DOWN WALLS...
- f. A day of CRYING OUT TO THE MOUNTAINS... looking for a place of refuge, but there is none

Luke 23:30 Then "they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"

- 6. What is this? Not the Assyrian invasion of Hezekiah’s Day... but the final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon
 - a. Godly Hezekiah did cry out to the Lord and seek His face, which this text says the Jews did not do
 - b. God forbade Assyria from building a siege ramp against the walls of Jerusalem
 - c. BUT in the day of Babylon’s invasion, wicked king Zedekiah did not seek the Lord
 - d. God permitted the Babylonians to besiege the city and batter in the walls
 - e. AND his officials DID try to escape... to run away and save their lives

E. Isaiah’s Overpowering Reaction

Isaiah 22:4 Therefore I said, "Turn away from me; let me weep bitterly. Do not try to console me over the destruction of my people."

- 1. Jeremiah is called the “weeping prophet”... but it seems that Isaiah weeps just as much

2. He is overcome with grief for the destruction of his people... a destruction that would not come for another century and a half!!
3. It is a GRIEVOUS THING when God's people break the covenant...
4. God Himself is HIGHLY EMOTIONAL about our sin

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

5. Later, God will call on the people to grieve and wail and cry over their sins
6. Here, Isaiah is ALREADY DOING IT almost 150 years beforehand!!

F. Elam and Kir: Distant Enemies, Well-Prepared for Conquest

Isaiah 22:5-6 The Lord, the LORD Almighty, has a day of tumult and trampling and terror in the Valley of Vision, a day of battering down walls and of crying out to the mountains. ⁶ Elam takes up the quiver, with her charioteers and horses; Kir uncovers the shield.

1. Isaiah is an AMAZING prophecy... moving back and forth with ease, jumping across the centuries like an eagle flying in moments from one mountain peak to another mountain peak across a valley that is miles wide
2. Isaiah 21 predicts the Fall of Babylon AFTER the events of Isaiah 22... and the Elam and Kir of Isaiah 22:6 are the Medes and Persians who helped Babylon defeat Jerusalem here in chapter 22, and seventy years later would turn and defeat Babylon itself and allow the Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem!! (Isaiah 21:2)!!!

Isaiah 21:2 A dire vision has been shown to me: The traitor betrays, the looter takes loot. Elam, attack! Media, lay siege! I will bring to an end all the groaning she caused.

3. These distant Gentile nations will come all the way to Jerusalem ready to do battle, and they will WIN

Isaiah 22:7 Your choicest valleys are full of chariots, and horsemen are posted at the city gates

G. Jerusalem Stripped

Isaiah 22:8 ...the defenses of Judah are stripped away.

^{ESV} Isaiah 22:8 ¶ He has taken away the covering of Judah.

This siege is devastating!! All of Judah's protection is GONE... Judah is stripped and laid bare, ready for the plundering

II. What Jerusalem Should Have Done: Faith and Repentance (vs. 11-12)

A. The Visions of the Prophets Had Warned Jerusalem of this For Centuries

1. "Valley of Vision" means the supernatural visions of the Prophets...
2. Especially ISAIAH... 150 years ahead of time
3. Chapter after chapter has made Judah and Jerusalem's sin CRYSTAL CLEAR

Isaiah 1:10-11 Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah! ¹¹ "The multitude of your sacrifices-- what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

Isaiah 1:16-20 wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, ¹⁷ learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow. ¹⁸ "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; ²⁰ but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Isaiah 5:11-13 Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine. ¹² They have harps and lyres at their banquets, tambourines and flutes and wine, but they have no regard for the deeds of the LORD, no respect for the work of his hands. ¹³ Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding; their men of rank will die of hunger and their masses will be parched with thirst.

B. Major Warning: The Exile of the Northern Kingdom of Israel to Assyria

1. 721 B.C.: Sennacherib invaded the northern Kingdom and carried them off into exile for their sins
2. AND Assyria invaded the Southern Kingdom of Judah and conquered every city but Jerusalem
3. BUT Judah did not repent... godly King Hezekiah's son Manasseh was the worst of all the Kings of Judah... he sacrificed his own son to Molech and all the people went after the Baals and Ashtoreths

C. Even Clearer: The Babylonians Were Coming

1. Nebuchadnezzar invaded other Gentile countries first... he conquered Assyria, then turned against Tyre and Sidon
2. The Babylonian invasion was clearly heading Judah's way
3. By that time Jeremiah the Prophet plainly told the people to repent

Jeremiah 4:4-8 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds."
⁵ ¶ ***Declare in Judah, and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say, "Blow the trumpet through the land; cry aloud and say, 'Assemble, and let us go into the fortified cities!'"*** ⁶ ***Raise a standard toward Zion, flee for safety, stay not, for I bring disaster from the north, and great destruction.*** ⁷ ***A lion has gone up from his thicket, a destroyer of nations has set out; he has gone out from his place to make your land a waste; your cities will be ruins without inhabitant.*** ⁸ ***For this put on sackcloth, lament and wail, for the fierce anger of the LORD has not turned back from us."***

D. Isaiah Spoke to them 150 Years Ahead of Time, Telling them What to Do

1. First: LOOK TO THE LORD

- a. Verse 11 speaks of all the military preparations they were making... more on that in a moment; but it rebukes them because they did not LOOK TO THE LORD... a look of faith, the look of trust

Isaiah 22:11 You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the Old Pool, but you did not look to the One who made it, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago.

- b. They did not LOOK to the Lord, they did not "see" Him... which is the look of faith
- c. Faith is the eyesight of the soul
- d. In the moments of impending invasion, they should have looked to the Lord and addressed their sin with Him... HE IS ALWAYS THE ISSUE
- e. The oracles against the nations show that the nations are a drop from the bucket, dust on the scales
- f. In their sin, these desperate Jews should have looked to the Lord for salvation

KJV Isaiah 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

2. Second: REPENT WITH BITTER GRIEF FOR YOUR SINS

Isaiah 22:12 The Lord, the LORD Almighty, called you on that day to weep and to wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth.

- a. As I just said, our sin brings immense GRIEF to the heart of God...
- b. The word “grief” is usually reserved for some great tragedy... like the death of a beloved spouse, or the drowning of a son, or a car accident that claims the life of a toddler
- c. As soon as the incident happens, the heart SCREAMS OUT in agony!!! NO...NO... NO... this can't be happening!!
- d. The event rips at the delicate fabric of the mourner's heart... their world will never be the same again
- e. For years after, the survivors cannot think of that loved one without tears filling their eyes, and some measure of that pain flooding back in all over again
- f. THAT is how the Lord wants us to react to our sins
- g. The Lord CALLS US to this repentance... to WEEP and WAIL and TEAR OUT YOUR HAIR and put on SACKCLOTH
- h. These Old Testament expressions of grief may not all still apply, but some do
- i. When we sin, we should feel the same grief the Holy Spirit does
- j. When we sin greatly, and deeply, and with a hardness of heart that shows a deeply rooted lust or pride or wickedness that we cannot seem to uproot, we should be lamenting over it... each new outbreak of the disease should bring about fresh effusions of grief
- k. It is a measure of spiritual health to grieve deeply over sin

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

- l. James calls for us to do it in the New Covenant

James 4:8-10 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

So, this is what these sinner should have done for their sins

They had 150 years of warning from Isaiah

They had the example of the northern Kingdom's exile by the Assyrians as a warning

They had a few years of direct warning once Nebuchadnezzar started to come their way

They had Jeremiah the prophet telling them to do the exact same thing that Isaiah had told them

They should have LOOKED to the LORD who planned it all

They should have GRIEVED and MOURNED BITTERLY over their sins and forsook them

Yes, they should have done all this... what DID they do???

III. What Jerusalem Did: Faithless Preparations and Feasting (vs. 8b-11, 13)

A. Avid Military Preparations

1. Trusting in weapons

Vs. 8 And you looked in that day to the weapons in the Palace of the Forest (of Lebanon)

This was the vast armory made from huge cedars of Lebanon in the days of King Solomon; filled with bows and arrows, slings and stones, golden shields and iron swords, it was the pride of all the kings of Judah; Hezekiah, filled with pride, showed it to the friendly emissaries from Babylon (Isaiah 39)

When the time for Babylon's invasion came, the men of Judah trusted in these weapons instead of looking to the Lord

2. Shoring up defenses in the wall

3. Storing up water for the siege

4. Counting buildings... and even tearing down houses to get building materials for the weak spots in the wall

Isaiah 22:9-11 you saw that the City of David had many breaches in its defenses; you stored up water in the Lower Pool. ¹⁰ You counted the buildings in Jerusalem and tore down houses to strengthen the wall. ¹¹ You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the Old Pool

5. Nothing wrong with these preparations in an of themselves... but they were done with NO FAITH and NO REPENTANCE... no understanding of what the times called for
6. Look again at the words

Isaiah 22:11-12 You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the Old Pool, but you did not look to the One who made it, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago. ¹² The Lord, the LORD Almighty, called you on that day to weep and to wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth.

Even worse is what comes next:

B. Fleshly Celebration

Isaiah 22:13 But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! "Let us eat and drink," you say, "for tomorrow we die!"

1. Having done all their military preparations, they felt secure in them and decided it was time to feast
2. The EXACT OPPOSITE of what the Lord was calling them to do
3. Never mind that the coming siege would result in STARVATION in that same city
4. The deeper issue was UNBELIEF... perhaps they didn't really think Judgment Day was coming
5. Or really, they just revealed what their true god was... their god is their STOMACH
6. This is the symbol of a life lived for the flesh with no concern for God and for the soul... EAT AND DRINK FOR TOMORROW WE DIE
7. The Apostle Paul quoted this exact verse in speaking of life if there is no resurrection of the dead

1 Corinthians 15:32 If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

8. This is the way our world lives its life... living for sensual indulgence, feeding the drives of the body and forgetting about God

C. Jerusalem was Spiritually Bankrupt

1. Completely hardened in their sin

2. Not aware of God's passionate hatred for their sin
3. Far from grieving over it, they actually CELEBRATED and FEASTED

IV. God's Solemn Response: This Sin Will Never Be Forgiven (vs. 14)

Isaiah 22:14 The LORD Almighty has revealed this in my hearing: "Till your dying day this sin will not be atoned for," says the Lord, the LORD Almighty.

A. Is Feasting When You Should Be Grieving an Unforgivable Sin???

1. In one sense, it is
2. The sense of impending judgment from God should produce sorrow and thoughtfulness and quietness and sadness and tears and zeal for a new life

2 Corinthians 7:10-11 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. ¹¹ See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done.

B. Attacking the Means of Grace

1. Repentance and faith in Christ are the only remedies for sin
2. When God calls for sorrow and mourning and repentance, and we feast and celebrate instead, there is nothing left but judgment

V. Jesus Christ: Our Sovereign and Immovable Savior (vs. 15-25)

A. Shebna: Arrogant Official Seeking Worldly Security

1. Isaiah's astonishing scope: from NATIONS to INDIVIDUALS
 - a. God's eye is always on the individual sinner... calling and beckoning that person to repentance
 - b. Isaiah focuses on two individuals for the rest of the chapter
 - c. I won't say much about them, except as they illustrate the arrogance of heart that causes this kind of sinful reaction
 - d. AND because the second man leads us to Christ
2. Shebna was a high-ranking official in Isaiah's day... so, long before the time of Babylon
3. He exemplifies the selfish, faithless arrogance he was attacking:

Isaiah 22:15-16 This is what the Lord, the LORD Almighty, says: "Go, say to this steward, to Shebna, who is in charge of the palace: ¹⁶ What are you doing here and who gave you permission to cut out a grave for yourself here, hewing your grave on the height and chiseling your resting place in the rock?"

4. Shebna was carving out a lofty, secure resting place for himself
 - a. It was a lofty, secure resting place... a grave where he could be memorialized for generations to come
 - b. He was looking for power and wealth and comfort and security APART FROM THE LIVING GOD
 - c. He loved the comfortable life of power and ease... as the “glorious chariots” of verse 18 refers to
 - d. He was presumptuous, because he had no permission to do all this... he was a palace politician, angling for position and power and pleasure
5. God’s words of stern judgment on Shebna:

Isaiah 22:17-19 "Beware, the LORD is about to take firm hold of you and hurl you away, O you mighty man. ¹⁸ He will roll you up tightly like a ball and throw you into a large country. There you will die and there your splendid chariots will remain-- you disgrace to your master's house! ¹⁹ I will depose you from your office, and you will be ousted from your position.

Lesson: no permanent plans can be made for ease, comfort and a peaceful death apart from the Lord!! Shebna is a symbol of a faithless way to live, and God fought against him

How dreadful it is to have God as your personal enemy!!!

How delightful to have God as your personal Savior!!

B. Hilkiah: Humble Servant Exalted by God

Isaiah 22:20-24 "In that day I will summon my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiah. ²¹ I will clothe him with your robe and fasten your sash around him and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. ²² I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. ²³ I will drive him like a peg into a firm place; he will be a seat of honor for the house of his father. ²⁴ All the glory of his family will hang on him: its offspring and offshoots-- all its lesser vessels, from the bowls to all the jars.

1. Hilkiah was a godly official, humble, meek

2. Unlike Shebna, he was not seeking great things for himself
3. God raised him up to fulfill Shebna's office, to take Shebna's place
4. Even more fascinating, though, are the grand words spoken over him... words which find their fulfillment only in Jesus Christ

C. Christ: The Fulfillment of the Promise

1. The "Keys of the House of David" Given to Christ
 - a. They represent authority... the power to lock and unlock
 - b. These words are spoken specifically of Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation

Revelation 3:7-8 "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. ⁸ ¶ I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.

- c. Jesus Christ has the sovereign power over all people and over all nations
- d. He has the power to shut doors that no one can open
- e. AND He has the power to open doors that no one can shut
- f. Ultimately, this speaks of Jesus' total power over DEATH

Revelation 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Through faith in Jesus Christ, we, like Hilkiah, have the right to pass through the doors of death into ETERNAL LIFE

Shebna had God as his enemy, and God killed him in a foreign land; he would never get to rest in the lofty, expensive grave he made for himself

Through faith in Jesus Christ, everyone who believes in Him will COME OUT OF THE GRAVE he or she is buried in and will live forever!!!

2. A "Peg Driven into the Wall" on which Everything Hangs

Isaiah 22:23-24 I will drive him like a peg into a firm place; he will be a seat of honor for the house of his father. ²⁴ All the glory of his family will hang on him: its offspring and offshoots-- all its lesser vessels, from the bowls to all the jars.

- a. This speaks of the total SECURITY of a life lived for Jesus

- b. Everyone—great or small—who trusts in Christ will never fall away
- c. Other pegs (like Shebna) will get sheared away and everything that rested on them will fail

Isaiah 22:25 "In that day," declares the LORD Almighty, "the peg driven into the firm place will give way; it will be sheared off and will fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut down." The LORD has spoken.

- d. But everyone who trusts in Jesus will never fall away; and everything that you entrust to Him will hang secure on a peg that can never be sheared away

Illus. Tree house; 4 5/8" diameter 6" long steel lag screws into the trees that hold it up; each 5/8" diameter steel screw has a shear strength of 150,000 pounds! Total is 600,000 pounds of weight in shear!!! Those screws will NEVER shear off

But Jesus is a stronger basis for your life!!! He is a firm foundation stone on which you can build the whole structure of your life

His finished work on the cross and the empty tomb is your salvation

VI. Applications

A. Come to Christ

B. Learn to Mourn for Sin

1. Thomas Watson's *The Doctrine of Repentance*... 17th century Puritan pastor
2. Lists six elements of TRUE REPENTANCE
 - a. Sight of sin
 - b. Sorrow for sin
 - c. Confession of sin
 - d. Shame for sin
 - e. Hatred of sin
 - f. Turning from sin
3. Sorrow for sin
 - a. Key text:

ESV Psalm 38:18 I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin.

- b. Ambrose calls godly sorrow an “embittering of the soul”; Watson says the soul must feel pierced because of the sin, as Christ was pierced on the cross
 - c. Watson: “A woman may as well expect to have a baby without birth pains as one can have repentance without sorrow.”
 - d. True sorrow for sin is not superficial, it is a holy agony
 - e. Joel says “REND YOUR HEART, NOT YOUR GARMENT”... so it is a heart-work, something inward...
 - f. Jesus said the hypocrites disfigured their faces and looked sorrowful to show men they were fasting
4. The reasons for godly sorrow
- a. To make Christ’s death all the more precious
 - b. To make sin all the more hateful
 - c. To protect us from ever doing again
 - d. To lay a solid foundation for genuine comfort
5. Not artificial sorrow... but genuine

2 Corinthians 7:10-11 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. ¹¹ See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done.

6. Elements of genuine sorrow for sin
- a. It is GOD-WARD: It grieves over the dishonor done to the glory of God... it hurts deeply over the pain Christ felt when He saw us do it; it is mindful of the indwelling Spirit’s presence while we were sinning
 - b. It is FAITH-FILLED: this godly sorrow does not in any way nullify the work of Christ on the cross... rather, it applies it to the actual living of our lives; we grieve not as those who have no hope, but as those who know we are genuinely forgiven, and therefore have been given much already and have a loving Lord who deserved better from us

- c. It does not focus on the PENALTIES and DISCIPLINES of sin, but on the heinousness of sin itself... even if there were no hell, no punishments for sin... sin would still be worthy of deep sorrow because it is so evil
- d. It TAKES TIME: too often we want to hurry back to the “good feelings” of a healthy conscience before God; we want to get back to happy things and the party... we want to play... God wants us to linger a while... take time to work on your heart; pray over what you did, what you failed to do... talk it over with God; if your heart is hard, ask Him to reveal to you the depths of your sin

C. Live for the Heavenly Party, Not the Earthly

1. “All men desire happiness... this is without exception” nothing wrong with a desire to be happy, to feast, to celebrate and enjoy a good party
2. But this text (as the whole Scriptures) point us to a heavenly feast that we should live for