

Series: Questions

Title: What Hast Thou Here?

Text: Isaiah 22:16-25

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Our text is another question that God asks of a sinner. God asked Shebna, **“What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here?” (Is 22: 16)**

In Isaiah 22, what was taking place in Jerusalem is a picture of the injustice and oppression of this entire world. God had brought the Assyrian army upon Jerusalem to turn the children of Israel to himself. Instead, they looked to their wisdom and works by looking to their weapons and fortifications. God’s preacher, Isaiah, declared, *“And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest. Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool. And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall. Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: BUT YE HAVE NOT LOOKED UNTO THE MAKER THEREOF, NEITHER HAD RESPECT UNTO HIM THAT FASHIONED IT LONG AGO.” (vv8-11)*

The LORD sent the enemy to make them repent and look to God—*“And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:”* But they did the opposite—*“And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.” (vv12-13)* Why?

As the people from outlying cities ran into Jerusalem for protection, it became a boom town full of commerce. The people had all the basic needs you and I have today so they were buying what the business men of Jerusalem had to sell. So the business men were getting rich from this new incoming population.

Shebna was the treasurer in Israel. He was the one getting the richest. Therefore, Shebna, told them to ignore God’s prophet, Isaiah. He was supposed to be a nail in a sure place—the one on whom the people could hang all their hope. But due to Shebna getting rich, he did not want to see the people change. Though he knew they were going to die, he wanted to get all he could while he could. So he gave them vain counsel, saying, *“let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die.” (v13)*

Years ago a worldly philosopher said something like this, “Change will never come because those who stand to lose the most by change hold the most power and those who stand to gain the most by change hold none of the power.” God said it better, *“The love of money is the root of all evil.” (1 Tim 6:10)*

The problem is the depraved heart in sinners. The same sin in the depraved hearts of the rich is in the depraved hearts of the poor and the oppressed. Even as believers, when we hear of injustice and oppression in the world, it is easy to get worked up in our sinful flesh. Hearing of injustice and oppression it moves us. We want to make a change. But it is easy to become worked up in our flesh so that rather than looking to God, we look to our wisdom and works to make that change.

Yet, true change is spiritual change. It comes only by God through the preaching of the gospel of Christ and him crucified. Like as God removed Shebna, God subdues our old man of sinful flesh. And like as God set up Eliakim the son of Hilkiah to replace Shebna, God creates in us a new man, raising up Christ in our hearts.

Proposition: God subdues our fleshly man who is no nail in a sure place and raises up Christ in our hearts who is a nail in a sure place. Christ is one upon whom we can hang all the weight of our eternal souls.

Divisions: 1) Shebna: God subdues the old man and removed all our false confidences 2) Eliakim: a picture of Christ; God raises up Christ in our hearts 3) Christ is our nail in a sure place upon whom we rest all!

SHEBNA: GOD PUTS DOWN OUR OLD MAN OF SIN

Isaiah 22: 15: Thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, *even* unto Shebna, which is over the house, *and say*, 16: What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, *as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?* 17: Behold, the LORD will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. 18: He will surely violently turn and toss thee *like* a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory *shall be* the shame of thy lord's house. 19: And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.

Notice, how God removed Shebna and raised up Eliakim. God sent his prophet Isaiah. True change is spiritual change worked by God through the preaching of the gospel of Christ.

Shebna was the treasurer over Israel. He was a sinful man full of pride and ambition who worked himself into this position. But he was faithful to none but Shebna. That is you and I and all sinners in our depraved, natural condition. We come forth ambitious for this world with no regard for God.

Shebna thought he would remain forever by his wisdom and works setting his house on high with worldly riches. But God sent his preacher with a question that we all need to heed—*"What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?"*

What and whom hast thou here? Jerusalem and Israel was not Shebna's place. He was not an Israelite but a Gentile, a stranger, an alien. He had no real brethren in Israel. Somehow, probably through the reign of wicked king Ahaz, Shebna had worked his way into position in Israel. Many do the same by working their way into the church by hook and crook. God must bring this question home to our hearts, *"What hast thou here? And whom hast thou here?"* As we come forth dead in trespasses and in sins, we have nothing and no one in this world.

Ephesians 2:12: That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

John 3: 36: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Yet, all spiritual dead sinners do as Shebna. We try to carve out a place for ourselves in this world as though we will remain forever. Perhaps Shebna made a grave in a rock, presuming he would live and die in Jerusalem. But the picture is of a man who thinks his wealth and position, along with his religious works, will be a place of stability. Yet, God called all Shebna's works nothing but hewing out a grave. Without Christ, you and I have no saving stability in this life. We may imagine we are setting ourselves on firm ground by our works. But without Christ we have only hewed us out a grave. Christ said,

Luke 6: 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. 49: But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that

without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

So God cast Shebna down—*"Behold, the LORD will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house. And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down."*

Likewise, God must cast down our sinful flesh with all our pride and ambition and vain confidences. And God must bind the devil from ruling over us.

Mark 3:27: No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

ELIAKIM—A PICTURE OF CHRIST SET UP IN OUR HEARTS

Isaiah 22: 20: And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah: 21: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and 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 to the house of Judah. 22: And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. 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.

Eliakim is a picture of Christ. When God has graciously put down our sinful flesh then God sets up a new master in our hearts, Christ Jesus the Lord. Eliakim was God's servant—*"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant."* His name, "*Eliakim*," means "my God will raise up." He was "*the son of Hilkiyah*" which means "my portion is Jehovah." Christ Jesus is God's servant, whom God raised up, whose portion is the LORD God, Jehovah, meaning Christ glorified the Lord God, Jehovah, in all his works. Shebna exalted himself to treasurer but God exalted Eliakim to that office. Likewise, scripture says of Christ,

Hebrews 5:5: So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

So first God gave Eliakim the glory that was once Shebna's—*"And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle."* Like as God stripped Shebna of his robe and gave it to Eliakim, God strips us of our self-righteousnesses and makes us behold Christ is our only robe of righteousness. God strips us of faith in our faith and makes us behold Christ is the Faithful One by whose faithfulness we are saved.

Revelation 1:13: And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Isaiah 11:5: And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Galatians 2: 16: Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Also, God strips us of our so-called power and makes us behold the government of God's house is on Christ's shoulder and God makes us behold how Christ is a faithful Father to all God's elect—*"and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah."*

Isaiah 9: 6: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, The Prince of Peace.

The government is on Christ's shoulder: Christ faithfully finished the work God gave him to do in perfect righteousness for his people. He fulfilled the law and the prophets. He manifested the righteousness of God. God robed him with the sin of his people that he might robe us in his righteousness. Christ declared God a just God and a Savior by satisfying justice and purging his people of all their sins. And that is not all. Christ is the Everlasting Father of all his children born again of his incorruptible seed. Adam was our father who plunged all his children into sin and death. But Adam is not our father for everlasting. Christ is the Everlasting Father of all who are born of him.

Thirdly, God strips us from vainly imagining that we open the door to God's house by our will and God makes us see that Christ holds the key to the house—"*And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.*" In irresistible power Christ opens the treasures of his word and grace to his redeemed. He gives us life by the Holy Spirit. He gives us wisdom and increases knowledge. His power is irresistible: *when he opens, none shall shut; when he shuts, none shall open.*

Finally, God makes us behold that Christ is THE nail in a sure place and his throne is made to be glorious to all his elect—"*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.*" When God sets Christ up in our hearts Christ becomes all these things to us:

- *He is God's servant*—we trust Christ to have served God perfectly for us.
- He is our *robe of righteousness* by whom we are made the righteousness of God and God makes us to believe that our strength is *Christ's faithfulness to God*
- He becomes our *sovereign ruler upon whom the government of God rests.*
- He becomes *our faithful, everlasting Father by whom we are born again and saved everlastingly*
- He becomes *the key holder* to whom we go to have him open the storehouses of grace and understanding and salvation to us
- We look to him *on his glorious high throne* to rule all things in our lives

A NAIL IN A SURE PLACE

Isaiah 22: 24: And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. 25: In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it.

The picture is of a nail fastened in a secure place upon which all these various vessels are hung and are secure. When God has worked this work of grace in our hearts then we are made to know that we can hang all our eternal hope on Christ because he is our nail in a sure place.

"*They shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house.*"—God our Father hangs the salvation of all his elect upon Christ. Therefore, when Christ is revealed in our hearts, our hope is sure and steadfast because Christ shall lose none.

"*The offspring and the issue*"—means all God's elect, first to last, hang on Christ.

“All vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons”—all God’s elect vessels of mercy from the least to the greatest are hung on Christ: Jew and Gentile, bond and free, rich and poor, educated and uneducated—all God’s elect hang secure on Christ Jesus alone.

What about our former vain confidence and refuges?—*“In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that [WAS THOUGHT TO BE] fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken!”* God’s word never returns void. God casts down our old man of sin and makes us to see that none of our former confidences and refuges can save us. God makes us remove all the burden, all the weight, of our eternal security from off our will and our works and makes us cast the whole burden on Christ.

All who believe on Christ Jesus rest our eternal souls on a nail in a sure place. Believing on Christ and Christ alone we have a sure hope, Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrew 6:19: Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20: Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

May God come now and remove our former vain nail and set up Christ in our hearts. Christ is our nail in a sure place on whom you can cast all your burden and leave it there.

Amen!