

July 16 Answers

- 1) The oracle against **Babylon**, the first of Isaiah's oracles against the **nations** (Isa 13–23). At the time, Babylon was part of the **Assyrian** empire, and it did not rise to world dominance until about a century later. Isaiah's prophecy about Babylon compresses events that are separated by time. Isaiah first spoke of the "**Day** of the LORD," the time when God's wrath will be poured out on the wicked during the Tribulation (Isa 13:1–16). Isaiah then used Babylon's coming destruction by the **Medes** as an example of what that Day will be like (Isa 13:17–22). This was a common practice of the prophets. They used God's judgments of Israel, Judah and the surrounding nations as **miniatures** of His final judgment on the "Day of the LORD." Micah was also prophesying at the time, and he indicted Judah's wicked **leaders**, a fitting charge given that Ahaz was still on the throne. Micah predicted that Jerusalem would become "a heap of **ruins**" because of their sin (Mic 3:12). This chilling prophecy would be remembered almost 100 years later when **Jeremiah** warned Jehoiakim of the same fate (cf. Jer 26:18). Yet Micah also spoke of Zion's future exaltation when **Jesus** would reign as King. Judah's distress would turn to deliverance, and a righteous ruler would arise to shepherd his flock (Mic 5:4). Where would this King come from? From **Bethlehem**: "From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel" (Mic 5:2). This was fulfilled almost **700** years later at the birth of Christ. This reading shows us that God is in **control** of history. He knows the end from the beginning, and He is working all things to the glory of His perfect will!