

BEHOLD MY SERVANT
A MESSIANIC STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOK OF ISAIAH
CHAPTERS 24 to 27

Introduction and Outline of Isaiah Chapters 24:1 – 27:13

The following outline is suggested by Thomas Constable's Notes on Isaiah, 2017 Edition page 112, in which, Constable quotes J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, InterVarsity Press, 1993, pages 194-195. This outline is suggestive of a chiasmic structure which has as its center, Isaiah 25:6-12, which depicts the glorious kingdom of the Messiah when He will reign on Mount Zion.

For those not familiar with a chiasmic structure, it is a literary device quite often found in the Scriptures which most often has as its form the front part of the letter X (Greek letter Chi) and referred to as a chiasm. The outline is seen in this format: > and most often has a forward and reversing set of repetitive points, statements or rows, for example:

A...(statement 1)
 B.....(statement 2)
 C.....(statement 3)
 D (center point).....(statement 4)
 C'.....(repeat of statement 3)
 B'.....(repeat of statement 2)
A'.....(repeat of statement 1)

It should be noted that the repeat statements do not necessarily have to be an exact repetition of the first stated point and may counter or repeat the intention of the first statement. Some scholars seem to find chiasmic structures everywhere in the Scriptures but care must be taken to not cast a chiasmic grid over passages where none is obvious evident. However, some Scripture passages have such a very visual and obvious chiasmic structure.

This structure is self-evident as seen from the outline below

A The Lord's harvest from a destroyed world: 24:1-13 (vs. 1-12 destruction and vs. 13 gleanings)
 B The song of the world remnant (24:14-16a)
 C The sinful world overthrown (24:16b-20)
 D The waiting world (24:21-23)
 E The song of the ruined city (25:1-5)
 F Mount Zion (25:6-12)
 E' The song of the strong city (26:1-6)
 D' The waiting people of God (26:7-21)
 C' The spiritual forces of evil overthrown (27:1)
 B' The song of the remnant of the people (27:2-6)
 A' The Lord's harvest from a destroyed people 27:7-13 (vs. 7-11 destruction and vs. 12-13 gleanings)

Chapters 24-27 contain prophetic declarations of world destruction and songs of praise to God in a manner that is very similar to the prophecy of the Book of Revelation from chapters 6-20. Since the Scripture have One divine author who moved the human scribes to write as He directed, 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21, it should not surprise students of the Scriptures to see the consistency of the message of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. Many commentators of Scripture fall into the habit of stating that a particular human author of a Bible book borrowed or took his message from a stated source either within or without of the pages of the Bible. This is a dangerous viewpoint and may lead to the conclusion that the divine author, the Holy Spirit, was not actively involved in the writing of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit moved the human writers to inscribe exactly as He planned so no human writer needed to borrow, repeat or take from any source any reference that was not the full intention of the Holy Spirit. These four chapters of Isaiah are placed exactly where the Holy Spirit intended them to be and are placed in this specific part of the prophecy God gave Isaiah for God's divine purposes.

Up to this point in the prophecy of the Book of Isaiah, the prophet has described in startling detail the plan of God in His dealings of judgment upon the nation of Judah, its immediate neighbors and the most powerful nations in the ancient near east during the days of Isaiah. All who oppose God or refuse to acknowledge Him and worship Him as the One glorious creator of the heavens and the earth will face His divine wrath. Chapters 24-27 are a dramatic climax to all 23 preceding chapters. The main overarching message of these four chapters as well as all those that have come before is: God demands unfettered trust and faith in Him and any peoples including His chosen race who do not trust Him whole-heartedly will face His judgment and destruction. A secondary message is also evident: Even amid the wrath of God, He will show mercy, Habakkuk 3:2, and has decreed that a remnant of His chosen race and Gentiles from the nations of the earth will survive to enjoy His glorious kingdom, which has as its center-piece Mount Zion and has as its personal Ruler, the Messiah.

Gary V. Smith provides a very useful analysis of how chapters 24-27 are thematically related to chapters 13-23:

“Chapters 24–27 are thematically connected to the messages against the foreign nations in chaps. 13–23 (especially 13:1–16), to the eschatological ideas in 2:1–5, and to the praise of God in 12:1–6. Specific theological ideas are recalled from earlier texts: (a) The positive “song of the vineyard” in 27:2–6 reverses the negative vineyard song in 5:1–7. (b) The establishment of God’s kingdom in 2:6–21 will involve the humbling of the proud (cf. 25:11–12; 26:5) and the Lord reigning in Zion (cf. 24:23b). (c) The imagery of destruction in chaps. 24–27 is closely connected to images of God’s judgment of the individual nations in chaps. 13–23, and particularly some of the phrases in the eschatological introduction in 13:1–16. (d) Both 13:1–16 and 24:1–23 describe the destruction and desolation of the earth (13:5, 9 and 24:1, 3.). (e) People will be in pain like a woman in labor (13:8 and 26:17–18). (f) God will come to the earth in power (13:9 and 24:23). (g) The sun and moon will be darkened (13:10 and 24:23) and the earth will shake (13:13 and 24:18–20). (h) The proud will be humbled (13:11 and 25:11–12; 26:5). And (i) few people will be left on earth (13:12 and 24:6) because the people are sinful (13:11 and 24:5–6). Chapters 24–27 are not so much a summary but the grand finale for 13–23. This repetition of ideas unfolds a high level of theological continuity with Isaiah’s earlier prophecies, but the meanings of these phrases in 24–27 are not limited to their meaning in earlier paragraphs. Though earlier reference may

provide a background from which to draw meaning, the interpreter needs to evaluate carefully the new contexts in chaps. 24–27 to find out if new meanings have developed to clarify God’s eschatological work.” (Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah*, Vol. 1, pages 406-407).

(1) A The Lord’s Harvest From a Destroyed World: 24:1-13

(1. Destruction: Verses 1-12)

If we understand that Holy Spirit intended these four chapters to naturally follow the preceding chapters on the judgment of the nations and prior to the destruction of the Assyrian armies by the angel of the Lord, then it is possible to determine the time when these prophecies were declared. It is likely that they were proclaimed by Isaiah just prior to the final siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians in 701 B.C. They are then closely linked to chapter 22 verses 1-14 and stand as a vivid picture of God’s intentions, not only for the nation of Assyria in the near future but for all the nations of the world in a far future day.

Throughout chapter 24, Isaiah is declaring the destruction to come on the entire earth. But when is this destruction to come? We know from history that this world-wide destruction did not happen during the days of Isaiah nor any day since the times in which Isaiah lived. We also know from Scripture that the type of destruction described by the prophet will happen in the future as stated by the Apostle John in Revelation chapters 6 to 20. It cannot refer to the opening verses of Genesis for at that time no peoples yet lived on the earth. There were no inhabitants during the first day of creation to be scattered.

Gleason L. Archer, Jr. comments on verses 1-13:

“The judgment that has been particularized in chapters 13-23 for each of the nations involved with Palestine now is represented as about to be poured out upon the earth as a whole. Verse 4 makes it certain that **earth** here must mean “the whole inhabited world” and not simply the land (of Palestine), as *eres* (v. 3) might otherwise be construed. There are just two classes of mankind in view here: the wicked and corrupt society of this world; and the faithful people of God. Without distinction as to class or condition, the wrath of the Almighty is to be poured out upon all the people of the world; and all the delights of sinful pleasure will be snatched away from them. Only the smallest remnant of them (vv. 6, 13) will survive the general destruction.” (Gleason L. Archer, Jr. *Isaiah*, The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, page 626, Moody Press, 1962).

24:1 *Look, the LORD lays waste to the earth,
makes it desolate,
twists its surface,
and scatters its inhabitants.*

There should be no doubt that the opening verse of chapter 24 clearly states that the cataclysmic days of the end of the Tribulation period, prior to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom are prophesied by Isaiah. This opening verse is a fit declaratory introduction for chapters 24-27 of Isaiah’s prophecy. Some call these chapters the little apocalypse of Isaiah for they describe

events that are revealed in greater detail in the Book of Revelation which is also known as the Apocalypse. This title for the Book of Revelation comes from the word “revelation” which is the Greek word *Apokalypsis* (meaning revealing, unveiling or unfolding) which is the very first word of John’s Revelation of Jesus Christ. Verse 1 of Isaiah chapter 24, not only is a capstone statement for all of chapters 24-27, but is also the beginning statement of these four chapters which brings to dramatic conclusion the judgment on the nations recorded in chapters 13 to 23 of Isaiah’s prophecy. Therefore, chapters 24-27 were not arbitrarily inserted into the book of Isaiah at this point but were carefully written by the prophet to bring his words of judgment on the nations to a stunning conclusion. These words should provoke all who read them to consider their relationship with the Lord who holds their future in His hands. If any who read or hear the words of chapters 24-27, choose not to come to the Lord in faith and trust in Him for salvation, then they will suffer the consequences that these chapters so terrifyingly reveal.

The very first word that Isaiah states in verse 1 is “*Look*” or better translated as “*Behold.*” Isaiah begins this declaratory exclamation with a notice that the LORD has something dramatic to reveal and all who hear or read the prophet’s words should sit up and take notice. This is not just the passing on of words received from the Lord. Isaiah intends that his audience pay serious attention to the message he will next reveal.

The message concerns the earth. The word for “earth” is the Hebrew word *eres* which in the context of this passage, as Gleason Archer Jr. has stated above, is best translated as “earth” and not simply land which some may misunderstand as referring only to the land of Judah. The entire world is being addressed and God’s judgment is to come upon it as the last book in the Bible so vividly declares.

The word “*desolate*” is also translated as “devastates” and is the Hebrew word *balaq* and has the meaning of “to annihilate” or “lay waste” which is repetitive of the prior phrase: “*lays waste to the earth.*” The word “*twists*” often translated as “distorts” is the Hebrew word *avah* which has the meaning of perversion, to do iniquity, and bending or twisting. The sense of the Hebrew is that all of the earth will be twisted out of recognition or distorted due to the activity of iniquity by its inhabitants. The Lord is therefore distorting the entire surface of the earth as a judgment upon the earth’s inhabitants for their unending wickedness. See also verses 5-6.

24:2 *It will hit the priest just like the people,
the master just like the servant,
the mistress just like the maid,
the seller just like the buyer,
the borrower just like the lender,
the debtor just like the creditor.*

The comparative words of who will be like each other: people-priest, servant-master, maid-mistress, buyer-seller, lender-borrower, and creditor-debtor are indicative that in the last days when God will lay waste the earth, everyone will equally face God’s wrath. There will be no exclusions. This prophecy is again seen in Revelation 6:15-17:

“15 Then the kings of the earth, important people, commanders, the rich and powerful, and every slave and free person, hid themselves in the caves and rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of the one sitting on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to survive it?”

24:3-4 *The earth will be absolutely devastated,
and completely plundered;
the LORD has spoken this word.*

⁴ *The earth dries up and withers,
the world languishes and withers,
the people of prominence of the earth languish.*

The destruction of the earth in these verses is described by many words which are very descriptive of the kind of devastation that will come upon the world at the end of the Tribulation period when God completes that part of His judgment just prior to the second advent of the Messiah who will rescue the faithful remnant of His people Israel and then establish His earthly kingdom that will endure for a thousand years.

The types of destruction mentioned describe a climatic time when God will deal with mankind for their abominations and evil actions. John the Apostle states: *“We thank you, O Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. 18 The nations raged, and your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged has arrived, as well as the time to reward your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear your name, both the small and the great and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”* Revelation 11:17-18.

Those who were responsible for destroying the earth would themselves be destroyed as Isaiah so clearly proclaims in verses 5-6. The final destruction of the earth will come about at the time of the great white throne judgment, Revelation 20:11 and just following the pronouncement of the judgment of the second death, the lake of fire as described in Revelation 20:14 – 21:1. Some students of Scripture see this destruction as not involving the complete destruction of the earth but more of a renovation where the earth is being prepared for the final eternal state. This view seems unlikely as the Apostle Peter states as recorded in 2 Peter 3:10: *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”* (NKJV)

At the time of the great white throne judgment, the Apostle John describes the demise of the earth and heaven as recorded in Revelation 20:11: *“Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it, from whose presence the earth and heaven fled away and there was no place found for them.”* The Apostle Matthew records the words of Jesus regarding these climatic days in

Matthew 24:35: “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.*” Isaiah also adds more comment in 24:18-20. See the notes below for these verses.

During the days of the Tribulation as recorded in the book of Revelation, the Lord will bring disaster upon the earth and its inhabitants. The Apostle John states various stages of destruction in Revelation 6:12-16, 8:7-12, 11:19, 16:1-21 which were all a prelude to the final removal of the earth and heaven as recorded in Revelation 20:11. The reference to the heaven in Revelation 20:11 must be the atmospheric and cosmic heaven, including the sun and the moon and all stars and galaxies. The new heaven and new earth, Revelation 21:1, will have no need for these celestial objects as stated in Revelation 21:23: “*The city has no need of the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God illuminates it and the Lamb is its lamp.*”

During the period of the Tribulation, the earth will be subject to great turmoil, yet the entire earth will not be destroyed. Jeremiah 4:27-31 is a similar passage regarding the days of the Tribulation. Vs. 27 states: “*For this is what the LORD says, the whole land will be desolate, yet I will not totally destroy it.*” The complete destruction of the earth will happen at the time of the great white throne judgment.

It is not just the earth and the cosmos that are under the judgment of God. Isaiah 24:1 as seen above includes the scattering of the inhabitants of the earth. Verse 2 describes these people as including all peoples from every walk of life. Vs. 4 states that: “*the people of prominence of the earth languish.*” The Hebrew word for languish is *amal* which has the meaning of languish, fades and withers. Isaiah uses this word in 16:8 (waste away); 19:8 (waste away); 24:7 (languishes); and 33:9 (withers). See also Jeremiah 14:2; Hosea 4:3; Joel 1:10 and Nahum 1:4.

Israel will not escape these days of judgment and devastation. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum suggests that there are several day of the Lord (Jehovah) passages that refer to the punishment of Israel: Ezekiel 13:1-7; Zechariah 13:2-6; Joel 2:1-11; Joel 3:14-17; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah 1:7-13; and Zechariah 13:8-9. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps of the Messiah*, pages 281-285

⁵ *The earth is defiled by its inhabitants;
because they have transgressed the laws,
violated the statutes
and broken the everlasting covenant.*

⁶ *Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants are found guilty.
Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned,
and few people are left.*

In verses 5-6, Isaiah expounds on the reasons for the demise of the people of the earth. The peoples of the earth, since the creation of the first man and woman, have never stopped violating God’s commands and rebelling against Him. God’s first catastrophic judgment on the peoples of the earth for their continual evilness was the great flood recorded in Genesis chapters 6-9. God stated that He would not destroy every living thing – while the earth remains.

Moses as recorded in Genesis 8:20-22 states: *“Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took some of all the clean beasts and clean birds, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the LORD smelled the sweet aroma. And the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of human beings, for the imagination of the human heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again destroy every living thing as I have done. 22 As long as the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night will not cease.”*

The people of the earth have defiled the earth by transgressing “the laws.” The word “laws” is the Hebrew word *torot*. It may not be a reference to the Mosaic law. It can be understood as general laws of truth that God has made evident to all human beings. The Apostle Paul states in Romans 1:18-20: *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness, 19 because what can be known about God is clear to them; for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes are clearly seen, even his everlasting power and divinity, being seen through the things that are made. So they are without excuse.”* However, as “laws”, Hebrew word *torot* is combined with “statutes”, the Hebrew word *choq*, it would also apply to the people of God who will face the terrible days of the Tribulation as Jeremiah 30:4-7 reveal.

Also, God stated, as recorded in Genesis 9:11: *“I establish my covenant with you. Never again will all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; and never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”* It is important to remember God made this promise to keep the seasons and the cycle of day and night, *“as long as the earth remains”*. In Isaiah chapter 24 and Revelation chapter 20, God promises to completely destroy the earth. The earth will not remain and therefore God can keep His covenant with Noah and also punish the inhabitants of the earth for their continuing to transgress His laws and to violate His statutes and to break the everlasting covenant. (Isaiah 24:5).

The reference to breaking the “everlasting covenant” (vs. 5) has resulted in many opinions by Bible scholars and students as to its exact meaning. What is this everlasting covenant? There are several covenants that God has made with man that are stated in the Scriptures as “everlasting”: (1) Covenant with Noah: Genesis 9:16 and the greater context: Genesis chapters 8 and 9; (2) Covenant with Abraham: Genesis 17:7 and the greater context: Genesis 12:1-3, 15:18-21, 17:1-21, 26:2-5 and 28:10-17; (3) Covenant with the Priesthood: Numbers 25:10-13; (4) Covenant with David: 2 Samuel 23:5 and the greater context: 2 Samuel 7:12-16, Psalms 89, 110 and 132; (5) the New Covenant: Jeremiah 32:40 and the greater context: Jeremiah chapters 31-33. As there is so much speculation among scholars and students as to the exact “everlasting covenant” meant in Isaiah 24:5, it is perhaps best not to join in adding further opinions but to let this statement stand on its own. God will have the last say on this in any event.

It is a worthwhile and important study for students of the Bible to understand the covenants God has made with mankind. It is arguably the central issue of all the Scriptures as the covenants give detail as to God’s purposes and plans for the world and the peoples He has created. To understand the Bible correctly is to understand the meaning and intent of these covenants. It is a

sad commentary that many Bible believing saints do not know nor understand, even in a cursory way, the content and meaning of these covenants.

In 24:6 Isaiah records the results of those who have not kept the laws and statutes of God and have broken the everlasting covenant God had made with them. There are two calamities to come upon the earth. The first calamity is: *“a curse devours the earth,”* and the second is: *“the inhabitants of the earth are burned and few people are left.”* The reference to the curse that devours the earth is as old as the Garden of Eden. God cursed the ground because of the sin of Adam, Genesis 3:17. Later when Noah was born, Lamech, his father called his name Noah, and he said, *“He will bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands, because of the ground that the LORD has cursed.”* Genesis 5:29.

God has promised a curse on those who have been disobedient to his commandments and a blessing to those who have been obedient to them. Near the end of Moses’ life, this great leader spoke to the Israelites and urged them to be obedient to the Lord and follow all his commandments. Deuteronomy chapters 28 to 30 contain promises of both blessings and curses for the people of God depending upon their obedience or disobedience to the words of God. Other passages of Scripture contain similar invocations: Joshua 8:34, 2 Chronicles 34:24, Proverbs 3:3, Isaiah 65:5, Jeremiah 11:3, 17:5, and Daniel 9:11 in the Old Testament. It is not until the last chapter of the Bible that we read of the eternal state where, *“There will no longer be any curse.”* Revelation 22:3. Jeremiah reminded the Israelites of the consequences of not heeding the words of God’s covenant, the Mosaic Covenant: *“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2 ‘Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 3 Tell them, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: ‘Cursed is the person who does not obey the words of this covenant, 4 which I commanded your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron-smelting furnace,’ saying, ‘Obey my voice, and do everything that I command you then you will be my people, and I will be your God, 5 so that I may keep the promise that I swore to your forefathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey,’” the very land you have this day.’” Then I answered, and said, “Amen, may it be so, LORD.”*

The words of Isaiah in 24:6: *“its inhabitants are found guilty,”* have a significant meaning. “Found guilty” is translated “desolate” in the KJV. The Hebrew word is *haru* which means to be burned or charred. (Victor Buksbazen, *Isaiah*, page 237). Thus, when this idea is repeated in the vs. 6, *“Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned”*, it delivers a powerful message to all who read Isaiah’s prophecy. God’s final solution to the unrepentant sin of mankind is destruction by fire. First the burning of Hell awaits those who go there and then Hell itself is cast into the eternal lake of fire. Revelation 20:14. This is not a popular message and many try to dispel this horrible outcome by advocating the annihilation of man’s souls upon death but this is not what the Bible teaches. The message of both Isaiah 24 and Revelation 20 needs to be heeded by all of the world’s inhabitants. No one who continues to sin is exempt. No one can escape the horrific consequences of God’s final solution for sin unless they repent of their sins and trust in the Messiah of Isaiah who is the Savior of mankind. Isaiah had earlier commented on this time in Isaiah 13:11-13.

24:7-9 *The new wine dries up,
the vine languishes,
all the merry-hearted groan.*

⁸ *The celebration with tambourines ceases,
the revelry of those who rejoice stops,
the joy of the harp halts.*

⁹ *No longer will they drink wine with a song;
strong drink will be bitter to those who drink it.*

Verses 7-9 are a sub-section within the greater section of verses 7-12 which continue the description of the woes of the people who are living during the time of the Tribulation. Those who would drink wine for celebrating have no cause for merriment as the vine will decay. Isaiah uses anthropomorphism in vs. 7 to describe the new wine as languishing (mourning) as if the wine itself is aware of the calamity of the judgment of God upon the people. In vs. 8, musical instruments, tambourines and harps will no longer be used by revelers, those who are joyous, exultant or jubilant. There will be no cause for joyous occasions. If and when singing takes place, wine is not consumed, vs. 9, and even strong drink offers no pleasure for it will be bitter to those who drink it.

24:10 *The wasted city is broken down;
every house is locked down
so that no one can enter.*

The identification of the “wasted city” (or city of chaos) vs. 10 and desolate city, in vs.12, has led to much speculation as to its identity. Jerusalem and Babylon have been suggested however, as the city is not identified, it seems best to let this prophecy of the “city” in the future to be a representation of all the cities and their inhabitants that will suffer unimaginable misery and ruin during the Tribulation period to come. The city where the wicked inhabitants have rebelled against God is “*broken down.*” The meaning here is that the city has been laid waste and is now of no worth. There is no house open where people can enter or live. This is a prophecy of the final days of the Tribulation period during which the announcement of the fall of Babylon is described (Revelation 18).

24:11 *There is crying in the streets for wine;
all joy has turned to gloom,
the gladness of the land is banished.*

Isaiah in vs. 11 repeats the emphasis of verses 7-9 as the vine has decayed and there is no wine to drink and there is no joyous occasion where wine would be consumed. There is no joy whatsoever in “the earth” as only gloom remains for any gaiety has been banished. The wicked inhabitants have no place to turn and face utter despair and the horror of the judgment of God upon them.

24:12 *The city is left desolate,
and the gate is beaten into pieces.*

As a fitting description of the worthlessness of the city, Isaiah states that the very gate of the “city” is “*left desolate*” or “*battered into ruins*” (ESV). The city gate represents its defense in the keeping out of enemies and protecting the people within the walls. There is now no defense and the enemy the people face is God Almighty who will enact complete destruction on both the city and its inhabitants. There will be no escape from the judgment of God as only desolation remains in the city.

(2. Gleanings: Vs. 13)

24:13 *This is how it will be throughout the earth
among the nations,
like when an olive tree is beaten in harvest,
like the gleanings left when the grape harvest is over.*

Although contained within the message of destruction, Isaiah’s prophecy does offer a glimmer of hope for those who will endure the days of Tribulation. The residue from the shaking of an olive tree and the gleanings when the grape harvest is over, seems to indicate that there will be a few people who can harvest the meager fruit that is left. These people may be understood to be the “remnant” of the elect people of God which are ethnic Jews who have come to a belief of their Messiah for salvation. They will have called on Him to come and save them from their enemies who have surrounded them and threaten to completely destroy them. Zechariah 9:11-17, 12:1-14:7. In that day they will: “*look on me, the one whom they have pierced. They will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only son, and will grieve bitterly for him, as one bitterly grieving over a firstborn child.*” Zechariah 12:10. The ones who glean the meager leftovers from the harvest would also include surviving Gentiles who have come to trust in Jesus Christ, the Messiah, for salvation.

(2) B The Song of the World Remnant (24:14-16a)

24:14-16a *They will lift up their voices,
they will shout for joy;
the majesty of the LORD
they will proclaim from the west.*

¹⁵ *Therefore glorify the LORD in the east,
even the name of the LORD,
in the islands of the sea,
the God of Israel.*

¹⁶ *From the ends of the earth we hear songs:
"Glory to the Righteous One."*

The remnant, both Jews and Gentiles who have trusted in their Messiah for salvation and are alive when the Messiah returns to end the period of Tribulation will sing praises of glory to the name of the Lord. They will sing His praises from the east and from the west, from the coastlands of the sea and from the ends of the earth. The peoples from every place on the earth will glorify God and sing "*Glory to the Righteous One.*" vs. 16a. The reason for this rejoicing is that they will have seen the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who has saved them from the calamity of destruction. This inclusion of songs of praises amid prophecies of destruction is similar to the pattern of the Book of Revelation. Chapters 24-27 of Isaiah remind the reader of Scripture of Revelation chapters 6-19 where the prophecies of world doom, introduced by Isaiah, are further explained. For a discussion on the inclusion of the Gentiles in this world-wide chorus of praise, see Gary V. Smith, Isaiah, Vol. 1, page 421.

Alternate meaning:

In vs. 16a the DASV states: "Glory to the Righteous One." The KJV has "glory to the righteous." Victor Buksbazen advises:

"Some understand "the righteous" as referring to God Himself. However since God is nowhere else called "*Tsadik*" – "the righteous one," it therefore means "the righteous people of God," or His faithful remnant. (Victor Buksbazen, Isaiah, pages 237-238).

(3) C The Sinful World Overthrown (24:16b-20)

24:16b-20 *But I said, "I am wasting away,
I am wasting away, woe is me!
For the deceivers have acted deceitfully;
the deceivers have acted very deceitfully."
¹⁷ Terror, the pit, and the snare, are upon you,
O inhabitant of the earth.
¹⁸ Whoever flees from the sound of terror
will fall into the pit;
whoever comes up out of the midst of the pit
will be caught in the snare.
For the windows of heaven are opened,
and the foundations of the earth tremble.
¹⁹ The earth is totally broken up,
the earth is ripped apart,
the earth is violently shaken.
²⁰ The earth will stagger like a drunkard,
it will sway like a hut in a storm;
its transgression will be heavy on it,
it will fall and not get up again.*

As the Prophet Isaiah contemplates the vision of the doom of the world given to him by God, he realizes the hopeless condition of all mankind including the nation of Judah. Not only is the situation of the world hopeless it is further terrorized by the treacherous actions of the world's inhabitants. Instead of seeking God in repentance when faced with worldwide calamity, the peoples of the world resort to treachery. The prophet cries out, "Woe is me" similar to an earlier time when he saw the Lord, Isaiah 6:5, and he acknowledged that he lived among a people of unclean lips.

David L. Cooper comments on these words:

"In verse 16b the prophet sighs and expresses a woe because "the treacherous have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous have dealt very treacherously." When one recognizes that Isaiah, chapter 24, is the abridged form of Revelation 6:1-20:10, and when one compares this brief outline with the full details as given in the Book of Revelation, one comes to the conclusion that this "treacherous one," or ones of whom the prophet here speaks, can be none other than the Antichrist and his lieutenants who, in the middle of the Tribulation ban all religion and demand that everyone worship him." (D.L. Cooper, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Biblical Research Monthly-June 1944).

Isaiah does not seem to be responding in woe to the current crisis facing Jerusalem by the armies from Assyria amid the cavalier attitude of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Isaiah 22:1-14. He states in verses 17-20 that it is the entire earth and all of its inhabitants that are facing destruction. From the perspective of Isaiah, who is declaring this prophecy, the timing of the calamity of the complete destruction of the earth would not be known. He would not have known how far it will be in the future that the earth "*will fall, and not get up again.*" vs. 20. Thus, Isaiah sees that due to the treachery of the world's inhabitants, he also is among the doomed and as yet, he cannot sing the songs of praise, verses 14-16a, that those in the future will sing who will have escaped the doom to come.

The tone of verses 16a to 20 is one of complete dismay and helplessness by the inhabitants of the earth. Those who are victimized by the treacherous dealings by the wicked of the earth will not escape terror if they run away for the pit and the snare will entrap them, verses 16a-18a. If this is not enough to endure, the prophet reveals that the windows above will be opened, vs.18b, which is likely a reference to the judgment God will send from the heavens upon the peoples of the earth as described in Revelation 6:12-17, 8:3-13 and 16:1-21. If the judgments of God sent from the heavens are endured, then worse is to follow.

The words in verses 17-18: "*the pit and the snare,*" are descriptive terms that predict that humans will be caught in traps just like those set for wild animals. Jeremiah uses these words when describing God's judgment on Moab: "*Terror, the pit, and the snare, is your destiny, O inhabitant of Moab,*" says the LORD. 44 "*The one who flees from fear will fall into the pit; the one who climbs out of the pit will be taken by the snare.*" Jeremiah 48: 43-44. The Prophet Amos describes these days in a well-known passage: "Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you want the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light. 19 It will be as if a

man fled from a lion, only to meet a bear; then escaping into a house, rests his hand on the wall, only to be bitten by a snake.” Amos 5:18-19.

The words in vs. 18: “*For the windows of heaven are opened, and the foundations of the earth tremble,*” are descriptive of the destruction to come during the days of the Tribulation. The phrase “*the windows of heaven are opened*” is a reference to the destructive judgments God will cause to come from heaven as John describes in Revelation 6:12-17; 8:5-12 and 16:1-21). The phrase “*the foundations of the earth tremble*” is also a reference to these same horrifying days of judgment as John describes in Revelation as earthquakes, 6:12; 8:5; 11:19; and 16:17-19.

Verses 19-20 reveal that the earth itself will be “*broken up.*” It will be “*ripped apart*” and will be “*violently shaken*” and the earth will “*stagger like a drunkard*”. It will “*sway like a hut in a storm,*” and finally, due to the transgressions of its inhabitants, “*it will fall, and not get up again.*”

This descriptive terminology of the last days is not confined to this specific prophecy of Isaiah. Isaiah mentioned a very similar judgment on the earth in 13:13-16. Those who understand this prophecy to be a literal description of the last days will acknowledge that no matter how bad this period of calamity appears to be during the great Tribulation period, God is still in control and will not allow the earth to be finally destroyed until after the days of the millennial kingdom are over and the world’s inhabitants come face to face with God at the great white throne judgment. Revelation 20:11.

(4) D The Waiting World (24:21-23)
(A Better Title: The Reign of the King)

24:21 *In that day the LORD will punish
the host of heaven in heaven,
and the kings of the earth on the earth.*

The final three verses of Isaiah chapter 24 are an amazing prediction of the final days of the earth, immediately following the great Tribulation period. These three verses are directly connected with the previous verses of chapter 24 with the opening words of vs. 21: “*In that day.*” What day is meant by the prophet? “*In that day,*” must refer in context to the period of the great Tribulation and the days following when God will have His final solution for the sinful inhabitants of both the “*host of heaven on high and the kings of the earth on the earth,*” vs. 21. The verses that precede these final three verses of chapter 24 deal with the destruction of the earth and punishment of its inhabitants that can only be understood as the days during the great tribulation. No other period in the history of the earth can rightly fit the days described in Revelation chapters 6-19. These three verses, 21-23, complete the prophecy with a description of the rule by the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem on Mount Zion.

The prophet records that, in that day, *“the Lord will punish the host of heaven in heaven and the kings of the earth on the earth.”* The close connection of the words “hosts” and “kings” reveal the prophet’s intention. For just as God is the Lord of hosts, vs. 23, who is the sovereign of all the armies (angelic ones) of heaven, the word “host” in vs. 21 should be rightly understood as those angelic beings who inhabit the heavenly places. These “hosts” should not be interpreted as stars and other celestial bodies for what purpose are they being punished? What have they done to deserve God’s judgment? The prophet Daniel was given a vision of the activities of these angelic hosts as recorded in Daniel 10:13. Other Scriptural references to their activity and their judgment are recorded in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 2:15, 1 Peter 3:22, and Revelation 12:7-9. Refer also to Job 1:6-12 and 2:1-7 for insights into Satan’s activities in the heavenly realm.

It is sometimes a puzzle to students of Scripture why God, in His design and plan for His creation, allowed for those angelic hosts to remain for so long in a state of rebellion before He finally brings His judgment upon them. The student must remember that God’s ways are higher than our ways and His wisdom far surpasses that of any human being, no matter how intelligent or knowledgeable. God ultimately has a purpose for these angelic beings and when this purpose is fulfilled to God’s glory, He will bring on them the punishment He alone has decreed. Not all angelic hosts will be so judged. Revelation 12:7-9 seems to indicate that up to one third of these angelic hosts will come under the judgment of God for their rebellious allegiance with Satan.

Not only will the angelic hosts who have rebelled be judged by God in the last days, but the kings of the earth will also come under divine retribution for their sins. It is significant that in vs. 21, the prophet Isaiah repeats the phrase “on earth”. This emphasizes the distinction between the heavenly realm and the earthly realm and makes it clear that God’s judgment upon all beings is being described. While Isaiah limits this punishment on earth to the kings as a counter point to those who are in the heavens on high, other Scriptures certainly indicate that all the inhabitants of the earth will face God’s punishment in that day. Refer to Zephaniah 1:2-3, Matthew 13:41-42, and Revelation 20:12. The earth’s rulers will certainly be at the forefront of the ones receiving their due reward for their sinfulness and rebellion against God. Revelation 6:15.

24:22 *They will be gathered together,
as prisoners gathered in a pit.
They will be locked up in the prison;
after many days they will be punished.*

Isaiah records that “they”, likely both the angelic hosts and the wicked kings of the earth will be gathered together and confined in prison and *“after many days they will be punished”*. A description of the fate of the angels and ungodly humans that sinned is recorded in 2 Peter chapter 2: verses 4-5: *“For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but threw them down to hell, and held them in pits of darkness to be there until the judgment; 5 and if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the ungodly world.”* and verses 9-10: *“then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and reserve the unrighteous for punishment unto the day of*

judgment, 10 especially those who indulge their flesh with defiling lust, and despise authority. Brash and arrogant, they do not fear slandering heavenly beings.”

Jude records in his letter, verse 6: “*And angels that kept not their proper positions, but left their appropriate dwelling place, he has kept in everlasting chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day.*” It is likely that the place where angelic hosts who have sinned are being kept for their final judgment is the pit or abyss. Revelation 20:3. The ungodly people of the earth who have died will be kept in Hades (Hell) until the day of the great white throne judgment. Matthew 23:33, James 3:6, Revelation 20:14.

The next statement in vs. 22 “*after many days they will be punished*” if taken in context with the first part of this verse, describes a period of time that best fits following the millennial rule of Christ. Revelation 20:1-6. This is a natural understanding of this verse. Revelatory prophecy in Scripture is progressive from Genesis to Revelation with later prophetic truth often filling in details that was not first declared in an earlier passage. This is seen most readily in comparing prophetic and fulfillment passages such as Isaiah 7:14 and Luke 1:26-38.

24:23 *Then the moon will blush,
and the sun will be ashamed;
for the LORD of hosts will reign in Mount Zion,
in Jerusalem and before his elders with glory.*

The prophet reveals the crowning and glorious truth of the apex of “in that day” of vs. 21. In that day, “*the moon will blush and the sun will be ashamed.*” The Hebrew words Isaiah used was literally the *white* and the *hot* referring to the white reflection of the moon and the hot blazing sun. The reason they would be abased and ashamed is their brightness and glory cannot measure up to the glory of the LORD of hosts who “*will reign in Mount Zion*” The Lord will reign in Jerusalem “*before his elders with glory.*” It is possible that the words of the prophecy in this verse are condensed as early prophetic messages often are in Scripture. Prophets of the Old Testament were often given prophetic truths from God that “telescoped” or condensed the complete message. Later passages in Scripture expanded the message to provide full details as to the Lord’s purposes and plans for His people and for the times of the end. Vs. 23 appears to be one of these condensed prophecies. The abashing of the sun and moon seems to fit with the eternal state according to Revelation 22:5: “*There will be no more night. They will not need any light from a lamp, nor light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. They will reign forever and ever.*”

However, the words in Isaiah 24:23, “*for the LORD of hosts will reign in Mount Zion in Jerusalem,*” best fit the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. In the eternal state, there is no mention of Mount Zion and Jerusalem is there called the New Jerusalem. The following passages describe the rule of the Messiah from Mount Zion: Psalm 2:6; Isaiah 2:3, 4:5, and 8:18; Joel 3:16-21; Micah 4:1-13; Zechariah 8:3, and 9:9. The last phrase of vs. 23, “*before his elders with glory.*” can be understood as fitting either the millennial kingdom or the eternal state. The first Scriptural reference to elders beholding the glory of God is Exodus 24:9-11 and the last specific

reference is John's vision of heaven in Revelation 19:4 which comes just before the establishment of the millennial rule of Christ.

David L. Cooper comments:

“At the conclusion of the Tribulation the Lord Jesus Christ will come back to this earth and will set up His kingdom. He will not return, however, until the Jews acknowledge their national sin of rejecting Him and plead with Him to return. This truth is seen in such passages as Hosea 5:15-6:3 and Matthew 23:37-39. When He reappears, He will lift the curse from the earth and restore conditions similar to those which prevailed in Eden. A hint of this is found in Isaiah 51:1-3.

In the last verse of chapter 24 the moon, it is said, will be confounded and the sun put to shame. The reason for this phenomenon is that Jehovah of hosts with His glory and majesty will eclipse the brilliancy of the heavenly bodies--even though at that time the light of the moon will be as that of the sun and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold what it is today (Isa. 30:26). For a glowing picture of the earth as it will appear during the peaceful reign of our Lord, see such passages as Isaiah 2:1-4 and 4:2-6”. (D.L. Cooper, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Biblical Research Monthly-June 1944)

Teaching Outline of Isaiah chapter 24

The Prophecy of the Ruin (of the earth): 24:1-12

The Plight of the Remnant: 24:13

The Praise of the Remnant: 24:14-16a

The Predicament of the Reprobates: 24:16b-20

The Proclamation of the Reign (of the King): 24:21-23

(5) E The Song of the Ruined City (25:1-5)

Chapter 25 of Isaiah continues the short apocalyptic section of chapters 24-27. Thomas Constable provides a concise commentary on this chapter:

The world rejoicing in Messiah's reign ch. 25

Isaiah next described the remnant, believers who will stream to Zion, praising God, at the beginning of Messiah's reign. Notice the many triadic formations in the structure of this chapter, creating a feeling of the completeness of joy. The prophet first pictured the pilgrims moving through a ruined world to Zion, singing of the wonder of their rescue and the Lord's power over their enemy.

"Soon after God in His judgment will wipe out sinful people (chap. 24) the Messiah's glorious kingdom will begin. In poetry Isaiah described the praise that will be ascribed to the Lord in the Millennium for His marvelous work."289. (Note: 289 J. Martin, p. 1073.) (Thomas Constable, *Isaiah*, pages 116-117.)

25:1 *O LORD, you are my God;
I will exalt you,
I will praise your name;
for you have done wonderful things,
plans shaped of old in absolute faithfulness.*

In verses 1-5 of chapter 25 Isaiah proclaims another song of praise to God. Interspaced among the prophecies of destruction on the earth are these praise hymns: 24:14-16a; 25:1-5; and 26:1-19 and 27:2-6. In the immediate context of Isaiah 24:21-23, the prophet injects this praise song, which is sung by the remnant of the earth as they march through a ruined city and onwards to Mount Zion to meet the Lord of hosts who is now ruling the world from the city of Jerusalem. The song of praise begins in verse 1, with exaltation and thanksgiving to the name of the Lord, for He has “*done wonderful things, plans shaped of old, in absolute faithfulness.*”

This wonder working God is being praised for bringing to completion His plans which He had formed in the countless ages of the past and He has brought them to fruition with a faithfulness that is perfect. The plans of God are precious promises for those who trust in Him: “*The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.*” Psalm 33:11. “*For I know the plans I have for you,*” says the LORD, “*plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope.*” Jeremiah 29:11. Isaiah spoke often of the plans of God: Isaiah 14: 24, 27; 22:11; 23:9; 37:26 and 46:11; as did Jeremiah 18:8; 49:20 and 50:45.

Not only are the plans of God steadfast and certain but His faithfulness in completing all that He has planned is perfect. Moses after a lifetime of witnessing first-hand the faithfulness of God proclaimed: “*He is the Rock, his work is perfect; all his ways are just. A faithful God who does nothing wrong, Just and upright is he.*” Deuteronomy 32:4. Even amid the foreboding sadness of a sinful and rebellious generation, the prophet Jeremiah could proclaim: “*The loyal love of the LORD never fails, because his compassions never end. 23 They are fresh every morning; great is your faithfulness.*” Lamentations 3:22-23. The perfect faithfulness of God is sung about most gloriously in the Psalms: Psalm 33:4; 36:5; 40:10; 89:1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33, 49; 91:4; 92:2; 96:13; 98:3; 100:5; 119:75, 90, 138; and 143:1 It is also a common praise from the prophet Isaiah: Isaiah 11:5, 16:5, 25:1 and 38:18-19.

25:2 *For you have made a city a heap,
a fortified town a ruin,
a fortress for strangers is no longer a city;
it will never be rebuilt.*

One of the wonders mentioned in the preceding verse is declared in this song of praise is that a city has been made into a ruin and it is no longer a fortress or palace for strangers for it will never be rebuilt. No specific city is mentioned in this praise psalm. Babylon may have been the intended city. Jeremiah proclaimed that: “*Babylon will fall for the slain of Israel who have fallen, just as the slain of all the earth have fallen because of Babylon.*” Jeremiah 51:49. The great city of Babylon will certainly meet its eventual doom just before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ

as stated in Revelation 14:8 and 18:1-2. This city may be intended as it best fits the chronology of the last days if this praise hymn is sung by the remnant as they march through the ruined city and on to Mount Zion in Jerusalem. David L. Cooper also understands the city to be a reference to Babylon. Other commentators however, are not so disposed to name “the city” as Babylon and understand it to be representative of a typical city which has been judged of God and overthrown completely.

25:3 *Therefore strong peoples will respect you;
a city of ruthless nations will fear you.*

The prophet records that due to the destruction of “the city” as stated in vs. 2, that “*Therefore the strong people will glorify You; the city of the terrible nations will fear You.*” (NKJV). Who are these strong people and in what context are we to understand the cities of ruthless nations who will “glorify” (revere, respect) the Lord God? As Isaiah, had previously proclaimed in 19: 23-24, two of Judah’s greatest enemies, Egypt and Assyria will one day worship the Lord. There likely could not be any stronger peoples from any more ruthless nations than these nations and in context of the end times there may be more Gentile nations who will revere the Lord as Messiah and come to worship in when He reigns on Mount Zion in Jerusalem during the Millennial kingdom. If the city that is destroyed completely is understood as representing the ungodly cities of humanity, then the Gentile survivors of the wrath of God during the Tribulation will be the ones who will come and revere the Lord God.

25:4 *For you have been a refuge for the poor,
a stronghold to the needy in their distress,
a shelter from the storm,
a shade from the heat.
For the breath of the ruthless is
like a storm battering against the wall,*

The prophet’s song of praise concentrates on the helpless and the needy in distress. The helpless and needy of verse 4 is set in contrast to the strong and ruthless of vs. 3. In that time, during the terrifying days of Tribulation, Revelation chapters 6-19, not everyone will be destroyed. Isaiah in the next chapter, verses 20-21 of this united prophecy urges his people, the Jews, the chosen people of God, to hide in their rooms:

Go, my people, enter into your rooms.
Shut your doors behind you.
Hide yourself for a little while,
until his anger is passed.

²¹ For look, the LORD comes out of his dwelling place
to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their sin.
The earth also will reveal the bloodshed on her,
and will no longer cover her slain.

The prophet is now praising God in the past tense. In vs. 4, Isaiah proclaims that God has been for the poor and needy a refuge and a fortress. From the storm and the heat God has been a shelter and shade. Those who would seek their harm, the ruthless, are likened to a storm that is battering against the wall of God's fortress. The implication is that their attack will not succeed and all inside God's protective shelter will be safe. The praise of the prophet here is for horrific days that are now past when God has been faithful to protect His people from the storm of destruction being brought on the whole earth. It is in keeping with the context of these verses that this protection by God refers to the safety He will give to the most helpless during the days of the great Tribulation.

25:5 *like heat in a parched place.*

*You will silence the uproar of foreigners;
like the heat subsiding from the shade of clouds,
the song of the ruthless will be silenced.*

Isaiah continues his praise to the Lord God who subdues or silences the uproar of the foreigners, which are the Gentiles who belong to the army of Antichrist who seeks to destroy the people of God. Not only will these ruthless invaders will be silenced but their song will be silenced "*like heat in a parched place*". The poetic language of the prophet here is used to dramatize the ways God will protect the helpless and needy. The songs of praise in verses 1-5 are leading up to an event that the peoples who were listening to the song would not likely have imagined. The proclamation of the next section, verses 6-12 must have been like listening to the "Hallelujah Chorus" in our day for the first time. No wonder Kings and rulers stand in respect when the music and words of the composer Handel are sung by a grand choir. It may have been the same for Isaiah when he proclaimed these next words. His audience would have been overwhelmed in wonder.

(6) F Mount Zion (25:6-12)

Isaiah's prophecy of the end times as recoded in chapters 24-27 has now arrived at the very center of the prophet's magnificent oration. Verses 6-12 are like a grand introduction to the entire great section of salvation and comfort that the prophet will present in chapters 40-66. It is almost as if the prophet is invoking the words of the psalmist David: "*Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.*" Psalm 34:8.

The center of attention is now shifted in vs. 5 to what Isaiah states as "on this mountain." What mountain is this? In the context of this chapter and specifically vs. 23 of chapter 24 and verses 6, 7 and 10 of chapter 25, Isaiah indicates that it is Mount Zion where the Lord of hosts will reign. There should be no doubt that this prophecy is about the day of the Lord where the returning Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ will defeat His enemies and rescue the remnant of the Jews from imminent destruction and then set up a banquet "*for all peoples*" on Mount Zion to celebrate His victory and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. There was no day like this on Mount Zion from Isaiah's day to today and it will not happen until the Lord returns. The Spirit of God,

who is the true author of Scripture, gave this magnificent prophetic word to Isaiah. It is one of the grandest pictures of the days of the returning Messiah that is recorded in all of the Scriptures.

The history of Mount Zion is worthy of careful study by the student of the Scriptures. Abraham was told by God to take Isaac: “*your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love,*” to be offered as a burnt offering, in the land of Moriah, “*on one of the mountains I will tell you about.*” Genesis 22:1-3. This was Mount Moriah where David went to erect an altar to the Lord and purchased this site, which was called “*the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite,*” 2 Samuel 24:18-25. This very site was stated by God to be the place upon which Solomon built the temple of the Lord 2 Chronicles 3:1. Abraham called this site, “*The Lord Will Provide*” and Moses commented, “*it is said even to this day, in the mount of the Lord it will be provided.*” Genesis 22:14. Moses called this place the “*mount of the Lord*”. God, through the prophet and king David, later stated, “*I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.*” Psalm 2:6 (NASB). In the future from David’s time to the time of the end, the day of the Lord, Mount Zion was and will still be the focal point of God’s dealing with his chosen people. For further study, students should consider all the Scripture passages where Zion and Mount Zion are mentioned. The words “Mount Zion” are found 21 times and “Zion” 178 times in the DAZV. From this study, it will be marvelous to discover just how much the Lord loves His holy mountain and the people who inhabit it.

25:6: *In this mountain the LORD of hosts will
make a lavish banquet for all peoples,
a feast of well aged wines and choice meats,
of the finest wines well strained.*

As will be discussed below, the occasion of this banquet will be the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Messiah will return to the earth as a victorious warrior king, Isaiah 63:1-6, and will vanquish His enemies and then lead His faithful remnant to “this mountain” which was previously Mount Moriah but is called Mount Zion, the beloved mountain of the Lord. This banquet consisting of wine and choice pieces stands in sharp contrast to the failed vineyards of Judah, Isaiah: 1:7-9, 3:14, 5:1-12 and 7:23; and to the banquet the Jews themselves selfishly enjoyed. Isaiah records in 5:12: “*The harps and the strings, the tambourine and flute, and wine are in their feasts; but they do not regard the work of the LORD, nor consider the operation of His hands.*” (NKJV).

Just as in Isaiah’s day, there were other banquets in the past when kings were crowned as recorded in 1 Samuel 11:15; 1 Kings 1:9, 19, 25; 1 Kings 8:62-65; and these banquets were also hosted by sinful men who could not measure in any way in holiness to the Lord of hosts. The banquet, Isaiah references in 25: 6 is to be unlike any other the world has seen before or will see, because its Host is the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings. The fulfillment of this predicted banquet must certainly be the marriage supper of the Lamb recorded in Revelation 19:7-9 for no other banquet event recorded in all of the Scriptures could possibly be the event predicted here in verse 6. This great banquet was alluded to by the Lord in the parable of the marriage feast in Matthew 22:1-14. The wedding clothes necessary for attending the marriage feast, Matthew

22:11-14 certainly point to the “*fine linen, bright and pure*” which will be worn by the saints who will be the bride of the Lamb who attend the great marriage supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19:7-8.

25:7 *He will swallow up on this mountain
the shroud that covers all peoples,
and the veil that is spread over all nations.*

This verses is most likely a reference to the final removal of the “*shroud*” and the “*veil*” that have covered all the inhabitants of the world. When people are still in their sins and unsaved, the meaning of the Scriptures and specifically the words of Moses which is the law, appear as a veil over their hearts. Only when they turn to the Lord for salvation is this veil removed. They then understand the word of God. For Satan, the one called “*the god of this world*” had blinded their minds that they could not see “*the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*” 2 Corinthians 4:4. Refer to greater context in 2 Corinthians 3:12 – 2 Corinthians 4:6. Many scholars, however, understand this shroud and veil to be a reference to the action of God who will “swallow up” (remove) the curse of death that is upon all nations. However, David L. Cooper affirms the interpretation given above:

What is meant by this covering or veil which is spread over the peoples of earth and which Jehovah will destroy in that mountain, Jerusalem? We immediately realize that the prophet was not talking about a literal covering; it therefore must be a spiritual one. What covering can this be? The answer is doubtless given in II Corinthians 4:3,4: "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them." That portion of the veil which covers Israel is referred to in Isaiah 29:9-12. As we have already seen, the judgments of the Tribulation will bring the bulk of the people of the earth to a realization of their helpless condition. Many of them will turn to God. The wicked will be purged by those judgments from the earth. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns, He will bind Satan and all of his cohorts in the pit of the abyss and will lift this veil which blinds the eyes of the people; thus, in that mountain--Jerusalem--will this great miracle be wrought. (D. L. Cooper, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Biblical Research Monthly – June 1944).

25:8 *He will swallow up death forever;
and the sovereign LORD will wipe away tears
from off all faces;
the disgrace of his people,
he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken it.*

Verse 8 is another dramatic statement of the many actions that will happen on Mount Zion during the great banquet to be hosted by God as the beginning of the millennial reign of His Son. Isaiah states that God “*will swallow up death forever.*” The Apostle Paul used this verse as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:54 to point out the truth of the victory over death that God will

provide at the resurrection of all those who believe in Christ for salvation. Isaiah in vs. 8 makes an outstanding prophecy about the reality of life after death. The prophet commented on this in the next chapter, Isaiah 26:19:

*Your dead will live;
 your dead bodies will rise.
 Wake up and sing, you who dwell in the dust.
 For your dew is like the morning dew,
 and the earth will give birth to those who were dead.*

The Old Testament does contain references to the reality of life after death. Death as an outcome of disobedience to God is first mentioned early in the Scriptures: Genesis 2:17 and Genesis 3:17-19. However, the possibility of living after death is revealed in later days. Job, who may have lived during the days of Abraham or shortly thereafter, believed in the reality of living with God following death. Job stated: “*But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he will stand upon the earth in the end. 26 Even after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. 27 I myself will see him with my own eyes, and not another. My heart is overwhelmed by the thought.*” Job 19:25-27. Job understood that he will have a Redeemer who will save him, not from physical death but from eternal death. This passage in Job contains the first mention of the word Redeemer. Students of Scripture understand that this Redeemer is the One who was declared to be the seed of Eve who would “*bruise Satan on the head*” but Satan could only bruise Him on the heel. Genesis 3:15. Isaiah, in 41:14 reveals who this Redeemer is:

*Do not be afraid, O Jacob, you worm.
 You men of Israel,
 I will help you,"
 says the LORD;
 your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.*

As the next verse in chapter 25, vs. 9 states, this One, whom the people of God have been waiting for, during the dark devastating days of the Tribulation will be revealed as the LORD for He will save them. In the context of these verses in chapter 25, there should be no doubt that Isaiah is not referring to just temporal physical salvation. Isaiah states in 54:5:

*For your Maker is your husband;
 the LORD of hosts is his name.
 The Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer.
 He will be called 'the God of the entire earth.*

In this reference, Isaiah also calls this Redeemer by other titles: “*your Maker – your husband*”. In the Old Testament God calls Himself the husband of Israel. In the New Testament Jesus Christ is the bridegroom of the saints –and that is also worthy of another study by the student to Scripture. Isaiah continues his description of this Redeemer in 60:16:

*You will know that I, the LORD,
am your Savior, your Redeemer,
the Mighty One of Jacob.*

There certainly may have been many who understood this Mighty One of Jacob, the Lord of hosts, to be their savior or redeemer in the sense of saving them from physical harm from their enemies. However, it is readily evident that by comparing Job's comment about eternal salvation wrought by the Redeemer with the description by Isaiah of the One who is the Redeemer, that Isaiah must have had understood that this Redeemer and Savior provides eternal rather than temporary physical salvation to those who trust in Him. The prophet Daniel clearly understood the reality of everlasting life. Daniel 12:2.

The second great action in vs. 8 regards the events of the end time banquet hosted by the Lord of hosts is stated as *"the sovereign Lord will wipe away tears from all faces."* In this comment, Isaiah again brings an early prophetic word about the wondrous works of God in the future. In Revelation 7:17, the Apostle John states: *"For the Lamb who is in the middle of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of living water and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."* John repeats this comforting word in Revelation 21:4: *"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, nor will there be any more mourning, crying, or pain. The former things have passed away."*

It is evident from the references in Revelation that the eternal state is in view rather than the millennial reign of Christ. Thus, we see again the telescoping of prophecy by the Old Testament prophets who were not given all the details about the end times and how God would bring in two sequential reigns, the one being temporal, one thousand years on the existing earth and the other being eternal on a new earth. It is significant that the Revelation 21:4 passage and the Isaiah 25:8 passage both mention the removal of death and the wiping of tears away from the eyes of the saints.

Isaiah continues with a third great action of the marvelous works of God as recorded in verse 8. *"the disgrace of his people, he will take away from all the earth."* At the time of the beginning of the millennial reign of the Messiah, Jesus Christ upon Mount Zion, the remnant of the Jewish people, "his people" which is *ammi* in the Hebrew, will finally have the stigma removed from them of being God's outcasts and His scattered ones. God will bring His people back to the land which He has promised them. This process has already started and will increase dramatically when Christ returns. Then His people will have a new status and standing in the world. Long ago, Moses stated the words of God as recorded in Deuteronomy 28:13: *"The LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will always be on top and never on the bottom, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, that I am giving you today, to observe and to do them."*

The words of Moses again speak to this situation in the longer passage, Deuteronomy 30:1-10 which promises that the Jews would return to God and be restored from captivity and would be gathered “again” from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you.” vs. 3. This second re-gathering of the Lord’s people was also mentioned by Isaiah in chapter 11:11-12:6. Refer to the notes on this section of this study. Other passages of Isaiah declaring this great re-gathering include: Isaiah 27:12-13 and 43:5-7. The major and minor prophets also made mention of this truth: Jeremiah 16:14-15, 23:3-4, 23:7-8 and 31:7-10; Ezekiel 11:14-18, 36:24 and all of Ezekiel chapter 37; Amos 9:14-15; Zephaniah 3:18-20; and Zechariah 10:8-12.

It should be remembered that the basis of this re-gathering of God’s chosen and elect people to a place of preeminence in the land God gave His people was the covenant God cut with Abraham as recorded in Genesis: 12:1-3, 12:7, 13:14-17, 15:12-21, 26:2-5, 28:13-15. Other references in the Old Testament include: Leviticus 26:40-45; Deuteronomy 30:1-14; Isaiah 27:12, 30:23-26, 35:1-10, 65:21-24; Jeremiah 31:1-14; Ezekiel 20:42-44, 28:25-26, 34:25-31, 36:8-15, 28-38; Joel 2:18-27, 3:18 and Amos 9:13. The above Scriptures have to do specifically with the land promise God made to His people. For a further treatment of the final restoration of Israel and many other subjects dealing with the Messianic Kingdom, see *The Footprints of the Messiah*, Revised Edition 2004, published by Ariel Ministries, by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum.

A final note on Isaiah 25:8. The prophet concludes this magnificent prophecy with the authoritative “*for the LORD has spoken it.*” This is a sure word of prophecy which has the stamp of the Lord’s sovereign declaration. It will happen exactly as the Lord said it will. There should be no doubt as to the messianic fulfillment of not only vs. 8 but of all the prophetic words that Isaiah has delivered. The words, “the LORD has spoken” is a common phrase used by Isaiah to affirm the authority of God’s message. See also Isaiah: 1:20; 21:17; 22:25; 24:3; 37:22; 40:5; 46:11; 48:15; and 58:14.

25:9 *It will be said in that day,
 "Look, here is our God;
 we have waited for him,
 and he will save us.
 This is the LORD;
 we have waited for him,
 let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."*

As mentioned above in the notes for vs. 8, Isaiah would certainly have known that the great Redeemer would bring everlasting salvation to the people of God. The occasion of the Lord’s banquet, verses 6-12, would be a celebration of this eternal life that the Holy One of Israel has given to His people. It is certainly not a coincidence that the very words of vs. 9, “*let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation*” are part of the praise of the saints at the great banquet, the marriage supper of the Lamb as recorded in Revelation 19:7. These words also are part of the great praise of Psalm 118:24: “*This is the day that the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*”

Other Scriptural references which use similar words of praise for the days when the Messiah will reign include: 1 Chronicles 16:31; Psalm 21:1, 31:7, 32:11, 40:16, 70:4, 96:11 and 97:1, 8; Isaiah 35:1, 65:18-19 and 66:10; Joel 2:21, 23 and Zechariah 10:7.

Isaiah expectantly waits for the salvation of the Lord and in his prophecy of vs. 9. He states that at this great banquet the peoples will see the Lord for whom they have waited. Others have expressed this sentiment: *"But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me."* Micah 7:7 See also: Genesis 49:8; Psalm 25:5, 62:1 and 119:81 and Lamentations 3:26. Isaiah further records his desire to wait for the salvation of the Lord as recorded in his prophecy: 33:2 and 51:5. See also Romans 11:25-26. An interesting and novel commentary on Micah about the long wait of Israel is entitled *Micah and the long, sad days before Israel's latter days* by Bernard E. Northrup. This short commentary is likely no longer in print but can still be found on the Internet.

25:10-12 *For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain;
Moab will be trampled down in his place,
just like straw is trampled down in the water of a manure pit.*
¹¹ *Moab will spread out its hands in the midst of it,
like one who swims spreads out his hands to swim;
but the LORD will lay low their pride together
with the spreading out of their hands.*
¹² *Your impregnable walled fortress he will bring down,
laid low, torn down to the dusty ground.*

These verses contain comments about the people of Moab who live in close proximity to Mount Zion, "on this mountain" vs. 10. The mountains of Moab can be seen from various parts of Jerusalem including Mount Zion. The Lord includes, in His message to Isaiah regarding the last days, a lament about the people of Moab who will not be a part of the glorious times mentioned in the first 9 verses of chapter 25. The legacy of the Moabites was one of ill dealings with their close cousins the Israelites. Isaiah had earlier delivered a message about the demise of this nation in chapters 15 and 16 of Isaiah's prophecy. The last mention of Moab in the Scriptures, Zephaniah 2:8-9, gives the reason for their demise:

*"I have heard the taunts of Moab,
and the ridicule of the Ammonites, by which they have mocked my people
and arrogantly threatened their border.
9 Therefore as surely as I live,"
says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,
"Moab will become like Sodom,
and the Ammonites like Gomorrah.
They will be overrun by nettles,
and become salt pits and a permanent wasteland.
The remnant of my people will plunder them,
and the remnant of my nation will occupy their inheritance.*

Isaiah records the Lord's complete and utter disdain for the people of Moab and in verses 10-12, the prophet states that the Moabites will be trodden down like straw in a manure pile and when they try to get out of the pile, they will be prevented from escaping and their final plight will be to be ground to dust. It does seem somewhat strange that God adds the lament about Moab in the context of the great words of praise for the works He will perform on Mount Zion. There seems to be an intentional contrast between the Mountain of the Lord where blessings will be given to the faithful remnant and the mountains of Moab where there will be judgment and absolute destruction. The prophet's intent in these verses is to remind all who will listen of the drastic consequences of their sinful actions and the delightful blessings of their faithful actions.

Even among those who despise the God of Israel and His people, God can still work to fulfill His sovereign plans and purposes. Could any good thing come out of Moab? God answers this question with the story of Ruth. This is a story about a widowed Moabite widow named Ruth who, although in deep poverty, became the wife of a wealthy landowner in Bethlehem named Boaz who happened to be a kinsman of Ruth's late husband's father. Boaz and Ruth became the parents of a son named Obed. Obed had a son named Jesse and Jesse had a son named David. The great story of Ruth from Moab is about her kinsman redeemer (Boaz) who portrays the greater kinsman redeemer, the Messiah.

Teaching Outline of Isaiah Chapter 25

The Rejoicing of the Remnant: 25:1-5

The Reward of the Repentant: 25:6-9

The Ruin of the Rebellious: 25:10-12

(7) E' The song of the strong city (26:1-6)

Some may view the words of the prophet, "*in that day*" (vs. 1) as a return to the days just prior to the culmination of the Assyrian attack on Jerusalem. Others may understand it to be a continuation of the prophecy of the greater day of the Lord and in particular the beginning of the millennial kingdom. In the chiasmic structure adopted for the outline of chapters 24 to 27 of Isaiah, the song of the strong city, verses 1-6 of chapter 26 is contrasted with the song of the ruined city, verses 1-5 of chapter 25. There seems to be no valid reason to understand the words, "*in that day*" (vs. 1) to be anything other than a continuation of the prophecy of the greater day of the Lord, which Isaiah began in vs. 1 of chapter 24 and continues until the end of chapter 27. The words "*in that day*" are repeated often in chapter 27 to confirm the continuation of the prophetic message of Isaiah in chapters 24-27 regarding the days of Tribulation and entrance into the millennial kingdom of the Messiah.

26:1-2 *In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:*

We have a strong city;

God has set up salvation like walls and ramparts.

² *Open the gates,*

so that the righteous nation

that keeps faith may enter.

Isaiah recites the beginning of a song that the remnant will sing as they march into Jerusalem, which will be the regal residence of the Messiah during the millennial kingdom. In the context of this song, the people are singing about a strong city within the land of Judah. This city is undoubtedly Jerusalem and one who sets up walls and ramparts is the Lord of the city, the Messiah who will reign the earth from this “strong city”. Those who sing are calling for the gates of the city to be opened so that the faithful righteous nation may enter. The faithful nation is the remnant of the Jewish people who have just been rescued from their enemies by their Messiah.

The prophet calls for the gates of the city to be opened. The city had just recently been overrun by the armies of the nations who were bent on destroying the Jews. Zechariah 14:1-3. Now it stands ready for re-occupancy by a faithful and righteous nation. Psalms 15, 24 and 118 describe this event. Psalm 118:19-20 is another description of this day:

*“Open the gates of righteousness for me;
I will enter through them,
and I will give thanks to the LORD.
20 This is the gate of the LORD,
the righteous will enter in through it.”*

Following the victory of the Lord over His enemies and His divine protection of the righteous remnant of His chosen people, those who belong to this faithful righteous nation, will march from their secure place, where they have been in hiding during the most terrifying days of the Great Tribulation. The Lord had just rescued them from the armies of the world who had surrounded them. In their most desperate moments they had called on the Lord in repentance and in humble recognition of their prior rejection of Him as their Messiah, they ask Him for protection. The Messiah responds to their plea and returns to the earth to destroy these enemies and then to lead His faithful remnant to the strong city and to Mount Zion where a great banquet has been prepared.

The above narrative is a very concise prophetic description of the last days of the Great Tribulation and the beginning days of the millennial kingdom. There is no single Scriptural passage that records this narrative. Students of Scripture must be diligent in their study to piece the story together from a number of Old and New Testament locations. One student who has done this piecing-together is Arnold Fruchtenbaum who has put this narrative together in precise order. Fruchtenbaum’s book, *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, presents the plight of the Jewish people from the days of their scattering and sojourning in the nations of the world until their re-gathering and settlement in their promised land during the days of the millennial kingdom and then into the everlasting days of the eternal state.

26:3-4 *You will keep in perfect peace,
those whose minds are steadfast,
because they trust in you.*

⁴ *Trust in the LORD forever;
for in the LORD, yes the LORD,
you have an everlasting rock.*

Isaiah continues the song of the faithful remnant. The emphasis of these two verses is on trusting in God the Lord who is an everlasting Rock. Because of this trust, those who are steadfast of mind will be kept in perfect peace by the Lord. The words “perfect peace” are in the Hebrew, *shalom shalom* or “peace peace”. The repetition of the word peace signifies the completeness and perfection of this peace which the Lord alone gives to those who are “*steadfast of mind*” which has as its meaning: that these people have a mind-set of completely leaning on and depending on the Lord.

Thomas Constable comments on verse 4:

“Isaiah urged everyone to trust in the Lord as a way of life, not just in a saving act of faith, because Yahweh, even Yahweh, is the very essence of what an everlasting rock should be (cf. 17:10; 30:29; 44:8; Exod. 33:21; Deut. 32:4; 1 Sam. 2:2; 2 Sam. 22:2, 32; Ps. 18:2; 19:14; 61:2; 1 Cor. 10:4). His presence is an unmovable place of refuge and protection from the elements and from all enemies. Augustus M. Toplady drew the inspiration for his hymn Rock of Ages from this verse.

"The issue of trust is the key to the entire segment beginning at 7:1 and concluding at 39:8. Will Judah commit her security to the nations or to God?" 297 [Note 297: John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, NICOT, pg. 472]. (Thomas Constable, *Isaiah*, page 120).

26:5-6 *For he has brought down those who dwell on high,
the lofty city;
he lays it low,
he lays it low even to the ground;
he throws it down into the dust.*
⁶ *Feet will trample it down;
even the feet of the poor,
the steps of the needy.*

Isaiah completes the first segment of the song of praise by the faithful remnant as they enter the City of Jerusalem to commence the millennial kingdom and to worship their returning Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Messiah who is the subject of these verses. It is He who is praised for bringing low “*those who dwell on high, the lofty city.*” This is a reference to the previous chapter, vs. 2 and vs. 12 where the cities of the world including those of Moab have been made into a ruin. It is the faithful remnant who, in vs. 6, are described as having: “*the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.*” It is they who are singing these praises to the Lord. It is they who will trample the remains of these cities into dust; when they walk victoriously from their hiding place up to Mount Zion. The prophet, in Isaiah 35:10, records their journey:

*Those ransomed by the LORD will return,
and come with singing to Zion;
everlasting joy will crown their heads.
They will find joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

(See also Isaiah 51:11).

(8) D' The waiting people of God (26:7-21)

This later section of chapter 26 contains two sections: (1) a prayer in two parts: of waiting and longing for the Lord, verses 7-10 and of praise for the future resurrection of God's people, verses 11-19 and (2) a prophetic warning to hide from the wrath of God to come, verses 20-21.

26:7 *The way of the righteous is straight,
you level the path of the righteous.*

The prophet changes the tone of the prophecy from a song of praise to a supplication of patience. The prayer beginning in vs. 7, reminds the reader of the Psalmists plea as recorded in Psalm 1:1,

*Blessed is the one who
does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
or stand in the way with sinners,
or sit in the seat of mockers.*

It also is similar to many of the instructions of Solomon as recorded in the book of Proverbs. The word "straight" is *meshar* in the Hebrew and has the meaning of evenness, uprightness and equity. It also occurs in Isaiah 33:15 (speaks straight) and 45:19 (speak righteousness). In the context of this passage this word could also be translated as "even" or "smooth" as the walkways and paths in Judah were upon rocky hillsides which made progress slow and often dangerous. Yet during the walk of the faithful remnant up to Zion to worship the Messiah, their paths would be made level and even. The word "way" is the Hebrew word *orach*. Among the major prophets, Isaiah alone uses this word. It is translated in Isaiah as: "path" or "paths" in 2:3; 3:12; 26:8; 30:11; 40:14; and 41:3. In 33:8 it is translated as highways. It also occurs in as path in Joel 2:7 and as paths in Micah 4:2. The word "path" in Isaiah 26:7 is the Hebrew: *magal*, which is also translated as paths in Isaiah 59:8. It is interesting that in many of these verses, the English version contains both the words way and path: Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2 (He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in his paths) ; 3:12 (the way of your paths NKJV); 26:7 (The way of the righteous is straight, you level the path of the righteous); 30:11 (Get out of the way, turn aside from the path); 40:14 (Who taught him the path of justice?.... or showed him the way of understanding?). These references are all for the DASV except for the NKJV as shown.

In the NKJV, the name of the Lord, “O Most Upright” is inserted between the two lines of verse 7. The DASV only has the word ‘you’ as a reference to God. The NIV and NASB have “O Upright One”; the KJV has “Thou most upright. This title for God, in the English versions, other than the DASV, is unique in the Old Testament, occurring only in this verse.

26:8 *Yes, in the path of your judgments, O LORD,
we wait for you;
the desire of our soul is for your name
for your memory.*

Isaiah reminds the Lord that the people of God have waited eagerly for Him and have been following the way, or path, of His judgments. They declare that the desire of their inner being or souls is for the name of the Lord and for His memory. That this is a prayer of the faithful remnant and not of the people of Judah during Isaiah’s day is obviously evident. Isaiah had previously delivered a message of condemnation to the people of Jerusalem and reminded them that their iniquity would not be forgiven. Isaiah 22:14. The Jewish people of Isaiah’s day were desirous of anything or anyone else other than the Lord. It is only after the chaotic days of the Great Tribulation that the Jewish people will finally cast off all other desires and love the Lord with all their hearts, souls, might (mind). Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Matthew 22:37.

The reverence and glory of the name of the Lord is a great theme of Scripture. For example, in Psalm 102:21 the psalmist writes: “So that the name of the LORD may be declared in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem.” Ezekiel writes in 39:25 that the Lord is jealous of His name: “Therefore this is what the sovereign LORD says: ‘Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel. I will be jealous for my holy name.’”

Giving praise to the name of the Lord is also a majestic theme of the book of Isaiah: 12:4; 24:15; 25:1; 26:8; 13; 47:4; 50:10; 56:6, 19; 60:9; 73:14, 16. The Psalms, however, are the Scripture’s grand storehouse of the glories of the name of the Lord with over fifty verses declaring praise to the name of the Lord. Psalm 106:47, for example, is an example of a song the faithful remnant will sing: “Save us, O LORD our God, and regather us from among the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and to glory in your praise.” Also, Psalm 119:55 is similar to Isaiah’s prayer in vs. 8 of chapter 26: “I have remembered your name in the night, O LORD, and keep your law.”

26: 9 *My soul longs for you in the night;
yes, my spirit within me desires you.
For when your judgments are seen in the earth,
the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.*

Isaiah in vs. 9 continues the prayer of the faithful remnant proclaiming that their soul and spirit longs for and desires the Lord in the night. The longing of the Lord during the night watches, see also Psalm 63:6, compliments the injunction of Psalm 1:2 which states that the righteous meditates on God’s law, day and night.

After the calamity of the Great Tribulation, all the faithful remnant will have left to them is their memory of and longing for their Messiah. They will seek Him with diligence and they will find him after He re-gathers them from among all the nations where they have been scattered. See also, Ezekiel 34:11-31.

In the second half of vs. 9, Isaiah reveals how God deals with the ungodly by stating: “*For when your judgments are seen in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.*” The prophet Jeremiah, in 36:3 comments: “*It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the disaster I plan on doing to them and turn everyone from their evil way so that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.*” The Apostle John expressed a similar but negative comment on this truth in Revelation 9:20: “*The rest of humankind, who were not killed with these plagues, refused to repent of the works of their hands.*” God brings judgment upon the earth as a punishment for the sins of its inhabitants but also as an opportunity for the world’s peoples to repent of these sins and turn to Him in trust and worship. Refer also to 1 Kings 8:47; 2 Chronicles 6:37; Jeremiah 26:3; 2 Peter 3:9; Rev. 2:21, and 16:9.

26:10 *When favor is shown to the wicked,
they will not learn righteousness;
in the land of uprightness they will act unjustly,
and will not see the majesty of the LORD.*

As recorded in vs. 10, the other side of the issue is declared. Even though the wicked are shown favor, with the meaning that they witness the Word and works of God, they will not repent and “*learn righteousness*”. The ungodly continue to “*act unjustly*” even in the midst of righteousness “*and will not see the majesty of the LORD.*” The Lord, just prior to His crucifixion, lamented in Matthew 23: 37-39, over Jerusalem: “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kills the prophets, and stone the ones who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not! 38 Look, your house is left to you desolate. 39 For I say to you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*” The Apostle Paul states, in 2 Corinthians 4:4 that: “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

26:11 *O LORD, your hand is lifted up,
yet they do not see it.
Let them see your zeal for your people,
and be put to shame;
yes, fire will consume your adversaries.*

In verses 11-19 of chapter 26, Isaiah directs his prayer to praise for the future resurrection of God’s people. In vs. 11, Isaiah asks God to allow His people to see His uplifted hand and see His zeal that they may be “*put to shame,*” for God’s enemies will be consumed by fire. The prophet warns the wicked of their final destiny because they fail to see the hand of the Lord raised and ready to bring judgment upon them. Even though the wicked witness the zeal of the Lord for His

people they still remain unrepentant and their shameful acts will lead them to be consumed by fire. Isaiah had previously warned his audience about the destruction of the earth to come including the burning of the inhabitants of the earth. 24:1-6. The prophet is casting his gaze far into the future where God will enact His ultimate solution for the unrepentant actions of the earth's inhabitants. The author of Hebrews reminds us of Him whom we have to face: "*for our God is a consuming fire.*" Hebrews 12:29.

26:12 *O LORD, you will establish peace for us;
for all our works you have actually done for us.*

The prophet's tone changes to that of praise for the Lord who will establish shalom (peace) for His people. This action of the Lord to establish ultimate peace best fits the period of the millennial kingdom when the Prince of Peace will rule the world in peace and righteousness. Isaiah's choice of words, "*for all our works you have actually done for us*" is a remarkable statement that would be at home in Paul's epistle to the Philippians: "*for it is God who works in you both to desire and to work, for the sake of his good pleasure.*" Philippians 2:13. It is statements like this in vs. 12 that so endears the prophecy of Isaiah to the believer in Christ the Messiah. For example, chapters in Isaiah such as 49, 52, 53 and 60-66 are filled with exhortations and promises that drive the believer to worship the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Messiah for whom the earth desires.

26:13 *O LORD our God,
other lords besides you have ruled over us,
but your name alone we will keep in remembrance.*

In this verse, Isaiah speaks for the faithful remnant which will enter into the newly established millennial kingdom. Even though the chosen people of God have endured under many other rulers and masters, it is God alone whose name they have confessed. This statement certainly best fits the context of the millennial kingdom since no other time in history, since the days of Isaiah, could this statement be true.

26:14 *The dead do not come back to life;
the spirits of the dead do not rise;
because you have punished and destroyed them,
and erased all memory of them.*

Isaiah next speaks for the wicked who have been punished and have been destroyed. There is no hope for them. Their departed spirits will not rise to enjoy the messianic blessings of the millennial kingdom. This understanding of the non-resurrection of the wicked at the beginning of the millennial kingdom is the only one that is in harmony with the unfolding of God's word about the latter days as revealed in Scripture, specifically Revelation 20:5: "*The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.*" Attempts to generalize Isaiah's words to claim that he was speaking figuratively or allegorically about death has no validity. In

the context of chapters 24-27, Isaiah is revealing prophetic truth about the days of the end and these words about the resurrection of the wicked must be taken in this context.

26:15 *You have increased the nation, O LORD;
you have increased the nation.
You are glorified;
you have enlarged all the borders of the land.*

The prophet adds additional details about the millennial kingdom. The repeated declaration that God has increased the nation can be understood as an increase in the number of people in the land and an increase in the land area of the nation. This will happen in the kingdom ruled by the Messiah when he sets up His earthly reign. Isaiah, in 49:19-20 and 54:1-3, describes this future time when the Lord will fulfill His promise to expand the nation of Israel. The prophet Ezekiel in 47:13-23 provides a very detailed description of the land of Israel with its widened borders. The nation of Israel currently does not have the land area described by Ezekiel. For Israel to enjoy the increase in her population and land area, she must first endure the trauma of the Tribulation, and then be liberated by her Lord from the horrifying threat of annihilation by the forces of Antichrist. After these dramatic events, Israel will joyfully witness the expansion of her land area and the increase of her people.

God will preserve His faithful remnant who will return to the land. Isaiah declares the protection of the Lord for these faithful ones. See, for example, Isaiah 10:20-23; 41:8-20; 65:8-16; and Micah 2:1-2. When the Lord gains victory over His enemies, Isaiah 63:1-6, He will lead those He has rescued, in glorious praise to Mount Zion, Isaiah 35:10; 55:11 and establish His kingdom which He will rule in peace and prosperity. Prior to the official start of this kingdom, the Lord will deal with certain items that need to be performed. This period is defined in Daniel 12:11-12 as following the second half of the Tribulation which will last for three and one half years or 1,260 days. There is first an additional 30 days mentioned that will total 1,290 days since the start of the second half of the Tribulation and then an additional 45 days bringing the total to 1,335 days. These additional 75 days (30 plus 45). Daniel 12:11 alludes to the necessity of cleansing of the temple from the desecration of it by the Antichrist. Also, the Lord will finally deal with the beast (the Antichrist) and the false prophet who will be cast alive in the lake of fire, Revelation 19:20. Satan will then be cast into the abyss to be bound for a thousand years, Revelation 20:1-3. The Lord will also deal with the Gentiles who have fought against He and His people: Joel 3:1-8; Matthew 25:1-46. The resurrection of the Old Testament saints will also occur during these days, Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2. Also, the resurrection of the saints who were martyred during the Tribulation will occur during these days, Revelation 20:4-6. Finally, the Lord will host the marriage feast of the Lamb just prior to establishing His rule, Isaiah 25:6-8 and Revelation 19:9.

There would be many who would not agree with the events that will occur during these “extra days” mentioned in Daniel 12:11-12. The above paragraph was adapted from Chapter 15, pages 361-372 of the book, *The Footsteps of the Messiah* by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. This adaptation may not do proper justice to Dr. Fruchtenbaum’s full description of these days. Students are

encouraged to carefully study this period and evaluate all passages of Scripture mentioned in the chapter of the book authored by Dr. Fruchtenbaum.

Following the events just described above which will occur during the interval of 75 days mentioned in Daniel 12:11-12, the Lord will establish His messianic kingdom. As Isaiah states in 26:15, one of the glorious acts of the Lord will be to expand the population and the area size of the land of Israel. Thomas Constable explains:

Rather than Israel dying out as a nation, the Lord had increased her, as He promised Abraham (Gen. 15:5). This was not Israel's doing; the Lord had increased her borders and so gained great glory for Himself. During the reigns of David and Solomon the Israelites experienced numerical growth and geographical expansion. God would do the same for them in the future.

"It is worth remembering that the land promised to Israel in Exodus 23:31 was never fully occupied, even in the days of David and Solomon, but that the bounds of the messianic kingdom are to be wider still (cf. Ps 72:8)." 301 [Note 301: Grogan, p. 166] (Thomas Constable, Isaiah, page 122).

26:16 *O LORD, in trouble they have searched for you;
they poured out a prayer when your discipline was on them.*

Isaiah continues to unfold the details of the plight of the faithful remnant. It was in a time of trouble that they, the faithful remnant, searched for Him, and prayed diligently and fervently when God's discipline was upon them. This is among the most remarkable prophecies regarding the predicament that the remnant will find themselves in immediately prior to the return of the Lord to redeem His people. Here Isaiah speaks for this remnant in remembrance of what has just taken place. The prophet Hosea in 5:15 – 16:3 gave what is certainly one of the most important prophetic messages in the Old Testament when he wrote:

"5:15 I will return to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt, and seek my face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek me ^{6:1} Come, and let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, but he will heal us, he has injured us, but he will bandage us up.² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, and we will live before him.³ Let us acknowledge him; let us pursue knowing the LORD; he will come forth as sure as the morning dawns; he will come to us as sure as the rain, as the latter rain that waters the earth."

This passage in Hosea which is one of the most important prophetic messages of the Old Testament regarding the events immediately preceding the return of the Lord to rescue His beleaguered people. When read in the context of the other prophetic Scriptures regarding the days just prior to the return of the Messiah to rescue His people, it is evident that it must refer to the repentance of the people of Israel who find themselves in an impossible place where their enemies have surrounded them and they face annihilation. They will then, acknowledge their national sin of rejecting the Messiah at his first appearance when He lived among them in the days when Rome ruled them. Their acknowledgment of their guilt and their whole-hearted

seeking of Him will result in His return to rescue them. Refer also to Zechariah 12:10-13:1 and Matthew 23:39.

26:17-18 *Like a woman with child,
who nears the time of her delivery,
with writhing and cries in her labor pains,
so we have been before you, O LORD.*

¹⁸ *We were pregnant,
we were in pain,
but we gave birth only to the wind.
We have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth;
nor have the inhabitants of the world been born.*

Isaiah foretells of the futility of the remnant, during the days just before the Lord redeemed them, who were striving in their own strength to bring about their own rescue from their enemies. The history of the Jews from Isaiah's days to the end times would certainly fit the context here as it was and is a history of rebellion and denial of the provision of the Lord in preserving them. The imagery of these verses is a woman in labor who is unable to give birth.

Thus, the people of God, in their own strength could not bring salvation to the earth nor could they bring forth children. The lament here is a parallel to the prophecy of judgment delivered by Isaiah as recorded in chapter 13 verses 6-8, in a clear "day of the Lord" context. But things were soon to change for the faithful remnant who are confessing their sins to the Lord as recorded in Isaiah 66:7-9:

⁷ *Before her labor pains began,
she gave birth;
before her pain came,
she delivered a boy.*

⁸ *Who has heard of such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Can a country be born in a single day?
Will a nation be born in a second?
Yet as soon as Zion went into labor,
she gave birth to her children.*

⁹ *Would I ever bring a baby to the point of birth
and not deliver it?" says the LORD.
Would I who deliver
ever force the womb shut?" says your God.*

The Lord will bring about a great transformation to His land and His people. He will allow the wombs of the wives of the remnant to be fruitful and quickly His millennial kingdom will flourish with people.

26:19 *Your dead will live;
 your dead bodies will rise.
 Wake up and sing, you who dwell in the dust.
 For your dew is like the morning dew,
 and the earth will give birth to those who were dead.*

Again, Isaiah delivers another outstanding prophetic message about the day of the Lord. The Old Testament contains a few references to the resurrection of those who have died. The major references are: Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2. Other O.T. Scriptures regarding the resurrection which are quoted in the N.T. are: Exodus 3:6 regarding Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Matthew 22:31-32) and Psalm 16:8-11 regarding Christ (Acts 2:25-28, 31). Recommended resources which contain discussions regarding the resurrection of both believers and non-believers include: Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, Moody Press, 1999; J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, Zondervan, 1958; and Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Second Edition, Baker Books, 1998.

David L. Cooper provides a proper context for verse 19:

Following the statement in verse 19 is the prophet's address to the righteous dead: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead." From the context we are certain that this prophecy refers to the righteous in Israel who are dead.

Let us recognize the fact that there two resurrections--one which precedes the Millennial Age and one which follows it. The righteous are raised before the thousand years' reign of our Lord; but the unrighteous never come to life until after the thousand years are finished. Some have thought, however, that the passage in John 5:28,29 proves a general resurrection. The words cited as evidence are these: "For the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, 29 and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." There is no contradiction between our Lord's language in this passage and that of John in Revelation, chapter 20. John says that one thousand years intervene between the resurrection of the just and that of the unjust. The word "hour" which Jesus used, though it may refer to a period of sixty minutes, has various connotations. For example, in John 4:23, our Lord said: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth." Certainly "hour" in this passage does not mean sixty minutes, but connotes the entire Christian Dispensation. Since our Lord used the term with this meaning and since there is no contradiction between His statement and that of the Apostle John, we are to understand that the word "hour" in John 5:28,29 is a long period of time and that His teaching agrees with that of John. So there are two resurrections: one of the righteous before the thousand years of our Lord's literal reign and one of the unrighteous after the thousand years. (D. L. Cooper, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Biblical Research Monthly – July 1944).

26:20-21 *Go, my people, enter into your rooms.*

Shut your doors behind you.

Hide yourself for a little while,

until his anger is passed.

²¹ *For look, the LORD comes out of his dwelling place
to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their sin.*

*The earth also will reveal the bloodshed on her,
and will no longer cover her slain.*

Isaiah, in these verses, records a message from the Lord about the latter days that have an impact on both the people of God and the ungodly of the earth. God urges His people to hide in their rooms for a little while. See Hebrews 10:37 for a New Testament application of vs. 20. The Lord will be coming “*out of his dwelling place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their sin.*” In the context of chapters 24-27 and specifically when references in these two verses to the earth are declared, it seems most likely that the Lord is referring to the times of the day of the Lord and not to the days of the Prophet Isaiah. If this is a reasonable understanding of these two verses, then the Lord’s message is about the days of the Great Tribulation when He will punish the wicked inhabitants of the earth and yet provide protection for the faithful remnant who will survive these days. Revelation 12:1-6 is a New Testament confirmation of these verses. Students of Scripture should note that there is a great deal of debate regarding these verses and many scholars interpret the message of the Lord differently than the one given immediately above.

Teaching Outline for Isaiah Chapter 26

The Praise of the Remnant: 26:1-6

The Prayer of the Remnant: 26:7-19

The Protection of the Remnant: 26:20-21

(9) C’ The spiritual forces of evil overthrown (27:1)

In chapter 27, Isaiah brings to a conclusion his short prophecy on the Day of the Lord. To emphasize the end times meaning of his message, Isaiah begins each section in this chapter with the words, “*In that day*”: vs. 1, 2, 12 and 13. Also in vs. 6 the prophet states regarding this time, “*In the days to come.*” In the context of this chapter and specifically the concluding verse, the “day” that is emphasized is the time of the millennial reign of Christ the Messiah who will be worshiped in the holy mountain at Jerusalem. No other time before or after the days of Isaiah fit these words of prophecy. Those who do not believe in a literal millennial kingdom ruled by the Messiah are left with interpreting this chapter and the preceding three chapters either by figure or by allegory. A plain literal sense of these chapters leads the student to an understanding that God is preparing a time in the future where the Messiah will reign on the earth from Mount Zion. This Messiah will fulfill all the promises contained in these four chapters and in all other passages of Scripture to His chosen people during His messianic reign.

27:1 In that day the LORD with his terrible, great and strong sword
 will punish leviathan the swift serpent,
 leviathan the twisting serpent;
 he will slay the sea monster.

The prophet gives a message about the destruction by the Lord of a beast called "*leviathan the swift serpent, leviathan the twisting serpent.*" The NKJV translates this verse as: "*In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; and He will slay the reptile that is in the sea.*" The KJV translates the last phrase as "*And he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.*"

Scholars and students of the Scriptures have posited many and fanciful interpretations of the identification of this beast. Yet those who understand that this prophecy regards the days of Messiah's return and rule on the earth, the descriptive words can readily be seen as referring to Satan as the Apostle John records in Revelation 12:9: "*So the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the one deceiving the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down with him.*" The final destruction of this beast, who is Satan is recorded later in Revelation 20:10: "*The devil, who had deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were too. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*" Not only does God have a final solution for those who rebel against Him, He also has a final solution for the great deceiver of mankind.

(10) B' The song of the remnant of the people (27:2-6)

David L. Cooper comments on verses 2-6:

In Isaiah 27:2-6 appears the "song of the vineyard." This song is related to Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:8-15; and Matthew 21:33-46. In each of these passages God compares Israel to a vineyard which He has planted and which He owns. All these references, except our present passage, deal with Israel as God's vineyard which has borne the wild bitter grapes of injustice and unrighteousness. But in the verses which we are to consider, Israel is represented as a vineyard which God, the true husbandman and owner, will tend, protect, and keep, and which will eventually yield a harvest, filling "the face of the world with fruit." The prophet urged his hearers to sing concerning this vineyard. The theme is indeed a worthy one. Israel is the nation of destiny. God will yet use her in the future as He has never done in the past. (D.L. Cooper, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Biblical Research Monthly-July 1944).

27:2-3 *In that day sing about the delightful vineyard.*

³ *I, the LORD, am its keeper;*

I will water it all the time.

I will guard it day and night

so that no one can harm it.

The Lord proclaims through the prophet of a vineyard, “*in that day*” which must refer to the day when the Lord will punish Satan when Christ returns. It is a day when Christ will set up His messianic kingdom which is described as a “vineyard” in which the LORD Himself is the keeper. Those who inhabit this future vineyard will be “Jacob and Israel” (vs. 6) who will prosper greatly. See notes on vs. 6 below. The description and outcome of this future vineyard is portrayed in sharp contrast to the present days of Isaiah which are also described as a vineyard as recorded in Isaiah 5:1-7. Isaiah emphasizes the protective care of the Lord, who is the keeper of His future vineyard of wine. The Lord will water the vineyard, “*all the time*” and guard it “*day and night*”.

27:4-5 *I am not angry;*
 if it gives me briers and thorns
 I will wage war on them!
 I would burn them up.
⁵ *Let them take hold of my protection,*
 that they may make peace with me;
 yes, let them make peace with me.

The Lord’s message, “*I am not angry*” (I have no wrath) (vs. 4) is significant because in the context of the day of the Lord, His wrath has been released during the terrible days of the Great Tribulation. The Lord now lovingly tends to His beloved vineyard and will not let anyone try to destroy it. In vs. 5, the Lord entreats all those who would be against His vineyard to make peace with Him. This call of the Lord for those alive “in that day” is for them to “make peace with Me” is very emphatic that it is repeated. He will rule the world as the Master of His kingdom and no one will be able to overthrow His government or His rule. Many will try, specifically towards the end of this future period of one thousand years. But there will be no doubt as to the outcome of their feeble attempts (Psalm 2:1-12 and Rev. 20:1-10). One of the great titles of the Son who is to come (who is the keeper of the vineyard) described in Isaiah 9 is “*Prince of Peace*” (9:6). Also, Isaiah prophesied that: “*Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end.*” (9:7). The Lord will reach out to the residents of the earth in this future day to seek His protection and make peace with Him. To not do so will be futility and folly with fatal consequences for no one will be able to stand against Him (Rev. 6:16-17).

27:6 *In days to come Jacob will take root;*
 Israel will bud and blossom,
 and fill the entire world with fruit.

The Lord, as recorded in vs. 6, gives the meaning of this short parable. It is Jacob and Israel, His chosen people who are His vineyard. They will take root, blossom, sprout and “*fill the entire world with fruit.*” These days can only be during the millennial kingdom of the Messiah who will rule the earth with peace. During these days, the chosen people of God, the Jews described as Jacob and Israel, will multiply and fill the earth and the earth will be blessed by their presence. Refer also to Isaiah 35:1-10; Isaiah chapters 60-66; Amos 9:11-15 and Zechariah 14:8-11.

(11) A' The Lord's harvest from a destroyed people: 27:7-13 (verses 7-11 destruction and verses 12-13 gleanings)

27:7 Has he struck them as he struck those who struck them?

Or have they been killed as those who killed them were killed?

As recorded in verses 7-11, Isaiah declares a prophecy about the purpose of the Lord in dealing with His people during the days of the Tribulation. The Lord asks His people in vs. 7 a rhetorical question: Has God struck His people Israel as He has punished the enemies of the people of Israel? Also, Have His people Israel been killed as God has killed those who have assaulted and killed His people? The Lord did not deal with His people in the same way as He has done with the enemies of Israel and Judah. The evil nations have been destroyed and their peoples slaughtered yet God has had compassion on His people.

*27:8-9 You contend with them by expulsion and exile;
he has blown them away with his fierce wind
as in the day of the east wind.*

*⁹ Therefore by this Jacob's iniquity will be forgiven,
and this will be the full fruit of taking away his sin:
When he makes all the stones of the altar like crushed limestone,
with no Asherah poles and incense altars left standing.*

Isaiah declares the way God deals with his rebellious chosen people by sending them into exile and removing them from their land and the benefits of their temple worship instead of killing them. Also, God does something amazing and unlike anything the people of the earth could comprehend. Instead of punishing them with death as they deserve for their continual sinfulness as graphically described in many passages of Isaiah's prophecy, the Lord will forgive His people and the proof of this forgiveness will be when their idols and incestuous practices will be forever removed.

God hates idols and idol worship and the long sad story of Israel and Judah had been one of rebelling against God and turning to idols for worship and other nations for safety and protection. When God forgave them through the discipline of banishment and expulsion, they did not return to their previous acts of rebellion by idol worship. In the more intermediate future from Isaiah's day, God banished His people to exile in Babylon and when they returned to the land, idol worship was a forgotten sin. In the far future during the Great Tribulation, however, God will once again discipline His people and the result will be permanent peace between God and His people.

27:10-11 *For the fortified city is solitary,
a habitat deserted and forsaken, like the wilderness.
There the calf feeds,
and there it will lie down,
and consume its branches.*

¹¹ *When its branches are withered,
they are broken off;
women come and make a fire with them.
For it is a people with no understanding,
therefore he who made them will not have compassion on them,
and he who formed them will show them no mercy.*

The prophet describes the sad conditions of those who live in the “*fortified city*”. This city is not identified and it seems best to understand it as representing the cities of the world during the period of the Great Tribulation. This “city” will be left desolate and forlorn, for it is a home to a people who do not have discernment. The Lord will not be gracious to them nor will He have compassion on them, as He will have on His chosen people. To His chosen people, the Lord gives grace and forgiveness of their sins. To the ungodly peoples of the world who will not repent, the Lord gives judgment and punishment for their sins. In these verses, 7-11, Isaiah gives a concise statement of the purposes of the Lord for bringing the days of the Tribulation to the earth.

27:12-13 *In that day, the LORD will thresh grain, from the Euphrates River to the Brook of Egypt; you will be gathered one by one, O Israelites.*

¹³ *In that day, a great trumpet will be blown; those lost in the land of Assyria will come, along with those who were refugees in the land of Egypt; they will worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.*

The message of the prophecy changes from judgment to redemption. God will “*in that day*” re-gather His people from the nations where they have been perishing and scattered and He will bring them to Zion, His holy mountain at Jerusalem. The purpose of this re-gathering of His people is for them to worship Him as their Messiah Who has returned to redeem His people. The message of the Lord’s re-gathering of His people is one that is repeated often in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament prophets. It remains a hope and a reality for the Jewish people today for this re-gathering is beginning, even though many are in disbelief. But in a future day, it will be a re-gathering of the faithful remnant who have repented of their sin of rejecting their Messiah and have asked Him to return and rescue them. Hosea 5:15-6:3; Zechariah 10:8-12 and 12:10-14; and Matthew 23:38-39.

Teaching Outline of Isaiah Chapter 27

The Predetermination of the Lord: (Final Destination of Satan) 27:1

The People of the Lord: (His Vineyard) 27:2-6

The Purposes of the Lord (Forgive His People) 27:7-9

The Punishment of the Lord (On His Enemies) 27:10-11

The Pleasure of the Lord (Re-gather his Faithful Remnant) 27:12-13