

The Gospel According to Isaiah - Chapters 24 through 29

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Judgement on the Whole Earth 24:1-23

24:1-3 the scope is the whole earth, everyone, no social or economic class is exempt; hyperbole is used for emphasis (60:2, Zph1:2; '... this word' see 45:23, 55:11, Jr1:12)

24:4-6 the condition of the earth due to the holocaust brought on by corrupt and incompetent world leaders (Mt24:22, Rv11:18); 'everlasting covenant' (Gn8:20-9:17) central component: justice – completely lacking in the world today; 'curse' Dt28:15, Is34:2, Mt4:6; 'scorched' due to nuclear war

24:7-12 social conditions due to war: paucity, lack of necessities, no joy in life; 'wasted city' any city, all cities

24:13 'beaten olive tree' metaphor for a very small remnant left (Jr6:9)

24:14-16a a refrain of hope – the singers are either the resurrected saints or those called to the second exodus

24:16b who is the speaker – most likely Isaiah; but could be the Church today

24:17-23 the day of YHWH: punishment of sinners; geological phenomena; cosmic phenomena; 'punish host of heaven' likely Satan and demons (2Pt2:4, Rv20:7); 'YHWH ... reigns' establishment of the Kingdom of God

A Psalm of Praise by Isaiah 25:1-12

25:1 typical introduction to a psalm; 'the plan of God' (28:21b, 29:14) see also At2:23, 4:28, 5:38, 20:27, Eph1:11, Hb6:17

25:2 result of Day of YHWH – 'the city': world city, the system of this world; 'foreigners' rulers of this world

25:3-5 the World Tomorrow – the King of Kings establishes his dominion; 'foreigner' – see vs2

25:6-9 classic description of the World Tomorrow: follows from vs1-5 since the world system is gone, peace and abundance are possible for all; v6 the World Tomorrow will be like a feast; v7 'covering' is the inability of people to understand God's plan (2Cr3:15-16, Mt27:51); 'swallow up death' – the objective of salvation; v9 all 'saints' through the ages have waited for salvation – once resurrected, we can take salvation to all the world

25:10-12 the last vestiges of sin will be eradicated; 'Moab' is a symbol of incorrigible humanity (Nm24:17)

A Psalm of the Church 26:1-20 – The Converted Life

26:1-2 the resurrection: 'righteous nation' – the Church in all ages (66:8)

26:3-4 'whose mind is stayed' someone converted; 'LORD GOD' – Yah Yahweh, a rare appellative

26:5-6 'has humbled' – prophetic perfect, as Isaiah sees it, the Day of YHWH is as good as already happened; 'the lofty city' – world city (25:2, contrast 26:2); 'foot tramples' metaphor of violently conquering the world with the gospel (Mt11:12)

26:7-9 the prayer of the converted; 'judgements are in the earth' – only happens in the World Tomorrow

26:10-11 the fate of the incorrigible: 'hand is lifted up' symbol of exhortation, authority, and action; 'see your zeal' (Lk16:19ff) the incorrigible will see the World Tomorrow, just before the lake of fire (Rv20:14-15)

26:12 'done for us all our works' – God will see Christians through to salvation (Pp1:6, 2:12-13)

26:13-14 a historical fact for Israel; also true in a spiritual way for each of us before conversion; the 'other lords' are dead – permanently if among the incorrigible

26:15 New Israel in the World Tomorrow – Land of Israel extended to ideal limits and beyond (Nm34:1-12, Obadiah 19-20)

26:16-18 two parallel streams of thought – applies to people in Jerusalem during siege of 701; and, to the end times: v16 is anyone in distress praying; v17 applies to reform of Hezekiah; but also, sounds like the efforts of the Church to affect the world; v18 is clearly the failure of Israel as God's holy nation; but also, the net result of the Church's efforts on the world today

26:19-20 the first resurrection: 'give birth' is a metaphor – Hebrew 'tapil' means 'to cast down': the idea is that the earth is 'giving up' the dead, which is also a metaphor: the resurrection is the creation of a new body infused with the life of the original person

The Day of YHWH 26:21-27:1

26:21 classic expression of the Day of YHWH – express purpose is to punish sinners; 21b alludes to 'everlasting covenant' (24:5)

27:1 'in that day' refers to 26:21; 'Leviathan' mythological symbol of the 'zeitgeist' – the spirit of the age: specifically Satan's influence in the social order of the world (Rv12:3)

The Second Exodus and the New Israel 27:2-13

27:2-5 metaphor of the vineyard revisited (see 5:1-7) – the vineyard is now the Church in the World Tomorrow – 'thorns and briars' all opposition is gone, only peace remains

27:6 plain statement of the purpose of the New Israel – to take the gospel to the whole world

27:7-8 Isaiah is looking back from the perspective of the World Tomorrow: in his day, North Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians, but Assyria was decades away from its destruction; from the perspective of the World Tomorrow, not only Assyria, but also Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome will have been fully punished; and the scattering of ancient Israel among the nations will be over (v8 in KJV is not intelligible)

27:9 the destruction of ancient Israel was the required punishment for covenant breaking; New Israel will forever eradicate all forms of idolatry

27:10-11 general description of any ancient city after a siege – may allude to Samaria, or Isaiah may be seeing the coming destruction of Jerusalem

27:12-13 classic description of second exodus: 'great trumpet' (Rv11:15) the seventh trumpet announcing Christ's return

Isaiah Comments on his Own Time 28:1-13

28:1-4 the end of the Golden Age: original setting likely around 735 – see Amos for description of social problems; 'one who is mighty' is Assyria – who will inflict the Day of YHWH on North Israel

28:5-6 Isaiah looks to the final Day of YHWH and the establishment of the New Israel

28:7-8 Isaiah now looks to South Israel's leaders – priests and prophets who exhibit the same sins as North Israel

28:9-10 some commentators take this to be the scoffing of Isaiah's teaching by the priests and prophets; some suggest that the Hebrew in 10b is not even intelligible wording, but just mimicking sounds; but given what follows, it seems also to be an assessment of the ability (and the desire) of the people (including priests and prophets) to understand God's teaching

28:11-13 God's judgement of the people: punishment by strangers (fulfilled by Assyrians and Babylonians); 'This is rest ...' God's desire for ancient Israel was the peace and abundance (which will only be realized in the World Tomorrow); but they refused; so God will give them over to their ignorance and the attendant punishment (Ps95:7-11, Hb3:7-11, 4:1-10)

A Prophecy of the Messiah 28:14-29

28:14-15 the ancient leaders (as with leaders today) were responsible for the deplorable condition of the nation; 'scoffers' alludes to vs7-10, perhaps also to Ahaz; 'covenant with death ...' perhaps sarcastic, but demonstrates the depravity of leaders; 'overwhelming whip' likely an allusion to Tiglath-Pileser

28:16 'therefore' because of sinful condition of Israel (and by extension, all mankind) the first coming of the Messiah is necessary (Rm9:33, 1Pt2:6-8, Ps118:22, Zc4:7, Mt21:42, At4:11); 'whosoever believes...' admonition to Christians be patient

28:17 the second coming: justice and righteousness will spread to all the world (2Kg21:13, Is34:11,17, Am7:7-8, Zc1:16, 2:1)

28:18-20 the depraved covenant of death is contrasted to the covenant of life inaugurated by the Messiah; 'the message' alludes to vs9, 10, and 13; 'the bed ...' likely a familiar proverbial expression, but understandable in translation

28:21a allusion to original meaning of 'Day of YHWH'; Mount Perazim – 2Sm5:17-25; Valley of Gibeon – Jsh10:1-5

28:21b Day of YHWH is now against Israel – a 'strange deed' (see also 25:1, 29:14, 37:26)

28:22 'scoff' v14; Isaiah comments: the ultimate Day of YHWH will be against the whole world

28:23-29 parable of the farmer (see Christ's agricultural parables in Mt13:, 20:, and Lk13:) the point is that when the time is right, God acts: the first coming of the Messiah is history; the second, will occur exactly according to God's plan

The Failure of Hezekiah's Reform 29:1-14

29:1-4 the siege of Jerusalem in 701: 'Ariel' a symbolic epithet for Jerusalem – likely derived from 'alter hearth': the temple sacrifices occurred in Jerusalem, and Jerusalem would be the site of the final 'sacrifice' of the nation of Israel; 1b 'feasts' allusion Hezekiah's reform – he had reinstated the outward form of worship, but the hearts of the people were not reformed; v4 'brought low' the pride and arrogance of the ruling classes was not altered by the reform; 'ghost' is better translated 'medium' (8:19, 19:3, 26:14)

29:5a specifically looks to destruction of Sennacherib's army in 688; but leads into 29:5b-6 the ultimate day of YHWH and the final destruction of 'world city' for which Assyria was just a type

29:7 looks to the battle of Armageddon (Rv9:16, 16:16, 19:19)

29:8 a proverbial expression demonstrating the illusiveness and anguish of trusting in 'world city'; 'Mount Zion' makes it clear the 'Ariel' represents Jerusalem

29:9-10 bowl of YHWH's wrath: (51:17, Dt32:32-33, Jr25:15ff, Hab2:16, Rv15:7, 16:1, 19) – specifically aimed at the leaders: priests and prophets

29:11-12 the vision, the words, the message – the plan of God: only understandable by God's revelation (28:9-13, 19)

29:13-14 lays bare the failure of Hezekiah's reform: 'this people ... their hearts are far from me'; therefore, God's plan will proceed with the final destruction of the nation of Israel (but in due time)

Final Summary 29:15-24

29:15-16 God for emphasis reiterates the condemnation of leaders for their corruption and depravity: 'deeds in the dark' see 28:15; 'turn upside down' how aptly that describes the world today; metaphor of the potter and clay see 45:9, 64:8, Jr18:2ff, Rm9:20-21

29:17 metaphor of the fruitful field (32:15, Mc7:14): the coming of the Kingdom of God will change everything about this world: demonstrated in the next verses

29:18-19 the signs of the Kingdom (Mt5:3, 11:5ff, Lk6:20, 7:18ff)

29:20-21 the 'high and mighty' of this world will be brought to nothing

29:22-24 God goes back to the beginning: Abraham – God remains faithful to the patriarchal promises and through his plan, Jacob (Israel), the New Israel, will fulfill his part in the promises; 'his children' the people called to New Israel in the World Tomorrow; v24 the work of New Israel – to bring the gospel to the world, whereby all nations are blessed (Gn12:3)