

Review

God has announced oracles of doom against the nations for their sins like pride and idolatry. But He is not yet done discussing judgment. In our study of chapter 24 tonight, we will see that God's scope is getting bigger, discussing the judgment of the whole earth.

24:1-4 The Earth Laid Waste

Isaiah looks to a time when judgment befalls the earth. Everyone, no matter what their status, income, or position will be judged.

World-wide, the face of the earth will be distorted. How will this happen? You may recall the words written in the book of Revelation,

Rev. 16:18-20 ...there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty ... the cities of the nations fell ... and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

24:5-6 A Curse For Transgression

Why would such a devastation be in store for our planet? Because its inhabitants have continually broken God's commandments.

Throughout history, God has communicated that if we reject His Word, a curse will result. As a matter of fact, the very first sin of rebellion to God's command brought about a curse on the earth:

Gen. 3:17 ...to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

Ever since then, God has set before mankind the blessing and the curse. He did this very clearly to the Israelites in the book of Deuteronomy:

Deut. 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may

live, you and your descendants"

Unfortunately, generation after generation has chosen the curse over the blessing, death over life. The day is coming when the full measure of that sin will overflow, and the earth will suffer the curse of the Great Tribulation.

24:7-14 Joy Turns To Gloom

New wine is a symbol of joy in the Scriptures, because it speaks of the abundance of the harvest. When there is grain, new wine, oil, and honey, it's a good year, and reason for cheer. David said to the Lord in Psalm 4,

Psa. 4:7 You have put gladness in my heart, more than when their grain and new wine abound.

But here in Isaiah, the prophet tells us that there will be no joy during the outpouring of God's judgment. The new wine mourns. There will be no harvest because the vine is decaying. Even those who try to get drunk will not be able to drown their sorrows. No one will be able to escape the desolation of the destruction.

24:15-16 Worshipful Lips, Treacherous Hearts

Interestingly, Isaiah points out that worship songs were being sung. "Glory to the Righteous One," they sang. But God was hearing something different. You see, in that day, even as now, there were lots of people singing worship songs, but not with sincerity. And because God listens to hearts, not lips, He sees through hypocrisy and acting. The words of a worship song mean nothing if the heart of the person singing it doesn't love God.

Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees,

Mark 7:6-7 And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME...'"

Jesus' quote was from Isaiah 29, but the point is the same. It's the same as what God said back in chapter one:

Is. 1:11-15 "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this trampling of My courts? Bring your worthless offerings no longer, incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies - I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, they have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood."

Whether it's a worship song, a prayer, an offering, or a trip to church, God is looking at your heart, not your religious action. He's blessed if it's genuine, and sickened if it's not.

In Isaiah's day, they were singing, "Glory to the Righteous One," but they were still dealing treacherously with other people - lying, deceiving, betraying one another. And so he tells his listeners, "Don't stop singing the song, just start meaning it!"

24:17-20 No Escape

Without repentance, doom and gloom are all that there is to look forward to.

I'm always bewildered by people who talk about trying to live through the Great Tribulation. Because it's not going to be like survival camp, or Y2K, or camping out through blackouts and high gas prices. In those days, no matter where you turn, you will face death. There will literally be no way out.

Those who hear that a city has been destroyed will think that they'll find safety by fleeing the area. But while they're running away, they'll fall into a pit. And if they manage to climb out of the pit, they'll be caught in something else. In other words, there will be no escape. When judgment is world-wide, where on earth are you going to run away from it?

24:21-22 Angels And Man Judged

Man and angels will be punished in the same place, and at the same time. Isaiah says that they will be gathered together like prisoners in the dungeon. That dungeon is the abyss. And after many days, they will be punished. Specifically, the "many days" will be a thousand years. Revelation chapter 20 tells us what will happen at the end of the Millennial Reign of Christ:

Rev. 20:7-15 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

This is the same place which Jesus described as,

Matt. 25:41 ...the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels

24:23 The Lord Will Reign In Jerusalem

Immediately after the judgment of men and angels in the lake of fire, the moon and sun will disappear. Revelation goes on to say,

Rev. 21:1-3 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

God will reign in Jerusalem - the new Jerusalem on the new earth. And His glory will shine before us forever.