



Isaiah 25-26

Tape #7253
Isaiah 25-26
By Chuck Smith

Isaiah twenty five. In the last verse of chapter twenty four, Isaiah was looking forward to that glorious day, “When the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.” So looking forward to the wonderful kingdom age, when the Lord of hosts is reigning.

Chapter twenty five is a response of praise to this marvelous event. As Isaiah now responds in his heart to this, to this glorious anticipation of the children of God. That day when God’s kingdom will come, and His will, will be done on this earth, even as it is in heaven.

We cannot understand the purposes and the intent of God in the creation of the world, as we look around and see it today. You do not see a world that is in harmony with God. You see a world that is in rebellion against God, and is suffering the consequences of that rebellion. As you look around you cannot see God’s intention for man. For man is suffering as the result of sin, and the fallen nature.

So we long for that day, we pray for that day! For at the present time, God’s will is not being done on the earth. God, in allowing man the freedom of choice has honored the choices that man makes. If a man chooses to destroy himself, God will allow him to do so. God will honor that choice. For choice is not a true choice, if it is violated. So God allows you to make your choice, and then He honors the choices. Man has made his choice to rebel against God, the law of God, to destroy himself, and God allows man to do that.

So we long for that day, when we will see the world that God intended. When the Lord of hosts shall reign. When His kingdom shall come, and His will, will be done, here on this earth, even as His will is done in heaven. Believe me, they don’t have the problems in heaven that we have here on earth! They don’t have the problems with environmental pollution, and those things that are plaguing our earth. Glorious day when the Lord of hosts comes to reign!

So as Isaiah responds to that, he declares...

Oh Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things; and your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth (25:1).

Now as you read this praise of Isaiah, we recognize that Isaiah is borrowing heavily from the song of Moses, and the praise that Moses offered to God for the victories that God wrought for his people in delivering them out of Egypt. So it is that, it’s interesting to me, and I believe that it is significant. That these men such as Isaiah, were men of the word. He was thoroughly endued with the word of God. His life was saturated with God’s word! It’s marvelous that when your life is so saturated with the word of God, that as God is working in your life, or does marvelous things for you, that as you respond, the response is, is taken out of the background of the richness of the word, that is within your heart.

So Isaiah is responding to God. “Oh Lord!”, or, “Jehovah, Yahweh! You are my God! And I will exalt thee, and praise thy name, because you have done wonderful things! And your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth!” That is, “You have fulfilled the things you said that you would do.” The counsels of old, the prophecies, the promises of the glorious kingdom, and the reign of Jesus, has now been fulfilled. And thus, “Faithful is God to keep His word.” The word of God is truth. These are the things that you can count on. The faithfulness of God to keep His promises, and to keep His word.

For you have made of a city an heap; of a defensed city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; and it shall never be built (25:2).

That is, those cities that have defied God, they’ve become a heap. A ruin, destroyed, obliterated.

The strong people therefore shall glorify thee, and the city of awesome nations shall fear thee. [Or, worship thee, reverence thee.] For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the awesome ones is as a storm against the wall (25:3-4).

So he speaks of how God has watched over the poor, the needy, and that He is a refuge of the storm. I

love that! A shadow from the heat. God becomes to you, whatever your needs may be. There's not an experience that you go through in life, but what God is not there to help you, to guide you. To be for you a refuge, in those times of storm. To see you through.

Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the awesome ones shall be brought low. [God will triumph.] And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, and of wines on the lees that's well refined (25:5-6).

So speaking of that glorious day of the Lord, and the wonderful feast that God will have.

Now in the oriental customs, and the mind set, the act of feasting together was a very important experience. Probably because of the way they feasted and ate, it had a lot to do with how it, the significance that they put upon it. You see, when they ate, they didn't have beautiful table settings like you're gonna have Christmas day. When you get out your finest china, and you get out your silverware and all, and you set the table out, and you have you know, all of these nice place settings. You have the little bread plate, and you have salad plate, and the dinner plate, and the dessert plate. You have the forks and everything all in order you know. That's not the way they ate.

When we were over in Tonga, and went to the feast that the king had, that's more the way they ate. We came to the table and there was the food. And you want some of that little pig, you'd reach, and you pull off, and you did eat it with your hands. The potatoes and everything else. You just had your hands to eat with. Not even a napkin to dry them with.

That's the way it was in the Bible days. They would have all of these sauces, and soups, and the meat, and you would have the bread. They would pass the bread around the table, and you'd pull off a piece of bread. They didn't have the kind of etiquette that they have today. You know, if you dip the shrimp in the sauce once, and take a bite, you don't drip it, dip it again, you know. You don't want to get your germs from your mouth in that shrimp sauce. Not with them, they'd pull off the bread, they'd dip it in the sauce, and they'd eat it, and they'd dip it back in and eat it. Scoop it, use it sort of as a spoon, and the various salads, they'd, they'd scoop with their bread and eat it. The soup, they'd all dip in and eat it. A real sharing of germs!

That is why they felt such a total oneness when they ate together. "Because we're really sharing. We're dipping our bread, which came from the same loaf, in the same bowl of soup. And thus, we're sharing from the same bread, we're eating from the same bowl of soup and, and we're even sharing each other's germs! "So I am becoming part of you, you are becoming part of me!" That's what feasting together symbolized to them. That unity, that oneness that you have with a person when you eat with them. That is why they were very careful who they ate with. They'd look, and they'd say, "Hmm, do I want to be one with them?" "Doesn't look like he brushes his teeth!" So they were, they were very careful. They would not think of eating with a Gentile. They even would not eat with sinners!

They found fault with Jesus because He was eating with sinners. "Eating with sinners in public!" I mean, and it was a big shocker to them. Because they looked at eating together, feasting together as, as a unifying and becoming one with each other. That is why the Lord's table was so vital and important to them. Because it brought them to that consciousness of their unity with each other, and their unity with Jesus. He was the common bond, and, and they were unified through the bread. "I am the bread of life." And they were unified through that bread, and through the cup, and through eating together of the bread, and drinking together of the cup. They didn't have nice little sterilized community cups like we do, plastic throw aways. They had the one cup. They all drank out of the same cup.

Now my grandkids talk about backwashing. I found out what that was lately. Once in awhile they share their coke or something you know. "Careful you don't backwash!" Creates real problems.

The bars are down, totally open. "I've become a part of you. You've become a part of me, as we have feasted together." And it symbolized to them that beautiful, beautiful union.

Thus, as we look forward to the marriage feast of the Lord! Now we have these beautiful pictures of a lovely table all set. There's the china, silver and all, and we, "We come, for now things are all ready! The marriage supper of the Lamb!" Beautiful table, nice chairs and everything else. You might be surprised

when you get to the table! You might be like I was in Tonga, looking for some knife to cut off a portion of the pig!

Now Isaiah speaks of the glorious feasting of the Lord. The fat, the wine. He speaks of the feast of wine on the lees. Now when the wine would settle in the lees, the flavor would become strong. However the wine would become murky. So as it would begin to settle on the lees, they would pour it into another vessel. Thus they'd pour from vessel to vessel in order that they might get a very clear wine, and yet it was, it was of a more mellow kind of a flavor. So the wines, that he said, that were on the lees, and yet it is refined. Oh it is a very special kind of wine, well flavored, and yet clear, or refined.

He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all the people, and the veil that is spread over all nations (25:7).

Now Moses, I, I mean, Paul, wrote about the children of Israel, how that when they read the law of Moses, there was a veil over their eyes. It would seem that over the nations there is a veil. A blindness to the things of God, to the word of God, the understanding. We look around at the world in which we live, and we see the people living in darkness, as far as God is concerned. That spiritual darkness that is there. Like a veil is over their face, and, and they just can't see. And in that day, the Lord is gonna remove that covering over the face, the veil that is spread over all the nations. Then the glorious promise.

He will swallow up death in victory (25:8);

When Paul the apostle was writing concerning the resurrection from the dead, in I Corinthians fifteen, he cried out at the end of his discourse, "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? For the sting of death has been swallowed up in victory!" Paul quotes this passage from Isaiah. Then Paul goes ahead and interprets it for us. He said, "For the sting of death is sin, but Christ having removed our sin, the sting of death is gone. Death is swallowed up in victory!"

I heard a very apt illustration the other day. It's like driving down a country road on a summer day, with the windows open, and a bee flies into the car. The little girl begins to scream, "A bee! Daddy a bee! Help Daddy! A bee!", she gets panicky. While he's driving, he's swinging at that bee, trying to catch it, and finally he gets hold of it, grabs it in his fist. He holds it there in his fist, until the bee stings him, and then he lets the bee go, and it's flying around the car again. And the little girl starts to scream again, "Daddy a bee, a bee!" He said, "Don't worry honey, it can't hurt you now." And he opened his hand, and he said, "There's the stinger there. The bee can't hurt you."

Jesus took the sting of death, our sin. Death can't hurt you any more. He said, "Oh dad! Dad!" "No. Can't hurt you." Jesus shows His hands, "I took the sting of death away." "Death is swallowed up in victory!" That is true in Jesus Christ, who removed the sting of death, by taking away our sin. There's no more sting!

The Bible speaks of those who, "All of their lifetime were subject to bondage because of the fear of death", but the sting is gone. There is no more fear. Like David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For thou art with me."

and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; and at the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it (25:8).

We read in Revelation, "God shall wipe away all tears. They shall sorrow no more. There will be no more pain, no more suffering. The former things are passed away."

It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; and we have waited for him, and he will save us: he is the Lord; and we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation (25:9).

Oh can you imagine how its gonna be! We have been waiting, still waiting. Lord come! Come quickly! Lord come and establish your kingdom! We've waited, and we continue to wait. But one day, it's gonna be! You know, there are those special days out of the year that you are anticipating. You look forward to them, you wait for them, and it seems like they'll never arrive! Christmas used to be that way with me when I was a kid. Every year I would wait, I would read in the paper, and follow it every night, twenty nine shopping days till Christmas. Twenty eight shopping days till Christmas. Man, I'd watch that! Waiting for Christmas to come, counting the days! Then the day, the magic day would finally arrive, and all of the excitement! We could never sleep, the night, we, we, our family always opened presents Christmas morning, and, and I, I can

see where that could be, we never slept Christmas, you know, Christmas Eve. Wake up every little while, and wonder, "Is it morning yet?" Just couldn't wait! The longest night of the year was Christmas Eve. Always! Yet the day would come.

Oh what joy, what excitement! Imagine the joy and the excitement, when the day of the Lord does come! We've been waiting, we've been anticipating, we've been planning, we've been praying, and that day, when it comes. Oh Lord! We've waited, save us! We've waited on Him, and now we will be glad, and we will rejoice in His salvation!

For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, [And the enemies, represented by], Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreads forth his hands to swim: [The enemies of the Lord will try to survive, but they're gonna sink.] And he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands. And the fortress of the high fort of the walls shall he bring down, and lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust (25:10-12).

Our Lord shall reign, and all opposition will be put down.

Chapter 26

Now we get to the worship.

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; [The lyrics] We have a strong city; salvation will [be will,] God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in (26:1-2).

So the glorious song in that day of God's strength, and God's protection, and God's deliverance. Then that beautiful verse.

For thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusts in thee (26:3).

Jesus said to His disciples, "Peace I give, peace I leave with thee. My peace I give unto thee, not as the world giveth, give I unto thee." Paul in one of his benedictions said, "And may the peace of Christ keep your minds and your hearts." Then the Bible speaks of the peace of Christ which passes human understanding.

Now it is one thing to have peace with God. That is established the moment you surrender to God. That makes sense doesn't it? As long as you're fighting God, as long as you're at war with God, as long as you're running from God, you can never have peace with God. The first consciousness that a person has when they ask Jesus Christ to come into their life, they, they repent of their sins, they say, "Lord I'm sorry for my sins. Please forgive me. Lord come in, and take over my life." The first consciousness that a person has is that of peace. Just suddenly there's a real beautiful peace. I'm no longer at war with God, I'm no longer fighting with God, I'm no longer running from God. "God I now belong to you!" You know man it feels good! Such peace!

But there is also the peace of God. That's peace with God. There are a lot of people who have peace with God, but don't have the peace of God. Their life is still in a turmoil. There's still a lot of anxiety, there's still a lot of fear. In trepidation about things around them. An uncertainty, and, and you see people who are Christians, it's not really questioning the fact that they are born again or a child of God.

But it is possible to be born again, and be a child of God, and not have the peace of God. The peace of God comes when you rest your case fully in His hands. When you say, "Well Lord it's in your hands." And you just look at Him. You don't look at the situations anymore. You don't look at the problems. You look at the Lord.

Now it's an amazing thing, when I look at my problems in the light of my strength, and then I look at my problems in the light of His strength. Very small things can overwhelm me if I think I've got to handle it. I'll tell you when you figure, "Lord, take care of it", there's nothing that God can't handle that I am facing. If I keep my eyes on Him, then I have that peace, that perfect peace.

As, as most of you know the church has a avocado, and citrus farm up in Santa Paula that was given to the church a few years ago, and we're holding it, and anticipating to sell it before too long. Because development is finally moving us that way. Last year was the first year that we were sort of able to break

even. We had a disastrous fire a few years ago that destroyed most of the avocado trees. We've replanted them in citrus. Last year was a good year for the farm, and we just about broke even. But that frost two nights ago was disaster, wiped us out. Both our citrus and avocados seemed to be gone.

The fellow in charge of the farm called me up yesterday, his voice was filled with gloom and discouragement as he told me of the tremendous frost damage that we sustained on Friday night in that disastrous frost. I said well, "It's the Lord's. Belongs to Him. And, I suppose if there's anybody that can afford to lose a crop of avocados, He can." You know. "I'm not gonna worry about it! It's His, belongs to Him." So you have that peace. "Lord you know, you control the weather. You can control whatever. So you want to wipe out the avocados and oranges that belong to you, that's fine. You're smarter than I am." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." That's the secret. Don't let your mind get all caught up in, in these things. Maybe I'm getting, maybe I'm getting old, I'm getting old!

It used to be nothing could disturb my sleep. I was a counselor for years in the summer camps. The guys you know, in a cabin, and you're, you've got these twenty guys in there you know, and they're out for a great time. They're out there just to have fun and all, and they don't want to go to sleep at night. They don't want to get up in the morning either! But they don't want to go to sleep at night. There's all this talking, all this you know, fooling around, playing tricks on everybody, short sheeting, you know, raiding the other campus and the whole thing. I mean it's all there.

As I was counseling them, I'd say, "Now look guys, give me a break. Just be quiet long enough for me to go to sleep, and then you guys can do anything. Cause once I'm asleep, I just don't wake up. I mean, I'm gone! I mean I sleep soundly, and so just let me get to sleep. Just stay quiet long enough for me to get to sleep, then you guys can do whatever you do (at the campground) and I'll never know it!" The interesting thing, by the time they were quiet long enough for me to get to sleep, they were usually asleep too you know, all piped down. But usually there's hyper vibes in that kind of a situation.

Now-a-days, I do wake up at night, and sometimes there are nagging thoughts, where you seek to sort of solve the problem. The problem will come to you, and it'll start sort of nagging on you. I borrowed some money this past summer to loan to Chuck Missler who was in a real need. They called and they told me that he had filed bankruptcy, and so I was wakened several times in the evening and thinking about that. I'm responsible really for the debt. It's not that I'm really worried about paying it, I mean, it'll come out. But as I would think, wake up, and think about that, it happened two or three times, and then finally, as I would wake up and my mind would start going to that, I'd just start praying for Chuck. "Lord he's going through some rough times. Lord be with him, help him now, and Lord, just really minister to him." You know, I quit waking up, as I started praying for him! I had peace then, didn't trouble me anymore. Just pray. Commit it to the Lord, and He will keep you in perfect peace, if your mind is stayed on Him. Get your mind on the issues, on the problems, and man you have sleepless nights and everything else!

Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength (26:3):

All you need, it's there, trust in the Lord. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, his mind is stayed on the Him, because he trusts in thee." Then just the commandment, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

For he brings down those that dwell on high; the lofty city, he lays it low; he lays it low even to the ground; and he brings it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy. For the way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just (26:4-7).

So trust in the Lord. God will take care of it, He will bring down the high ones. He will exalt the needy, the poor, the just will triumph.

Yea, in the way of thy judgments O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee (26:8).

So, "Lord, we've waited for your judgments". Have you ever been in that position where you want to get even? Because they are wrong, they've done wrong, and you want justice in this matter. It appears that they're getting by with it, that's the thing that gets under my skin! They seem to be getting by with their evil. Now we know that the Lord is just, and we know that in the end justice is going to triumph, even over the

injustices of our justices!

You know I read some of the, the judges today, and some of the decisions, and some of the things that they are doing, and I think, “That is not justice, that is not right! That’s not even sane! Lord! Deal with them!” I wait for His judgments. But one day as we wait, God will be just, and we will see true judgment come forth.

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; [He said] yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: [“Lord, through the night, early in the morning I long for you, I seek you, I seek your fellowship.”] for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness (26:9).

Right now you see, evil causes can triumph through corrupt judicial systems. Men can get by with evil. Thus, they don’t really learn righteousness. The whole idea of the judicial system is, is to cause people to live right lives, to do the right things. But when the judicial system breaks down, then you have chaos! Because people can get by with evil. But when God judges, it will be righteous, and the people will really learn what righteousness is, when God’s judgments are in the earth.

Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: [That’s the problem, the justices today showing favor to the wicked, and thus people are not really learning what righteousness is.] in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and he will not behold the majesty of the Lord (26:10).

Thus is the, the condition of our land today. People dealing unjustly, forgetting God, leaving God out, blaspheming God, upholding every rotten cause. But...

Lord, when you hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us (26:11-12).

So the day’s coming when God will bring His true judgment on the earth. “God has ordained peace for you.” I love that! God wants you to live in peace, He wants you to know His peace. “For God has wrought His work in us.” I love that! God is working in you, both to will, and to do. He’s wrought His work in you. That work of righteousness He is doing in you.

O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: [The acknowledgment that I have served other interests, other desires.] but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. For these other things are dead, they shall not live; they’re deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish (26:13-14).

Look back in your life, and those things that ruled over your life at one period, those desires that were all-consuming. When I was in High School, I lusted after a beautiful little black 3643 Window Coupe, that was parked on South Main Street in Santa Ana. Smitty mufflers, twin spotlights, the Buick emblems on the fender skirts. Man what a beautiful car! I lusted after that car! I’d drive by and just look at it. Get off my bike, and just go around and just admire that car, and lust after it. That’s all I could think of, ways by which I might make that car mine! What I could sell, and what I could do in order to buy that car, because it did have a For Sale sign in the window. Oh how I desired that car. That’s all I could think of. Those thoughts ruled over me for a period of time. But as he said, “Those things that once were lords in our minds, in our hearts, are dead.” Car’s probably long, long, long gone! It’ll not rise. God has destroyed, the memories perish.

But thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation: and thou art glorified: for thou hast removed it far unto all the ends of the earth. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, and poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them (26:15-16).

So that is so typical in times of trouble, we call upon the Lord, we pour out our prayers. When, when God sees fit to chasten us, draw us back to Himself.

And like as a woman with child, when the time is drawing near for the child to be born, time of her delivery, she is in pain, and cries out in her labor; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, and have as it were brought forth wind; and we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen (26:17-18).

“Lord, we’ve been in pain, but we haven’t seen any fruit, we haven’t seen any results.” Now as you’ll notice in many of the Psalms, when David would pour out his heart to God, so often there would be a change

of voice, and God would respond to the words of David, the prophet. So David talks about the happiness of the person whose sins are forgiven, and he talks about his own personal experience, when there was a time when he was trying to hide his sin. The misery that he went through. How that the heavy hand of God was upon him, and he became so spiritually dry, shriveled up, like the drought of summer. Night and day, he was just under that heavy pressure of guilt, until he finally said, "I'm gonna confess my sin!, and then Lord, you forgave me my sins. Oh how happy is the man whose sins are forgiven!"

Then, at the end of that Psalm, the Lord speaks. He responds to David. The Lord said, "I will guide you with my eye. Don't be like a mule, where you have to put a bit and a bridle in its mouth to lead it around. Lest it step on thee." So God is responding to this prayer of David, and saying, "Don't be stubborn. It only hurts, it only brings pain. Be sensitive, be attentive, I will guide you, I will lead you in an easy way if you are open, and sensitive, and obedient. Don't make me have to use painful methods to get you where I want you to be." Jonah's a classic example of God using painful methods to get him, and Chuck Missler's a good classic example of God using painful methods to get him where he wants him to be. God's saying, "Don't be like a mule, where you have to put a bit and a bridle!" Now that bit is, hurts, painful! But it's necessary to lead them around. But God's saying, "I don't want to have to lead you that way. I don't want to lead you through painful processes."

Now here, as he talks about, you know, "We've been in pain, we've been in travail, but it seems like nothing is come of it." The Lord gives to him a glorious promise of the resurrection.

Now in the King James Bible, when the words are printed in italics, that is an indication that those words are not in the original Hebrew or Greek text. But when they translated them, they could not seem to make sense out of the literal Hebrew. So in trying to interpret, or give to you a possible understanding of what the Hebrew text did say, they often inserted words, but they were careful to put them in italics, so that you would know these are not really the original text, but these words were inserted by the translators to help sort of give you an understanding of what the original text was saying. Sometimes where these words were inserted, I think that they sometimes change the meaning of the text. "This is what I thought the Lord was saying."

Now if you take out the words that are in italics, I think you'll understand what God was saying. I think God meant what He said. I think that God was talking about that day of resurrection.

Thy dead shall live, with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of the vegetables, and the earth shall cast out the dead (26:19).

So there is a declaration that the dead are gonna live. That they will arise with His dead body. I believe that this is a reference to those souls who died prior to the crucifixion of Jesus, but believing in Jesus. Dying in faith. "Your dead bodies will live, they will arise with my dead body."

The Bible teaches us that when Jesus died on the cross, His soul went into the grave, Sheol, or Hades, where He had the promise of the Father, that He would not leave His soul in hell, neither would He allow the Holy One to see corruption. That was God's promise to Him. But He, He went into hell, but at that time, hell had two compartments, one of torment, and one of comfort. In Luke's gospel chapter sixteen, Jesus tells us of the rich man who died, and the poor man. The poor man carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment, seeing Lazarus, asked Abraham to, "send him with water, to touch my tongue! I'm tormented in this heat!" Two compartments.

When the Jews were asking Jesus for a sign, He said, "No sign will be given to this evil and adulterous generation, except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days, and three nights in the heart of the earth." So when Jesus died on the cross, His soul went into hell, the grave. Into that place where Abraham was comforting those dead, throughout the old testament period, who died in faith of the coming Messiah. Peter tells us that, "He preached to those souls that were in prison."

Now the prophecy of Isaiah, when we get there in the sixty first chapter that, "Jesus read to the Jews in the synagogue in Nazareth that the beginning of His ministry, spoke about, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, and to open the prison doors to those that are bound. To set at liberty the captives." He said, "This day is the scripture fulfilled in your sight." In

other words, "I'm the one that was prophesied here." Peter tells us that Jesus died and went into hell. But God had promised that He would not leave His soul in hell, neither would he allow the Holy One to see corruption. Paul tells us, in Ephesians four that, "He who has ascended into heaven is the same one who first of all, descended into the lower parts of the earth. But when He ascended, He led the captives from their captivity."

I believe that this is a prophecy of that. Where the Lord is encouraging those, the resurrection. "Thy dead shall live." Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and life, he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "Thy dead shall live. With my dead body shall they rise." So that when Jesus ascended out of the grave on the third day, He emptied hell, that portion that was being overseen by Abraham. But He emptied that part of hell, leading the captives from their captivity! For it was impossible that they could enter into heaven, until the atonement for sin had been made, that complete atonement through Jesus. It was not possible that the blood of goats, or bulls could put away their sin, all it could do was cover their sin, and point to the perfect sacrifice, by which the sins would be taken away.

So as the author of Hebrews writes concerning those Old Testament sayings, it says, "Now these all died in faith, not having received the promise, God having reserved some better thing for us, that they, apart from us, could not come into the perfected state." Without the death of Christ upon the cross, they couldn't enter in. But when He died on the cross, He went down and say, "Hey look, it's done!" Their redemption is accomplished, it's complete. "I paid the price!" I imagine there was shouting and praising like you can't imagine! Then on the third day, He says, "Okay, time to go. Let's get out of here!" He broke asunder the bars, and gates of hell, and delivered those righteous who were waiting for the promise of God.

So this glorious promise, "Thy dead shall live." "He that liveth and believeth in me", or "he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "My dead body shall they arise", or "with my dead body they will arise." And thus, "Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust from down there! Wake up! Sing!" I imagine that's what He said when He arrived. You know He came in and He said, "Hey wake up, let's sing! Victory!" "For thy dew is as the dew of the herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead." And it did!

Now these last two verses seem to be unconnected with the rest of the text. For these last two verses take us out to a point in the future, when God's judgment is going to fall upon the earth in the period known as the great tribulation. It is referred to here as "His indignation". The word "indignation" is an old testament term for the great tribulation period. So the Lord is saying...

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: and the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain (26:20-21).

So there is coming a period of time in which God is gonna deal with the Jews again, referred to here as "my people". This will be a seven year period, and in the middle of this seven year period, an event will take place in Jerusalem that will trigger the wrath and the judgment of God upon the earth. The abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, when the Antichrist comes to the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, and stands in the Holy of Holies, and proclaims that he is God, and demands to be worshiped as God. That will be the final event of man's rebellion that will trigger the indignation and wrath of God that is to be poured out upon the earth.

Now Jesus talking to the Jews about His return, and the signs of His return to the earth, to establish His kingdom, He said, "When you see the abomination of desolation that was spoken of by Daniel the prophet", that is, the Antichrist standing in the temple, causing the daily sacrifices and prayers to cease, He said, "when you see this happening, then", He said, "flee to the wilderness! If you happen to be in the fields, don't even return to the city to get your stuff, just get out. If you're on the rooftop, don't even stop as you're passing through the house to get a jacket. Just get out of there as quick as you can. Flee to the wilderness."

We are told in the book of Revelation that, "The seed of the woman Israel, will be given wings as of an eagle, to bear her to a wilderness place, where she will be nourished, and protected by the Lord for three and a half years." This is the prophecy regarding that. During the tribulation period, God will protect certain of

the Jews, those who escape to that place in the wilderness that God has prepared for them, where He will sustain them, and keep them for three and a half years. So He is saying, "Enter into your chambers, and shut your doors about thee. Hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation", or the great tribulation, "is over. For behold the Lord is going to come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity."

Which would preclude the church being here, and being a part of that judgment. Because your iniquities have been cleansed by Jesus Christ. You've been washed and cleansed! God's wrath against my sin was taken by Jesus Christ upon the cross. He received my punishment, and the judgment for my sins, so that I'm exonerated. I'm justified. I stand as righteous before God, in Christ Jesus. He bore for me, the penalty of my sin.

This business of penance for purgatory is, is hogwash! It's a denial of the complete work of Jesus Christ! He did a complete job of forgiving, cleansing, washing, and there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. But to those who are not under that covering of Jesus Christ, there remains that certain fearful, looking forward to the fiery indignation of God's wrath, by which He will devour His adversaries. "For behold, the Lord is coming out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Complete judgment upon the unrighteous.

So interesting little insights that God has given to Isaiah, of glorious events of the future, and of rather horrendous events of the future. Some of these things have already happened, some of them are waiting to happen. But, no matter what may come, in the next few days, in the Mideast, as the head of the Parliament of Iraq says that they will not hesitate to use their chemical weapons, and bacteria weapons against our forces. They will not move one inch out of Kuwait, as we're facing a showdown, remember that He will keep you in perfect peace if your mind is stayed on Him, and if you trust in Him. Keep your trust in the Lord, keep your eyes on Him, the Lord will take care, and you will have the peace of the Lord in your heart, and in your life.

Father, we thank You for that perfect peace that we have through Jesus Christ, and through knowing Lord, that our lives are in Your hands. That nothing can touch us unless you allow it to touch us. And, if You allow it to touch us, then You have a reason, and a purpose, for having allowed it. The reasons and the purposes that You have for us are good, because You love us. You are only doing that which is necessary, that good might come from it. Oh Lord how thankful we are that we can live with this confidence, and this assurance, that You love us, and that You are in control of the circumstances and the issues of our lives! So now help us Lord to just keep our minds on You, that we might experience Your perfect peace. In Jesus' name, Amen.