

The Prophets

Lesson #15

Isaiah 24:1-27:13

Outline

I. **Denunciation (1:1-39:8)**

- A. The Lord's great judgments (24:1-27:13).
 1. Universal judgment for universal sin (24:1-23).
 2. Praise to the Lord for deliverance and victory (25:1-12).
 3. A song of rejoicing in Judah's consolation (26:1-21).
 4. Punishment for oppressors and preservation for God's people (27:1-13).

Notes

Isaiah 24:1-23

- Desolation of the Earth and the world city (24:1-13).
 - The whole Earth is made empty; it is made waste and turned upside down. The judgment is universal in scope; none shall escape.
 - Those who try to drown their sorrows in strong drink find that it brings only bitter remorse.
 - The "world city" is a place forsaken, like a dreary desert or a ghost town. This entire prophecy has an air of finality about it.
- Premature rejoicing and more judgments (24:14-23).
 - Those who have come through the judgment now realize the purpose of judgment and the mercy of God that spared them. The object of praise is the majesty of God.
 - The rejoicing is premature; the condition continues to warrant more judgment.
 - Isaiah does not point to the final destruction of the world, but to the total and complete collapse of pagan power, to the failure and destruction of the heathen world. This conflict and the subsequent defeat of Satan's forces are set forth in Revelation 12:7-10.

Isaiah 25:1-12

- A hymn of thanksgiving for victory (25:1-5).
 - God has been absolutely faithful to Himself and to His purpose, and has always acted according to His true character.
 - Massive bulwarks are no protection when God determines the judgment of a city or nation.
 - Cities lie in ruin as monuments to man's folly, not his greatness. The Lord can silence the noise of foreigners and drive them away.

- God's feast for the nations (25:6-8).
 - God will provide a great spiritual feast for all, Gentiles and Jews, in His Mt. Zion.
 - The removal of the veil of darkness seems more consistent with Isaiah's theme and is confirmed by New Testament teaching (2 Corinthians 3:14-16; Ephesians 4:18).
 - Jesus Christ swallowed up death forever (2 Timothy 1:9-10). In their victory over all forces by the strength which He gives, their reproach is taken away.
- The joy of those who wait and the destruction of the proud (25:9-12).
 - This is what the law and prophets have pointed to and the faithful have waited for. The helping and protecting hand of the Lord will rest in His holy city, continuing to care for His own at all times.
 - Moab stood as a symbol of pride and arrogance which must be completely destroyed before anyone can share the salvation in Mt. Zion. The humiliation of and judgment against Moab will be complete (Jeremiah 48:47).
 - God will bring down and lay low all that in which the nation trusted and on which it had built its pride (Proverbs 16:18).

Isaiah 26:1-21

- Praise for the strong city (26:1-6).
 - This spiritual city needs no massive walls of stone for protection, for God protects her. Violence and desolation will be unknown in her borders.
 - When the proper time finally comes, the "righteous nation" is given preference; the gospel came to the Jews first, then to the Greeks, and includes all nations and peoples.
 - God's overthrow of the lofty "world city" of wickedness is progressive. The stronghold of all that exalts itself against God must be brought down (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).
- The effect of God's judgments (26:7-10).
 - The emphasis here seems to be on the rightness or straightness of the way and on the fact that God levels it. He removes the obstacles and makes the way straight (Proverbs 5:21).
 - Those who wait for God's righteous judgments and truth in the all-inclusiveness of His name, which sums up the desire of the righteous soul, shall find the true path.
 - Continued prosperity tends to turn the heart away from God, causing it to forget the source of blessings.

- The Lord versus "other lords" (26:11-15).
 - Though God's hand continues to be lifted in judgment of the world and in the protection of the faithful, the people refuse to see and to be impressed with His being and greatness.
 - In the midst of the devouring fire that overtakes the adversaries of Jehovah's purpose and rule, He in His zeal for His people will provide and establish peace -- full and complete happiness -- for them.
 - In contrast to the destruction of the nations that served idols, God in His zeal has increased the nation -- His nation. And in contrast to the destruction of the impotent idols, God is glorified.
- From failure to victory (26:16-19).
 - In time of trouble and affliction the heathen "howled." The rebellious sinners of Judah made many prayers which God did not hear; they lamented with a sad lamentation.
 - Though the people have been with child and in pain, they have accomplished practically nothing, bringing forth only wind, a symbol of failure, disappointment and emptiness (cf. 41:29; Hosea 8:7; 12:1).
 - There will yet be victory, but it will come not from man, but from God -- a work of His purpose, power and grace.
- Wait for God (26:20-21).
 - As in Matthew 6:6, the chamber in view here is an inner chamber where the faithful are to continue in a life of faith, prayer and dependence on God. Where can more secure chambers be found than in God, the "everlasting strength" (vs. 4)?
 - From His habitation in heaven God comes forth in judgment. The crimes of society shall be clearly disclosed before Him, and the penalty against such crimes shall be executed.

Isaiah 27:1-13

- The new vineyard (27:1-6).
 - The Lord's sword is unbreakable, well-tempered, able to retain its keen cutting edge, mighty, powerful, not susceptible to wear, but ever able to execute God's punitive and destructive judgment.
 - In the former case (5:1-7), Isaiah sang a song to or about God, whereas here the prophet sings about the vineyard. It is likely that the song is not actually recorded; rather, it is to be spontaneous praise from the heart.
 - In the former case, the vineyard is destroyed because of its unfruitfulness; in this case the vineyard is praised for its rich production of grapes.
 - As protector of His people, the new vineyard, the Lord will suffer no enemy to destroy them.

- Expiation and desolation (27:7-11).
 - The judgment upon the nation is to be no mere slap on the wrist; it is a severe expression of God's hatred of sin and a judgment upon those who have rejected Him for idols.
 - Though Israel will not be brought to a full end, God will destroy those among whom His people will be scattered (Jeremiah 30:11; 46:28).
 - The idols must be so completely destroyed that they will never rise again. After the captivity, idolatry never appeared again among the people. Though they were corrupted by Greek philosophy, they never again yielded to the worship of idols.
- The ingathering of the outcasts (27:12-13).
 - Isaiah's characteristic of moving from a message of gloom and depression to one of encouragement and hope emerges again in these two verses.
 - The beating out of God's fruit from the river Euphrates to the brook of Egypt metaphorically describes His gathering of those who are His -- the remnant. The area described is symbolic of the world over which God rules.
 - The sounding of the trumpet might be both a call to assemble on the mountain for worship and an announcement that atonement for sin has been perfectly provided in the sacrifice to which the law points.
 - The writer of Hebrews says that it is to this mountain, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the blood of Jesus that we have now come (Hebrews 12:22-24).