

## Isaiah 24-25 Handout

We just spent the last 11 chapters (13-23) looking at God's judgment on specific nations, holding them accountable for their sin. These judgments dismantled every false security that the nations were looking to rather than looking to the Lord and trusting Him. Now we are going to see God's sovereignty and justice extend to the entire world.

Chapters 24-27 are often called "Isaiah's Apocalypse", because they describe cosmic, universal vision of the end times, global judgment and final redemption. Chapter 24 describes God's judgment on the entire earth. Many biblical scholars see it as a prophetic passage that describes the universal devastation and judgment that takes place during the Great Tribulation, the Day of the Lord and the events immediately preceding the Second Coming of Christ. The big idea to keep in mind as we study this chapter is that it's not mainly about predicting dates or charts. It's about what happens when God finally removes every false security people rely on and the whole world feels it.

### Coming Worldwide Judgment (vs. 1-6)

#### Verse 1

The chapter starts with "see" or "behold". This is a call to attention. We see right from the beginning that this is the Lord in action.

#### What is the Lord going to lay waste? \_\_\_\_\_

He's going to devastate it. The verb used here conveys a pouring out, draining, or stripping bare.

#### What will He do with its inhabitants? \_\_\_\_\_

God is not just judging nations — but humanity. The Lord will bring global judgment that will dismantle human civilization and scatter its people, setting the stage for eventual restoration.

#### Verse 2

Verse 2 shows us that no matter who you are — no matter the gender, rank, nor function will exempt anyone from what takes place.

#### Verses 3-6 READ

#### Again, who is all of this coming from (vs.3)? \_\_\_\_\_

He has spoken this word.

Wither and languish are two pretty strong descriptors of what is happening. Notice how the heavens will languish with the earth. This is universal judgment. No part of all of creation is untouched.

Verse 4 directly connects with Romans 8 where Paul echoes this theme saying that “all creation groans” in bondage and futility as it awaits redemption from the curse of sin.

Romans 8:18-22 is says, “**18** I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. **19** For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. **20** For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.” **22** We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.”

Verse 5 gets at the heart of this passage. It says that the people have defiled the earth. We get three accusations against people:

1. Disobeyed the \_\_\_\_\_
2. Violated the \_\_\_\_\_
3. Broken the everlasting \_\_\_\_\_

In the commentary “The Message of Isaiah” by Barry G. Webb, he says this about the “everlasting covenant” being referred to here:

*“This is most certainly a reference to the covenant between God as creator and humankind as creature implicit in the very act of creation itself, and reaffirmed to Noah after the flood. It is in this context that we must understand the laws and statues referred to in verse 5. These are the basic standards of right behavior given to the man and woman at creation—especially their responsibility to care for their environment as stewards accountable to God. The present passage shows us a world so abused by those to whom it was entrusted that it can no longer sustain life: it has been defiled by its people.”*

Humanity has violated the moral responsibilities ingrained in God’s covenant with creation. The world lives as though God is not Creator, that life is expendable and justice is optional.

Therefore, a curse consumes the earth. **What must the people do?** Bear the guilt

Therefore — connects the judgment to the guilt. The earth’s inhabitants are burned up and very few are left. This shows again that there will be a remnant.

### **The Ceasing of Joy and Security (vs. 7-13)**

#### **Verses 7-9**

**What happens to new wine and the vine?** \_\_\_\_\_

All the merrymakers groan. Wine and vine represent abundance, blessing and celebration.

In verse 8 we see that celebration is replaced by silence, showing that music, parties and festivals all fall silent. Verse 9 shows that what once brought delight now turns bitter. These three verses show that when God's judgment comes, the joy rooted in prosperity and self-indulgence withers, celebration falls silent and even pleasure turns bitter. This reveals how joy apart from God is empty.

### **Verses 10-12**

The "ruined city" in verse 10 seems to be referring to the entire earth. Homes are abandoned, locked up or destroyed.

### **What are they crying out for in verse 11?** \_\_\_\_\_

This echoes vs. 7-9 only it's not used in celebration but desperation. Their joy has been extinguished; all joyful sounds banished.

In verse 12, the city is left in ruins and the gates battered to pieces. Not only is life desolate, but it is also defenseless.

### **Verse 13**

This verse is a turning point in the chapter, as it gives a ray of hope which applies to all people. God's judgment affects the whole world, but so does His mercy.

In ancient Israel, olive trees were beaten to knock down fruit. A few olives remained high in the branches after the main harvest was done. This was actually done on purpose in accordance with the law. They were to leave what remained for the foreigner, fatherless and widow. It was the same way with the grape harvest. So we see that what remains behind may be small, but it's intentional. It's the same here with God. He will intentionally preserve some people, a remnant.

### **Songs of Praise Amidst Judgment (Verses 14–16a)**

#### **Verse 14-16a**

We get a huge shift from cosmic, worldwide judgment to something much more positive.

#### **What are we told the remnant of people will do?** \_\_\_\_\_

Acclaim the Lord's majesty. The cause of praise is God Himself, not deliverance yet. God's majesty has been revealed through judgment. These survivors will bear witness to the Lord. Praise is the right response to what has happened. Judgment has clarified reality. Verses 14 and 15 refer to both west and east, showing that the entire earth is summoned to worship.

#### **What is heard from the ends of the earth (vs.16)?** \_\_\_\_\_

"Glory to the Righteous One". We again see a global scope here. A remnant from across the world is erupting in joyful worship. God is being praised specifically for His righteousness. His judgment is seen as morally right. It's like the world finally agrees that God was right. It's important to note that this is taking place in the midst of global upheaval, not afterwards. They are praising God in the middle of judgment.

We see from these three verses that:

- Judgment doesn't end the story; worship rises from the ruins
- God's righteousness leads to joy, and that true joy comes when reality is finally set right.
- Global hope is envisioned. Gentiles and Israelites alike glorify the Lord.

## **The Final Judgment and God's Reign (Verses 16b–23)**

### **Verses 16b-18**

We get another big shift here, going from global praise to personal lament. The shift here from worship to woe shows life between promise and fulfillment.

We hear Isaiah's voice here. Let's walk through some of these phrases.

*"I waste away, I waste away"* - this is a cry of physical and emotional collapse. Isaiah feels the weight of what is still to come before full redemption takes place.

*"Woe to me!"* - this is classic prophetic lament. Isaiah is not just observing, but he is deeply affected by the judgment to come.

*"The treacherous betray . . ."* - this seems to be referring to the ongoing human faithlessness. Despite the glimpse we get into future worship, sin and violence continue to persist.

### **What awaits the people of the earth (vs.17)? \_\_\_\_\_**

Verse 18 gives us escalating imagery. Every attempt to escape leads to another disaster.

Whoever flees → falls into a pit; Whoever climbs out of the pit → will be caught in a snare.

Human effort cannot outrun divine judgment. There is no escape.

The end of verse 18 says,

*"The floodgates of the heavens are opened"* - This is a direct echo of Genesis 7:11 which says, *"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened."*

In scripture, "windows/floodgates of heaven" represent God releasing what He alone controls whether blessing or judgment. Here this means that God is removing restraint. Judgment is not held back any longer.

*"The foundations of the earth shake"* - the foundations of the earth represent stability, order and permanence. The shaking of these foundations signals cosmic disorder and divine intervention. Everything that humans depend on will prove unstable. Judgment won't just affect people, but the created order itself.

These two images together show a total collapse of false security. There is no escape in the heavens nor the earth. All this is to say that God's judgment is inescapable, righteous and world-shaking. This cosmic judgment will strip away all human security and expose the world to God's righteous rule.

## Verses 19-20

The imagery intensifies in these two verses.

**What does verse 19 say about the earth?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ broken
- \_\_\_\_\_ split
- \_\_\_\_\_ shaken

This is three ways of saying the same thing: total catastrophic collapse. Creation is unraveling because humanity has corrupted its moral order (vs.5).

Verses 19 and 20 portray the earth itself collapsing under the weight of human sin. They are showing how the corrupted world can't stand before God's righteous judgment. Humanity's moral confusion is now reflected in creation itself. Human rebellion against God has consequences that ripple out into the created order, so that creation starts to mirror humanity's disorder.

The end of verse 20 says, "*It falls—never to rise again*" - this means that the corrupted order of the earth cannot be restored as is. This isn't denying future renewal, rather it's denying the return to the old, sinful world order.

This same theme can be seen in other places in scripture:

\*Genesis 3 - the ground is cursed because of human sin

\*Jeremiah 4:23-26 - here creation is described as undone because of Judah's sin

\*Romans 8:20-22 - creation is subjected to futility because of human rebellion

## Verses 21-23

"*In that day*" at the beginning of verse 21 is referring to the climactic Day of the Lord; the day of decisive divine reckoning.

**What two entities will God punish?**

\* \_\_\_\_\_

\* \_\_\_\_\_

This implies that earthly oppression is not only human and that behind corrupt systems are corrupt powers. The main point of this verse is that no power is beyond God's judgment. He will judge both visible and invisible authorities.

Verse 22 says they will be "herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison." It seems their power and authority will be removed and they will no longer have influence nor will they rule.

*“They will be punished after many days”* seems to be suggesting a delayed, final judgment. It seems there will be a period of confinement, like “prisoners in a dungeon”, before a final, ultimate punishment. We need to remember that not everything happens at once. God’s judgment unfolds in stages.

Something that we see here is that scripture doesn’t show all spiritual beings as automatically faithful:

- **Psalm 82** - God stands in judgment over heavenly “gods” for injustice

*1 “God presides in the great assembly;*

*he renders judgment among the “gods”:*

*2 “How long will you defend the unjust  
and show partiality to the wicked?*

*3 Defend the weak and the fatherless;  
uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.*

*4 Rescue the weak and the needy;  
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.*

*5 “The ‘gods’ know nothing, they understand nothing.*

*They walk about in darkness;*

*all the foundations of the earth are shaken.*

*6 “I said, ‘You are “gods”;*

*you are all sons of the Most High.’*

*7 But you will die like mere mortals;*

*you will fall like every other ruler.”*

*8 Rise up, O God, judge the earth,*

*for all the nations are your inheritance.”*

- **Daniel 10:12-14** - We see spiritual “princes” influence earthly kingdoms.

*12 “Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. 13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. 14 Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”*

- **Ephesians 6:12** - *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”*

So we see that when God brings universal judgment on the world, He will punish all unfaithful authorities both in the earthly and heavenly realms. Rulers seem to be the individuals in view here.

**What does verse 23 say about the moon?** \_\_\_\_\_

## What about the sun? \_\_\_\_\_

The two greatest created lights will pale in comparison to God's glory. They aren't destroyed – God just outshines them.

This happens because God's kingship is fully revealed. His rule is public, acknowledged and uncontested.

### Big Picture Flow of Isaiah 24

- 24:1–12 – The world judged
- 24:13 – A remnant preserved
- 24:14 – The remnant praises
- 24:15–16a – Praise spreads globally
- 24:16b-20 – Personal lament amid judgment
- 24:21-23 – Judgment of all powers and the establishment of God's reign

## Isaiah 25

We just saw global devastation and cosmic judgment because of human sin and rebellion. We saw that both humanity and the powers behind it are accountable.

Isaiah 25 is going to respond with praise, salvation and restoration. In a nutshell, chapter 24 shows the collapse of the old, sinful order and chapter 25 shows the establishment of God's righteous reign.

### Verse 1

#### What's the first thing Isaiah says here? \_\_\_\_\_

He goes on to say, *"I will exalt You and praise Your name."* This shows personal trust. This is a song of praise. Notice that there is praise before understanding. Isaiah is praising God before everything is fully restored.

I love the second half of this verse — *"for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago."* Before the foundation of the earth, God had a perfect plan for the universe. This means that all of human history was completed in God's mind before He even spoke anything into existence.

#### What does this verse show us about how God's people are meant to respond to His sovereignty?

What would it look like to echo Isaiah's words—*"O LORD, you are my God"*—in a current situation where the outcome is uncertain or unsettling?

### Verses 2-3

#### What does it say He has made the city? \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah doesn't name the city, showing us that this is not about geography. This representative city is a symbol of human pride, security and self-made power.

Notice the progression in these verses:

City →heap fortified town →ruin foreigner's stronghold→a city no more

Every part of human security is dismantled.

**Therefore what will strong peoples do (vs.3)? \_\_\_\_\_**

Strength itself is not condemned, rather pride is. Strong people will now recognize that real power belongs to God.

**What will cities of ruthless nations do? \_\_\_\_\_**

Some translations might say fear Him. This is talking about reverent recognition. These cities that once terrorized others would now stand in awe of God.

So we see that verses 2 and 3 work together:

Verse 2: God dismantles false security

Verse 3: God redirects human strength toward proper worship

We see that judgment brings revelation — it shows who truly rules.

**Verses 4-5**

We get a shift here—same God, different experience. In verses 2-3, God is terrifying to the nations, but in verse 4, the same God is a refuge for the vulnerable.

Look at the words describing God in verse 4:

- Refuge for the poor
- Refuge for the needy
- Shelter from the storm
- Shade from the heat

*"It says the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall."* Ruthless power looks unstoppable until it meets God.

Verse 5 shows us that what had oppressed the weak is not just endured—it has ended!

When we look at verses 2-5, we see that Isaiah is trying to teach us how to interpret judgment correctly: God's judgment is not cruelty—it's rescue.

Verses 2-3

Verses 4-5

Proud cities destroyed

Vulnerable people protected

Ruthless power judged

Ruthless threats are silenced

Human glory collapses

God's care is revealed

If you only read verses 2–3, God seems severe.  
If you only read verses 4–5, God seems gentle.  
When you read them together, He is just in order to be merciful.

### **Verses 6-8**

These verses are seen by many to give one of the clearest predictions in the Old Testament of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

#### **What does verse 6 say the Lord Almighty will prepare on this mountain? \_\_\_\_\_**

“This mountain” refers to Zion/Jerusalem. Most scholars see this “feast” as symbolic rather than literal. They see it as symbolizing joy, peace and permanence; an ultimate joyful communion between God and all nations.

#### **Who will it be for? \_\_\_\_\_**

After judging the nations, God invites them. Judgment has cleared the way for communion.

#### **What does verse 7 say He will destroy? \_\_\_\_\_**

Some translations might say veil. (*“that enfolds the peoples; the sheet that covers all nations”*)  
This is talking about the curse of death.

We get a list of things God is going to do in verse 8:

- Swallow up death forever– this is an overwhelming defeat of death
- Wipe away the tears from all faces - judgment leads to justice; justice leads to healing.
- Remove His people’s disgrace from all the earth - the disgrace of sin and death has been swallowed up in victory (I Corinthians 15:54)

#### **How does verse 8 end? \_\_\_\_\_**

This seals it. This is a secure promise.

The story arc is very clear: God judges → rescues the weak → invites the nations → destroys death itself.

We see here that God’s final goal is not judgment, but joy — and judgment is the path that makes joy possible.

### **Verse 9**

Here we get the human response to everything God has just done in the chapter.

“*In that day*” is referring to the end when Christ returns and destroys death completely and wipes away tears.

The people are going to say, surely \_\_\_\_\_.

This is a cry of recognition. It’s a total reversal of the misplaced trust we saw throughout Isaiah 13-23.

#### **What phrase is repeated in verse 9? \_\_\_\_\_**

Now my first thought when reading this was “no you didn’t!” which is true. But this verse is talking about a confession spoken from the far side of judgment. These are not the same

people from the first 23 chapters. This is speaking of a purified, humbled community, not the original audience as they were. This is speaking of learned trust. It's important to see that verse 9 is not praising Israel's faithfulness, but rather praising God's faithfulness in making a people who can finally trust Him.

### **Verses 10-12**

We get a closing snapshot of judgment here. After celebrating God as a refuge and bringing ultimate victory over death, Isaiah turns to Moab as an example of what happens to prideful, self-reliant hope. Moab represents human arrogance that refuses to trust the Lord.

### **What does it say will happen to Moab?** \_\_\_\_\_

Moab will spread out her hands to stay afloat, showing frantic self-rescue. But God brings them down to the dust.

Moab is not being singled out, but is an example to study because she illustrates perfectly misplaced hope.

A main point that we see from chapter 25 is that salvation is not neutral — it lifts some and brings down others. It actually changes realities. It lifts those who are humble and trust in the Lord (vs.6-9 with the feast for all peoples and the wiping away of tears). This shows God's salvation bringing life, joy and security. We see that those who place their trust in Him are lifted. However, it brings down those who are proud and trust in themselves (vs.10-12). Moab's pride, walls and frantic effort cannot withstand the hand of God.

Salvation isn't just a blanket blessing that leaves everything else untouched. It actively reorders the world according to God's justice. We see that those who are aligned with Him are lifted, and those who remain clinging to false hope are humbled.

Isaiah 25 is widely read as pointing to God's ultimate future. Now whether or not that is specifically the Millennial Kingdom or not depends on how it's interpreted. Some think it is and others think it's not. One way to look at this chapter though is as prophetic telescoping – it looks forward to God's decisive reign without clearly distinguishing stages. In other words, Isaiah 25 gives us the destination, not the travel itinerary.

In the end, this chapter isn't about trying to settle millennial timelines. Rather, it's answering a deeper question: *What happens when God finally reigns without opposition?*

And the answer is:

- Joy replaces fear
- Feast replaces famine
- Waiting gives way to sight
- Death itself is undone

### **What do you think about this statement:**

***Isaiah 25 invites God's people to praise a future that is so certain it can be celebrated before it arrives.***