

The Coming Tribulation Period and Millennial Kingdom

Isaiah 24-25

Isaiah 24:1-6 - *“Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface, and scatters abroad its inhabitants. ² And it shall be:*

As with the people, so with the priest;

As with the servant, so with his master;

As with the maid, so with her mistress;

As with the buyer, so with the seller;

As with the lender, so with the borrower;

As with the creditor, so with the debtor.

³ *The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word. ⁴ The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away; the haughty people of the earth languish.*

⁵ *The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶ Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.”*

Background Notes

Isaiah 24 begins a new four-chapter sub-section that is sometimes called “Isaiah’s little apocalypse.” (The “big apocalypse,” of course, is the book of Revelation.) The phrase *“in that day”* is used in each of these four chapters. In Isaiah’s prophecy this phrase is generally an indication that Isaiah was looking to the future End Times.

Doctrinal Points

1. There will be a future Tribulation period.

In His Olivet Discourse about the future, the Lord Jesus spoke of a period of tribulation that will culminate in the greatest tribulation this world has ever known. Matthew 24:21-22: *“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved.”* This End-Time Tribulation will be worldwide in scope, as seen especially in the book of Revelation.

Isaiah 24 is all about this worldwide tribulation. Notice the global scope of this chapter: *“Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants.”* And verses 3-4: *“The land shall be*

entirely emptied and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word. The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away.” And verse 6: “Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

Notice that no class of people will be spared (v2). There will be no escape. The Tribulation will be worldwide in scope.

What is the “everlasting covenant” that man has broken (v5)? Some commentators believe that it is the Noahic Covenant that God made with mankind after the Flood. But probably it is the general covenant that God gave to mankind right from the beginning – the responsibility to care for the earth and to obey the Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 24:7-13 - *“The new wine fails, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh. ⁸ The mirth of the tambourine ceases, the noise of the jubilant ends, the joy of the harp ceases. ⁹ They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. ¹⁰ The city of confusion is broken down; every house is shut up, so that none may go in. ¹¹ There is a cry for wine in the streets, all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. ¹² In the city desolation is left, and the gate is stricken with destruction. ¹³ When it shall be thus in the midst of the land among the people, it shall be like the shaking of an olive tree, like the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done.”*

There will be no parties and no joy during the Tribulation period because of the complete desolation. But what about the “shout of joy” (v14), the “glory of the Lord” (v15), and the “song of praise” (v16)? These verses are like a parenthesis, giving the response of the godly remnant. They will praise the Lord from west to east for His righteous judgments.

Isaiah 24:16-20 - *“From the ends of the earth we have heard songs: “Glory to the righteous!” But I said, “I am ruined, ruined! Woe to me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously, indeed, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.” ¹⁷ Fear and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth. ¹⁸ And it shall be that he who flees from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare; for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth are shaken. ¹⁹ The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly. ²⁰ The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut. Its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again.”*

There will be no escape from the treachery and terror of the Tribulation period (v16-18). And there will be geological disturbances on the earth and astronomical disturbances as to the heavens during the Tribulation period (v 18-20), as seen in the book of Revelation.

Isaiah 24:21-22 - *“It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth. ²² They will be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prison. After many days they will be punished.”*

Verses 21-22 spoke of the punishment of the “host of heaven” and the “kings of the earth.” Who are these “host of heaven”? Most likely this refers to the fallen angels who will be gathered together at the end of the Tribulation period. With Satan, they will be imprisoned in the abyss during the 1000 years of the Lord’s reign on this earth. After 1000 years, they will be released for the final rebellion. However, following their defeat they will be judged and punished in hell forever. Read Revelation 20.

The last few verses of Isaiah 24 move from the Tribulation period to the Millennium, when the Lord will reign over His kingdom here on this earth.

2. There will be a future Millennial kingdom.

Isaiah 25 - *“O Lord, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, for You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. ² For You have made a city a ruin, a fortified city a ruin, a palace of foreigners to be a city no more. It will never be rebuilt.*

³ Therefore the strong people will glorify You; the city of the terrible nations will fear You. ⁴ For You have been strength to the poor, strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat; for the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. ⁵ You will reduce the noise of aliens, as heat in a dry place; as heat in the shadow of a cloud, the song of the terrible ones will be diminished.

⁶ And in this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees.

⁷ And He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. ⁸ He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces. The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

⁹ And it will be said in that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.” ¹⁰ For on this mountain the hand of the Lord will rest, and Moab shall be trampled down under Him as straw is trampled down for the refuse heap. ¹¹ And He will spread out His hands in their midst as a swimmer reaches out to swim, and He will bring down their pride together with the trickery of their hands. ¹² The fortress of the high fort of your walls He will bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, down to the dust.

The blessings and triumphs of the Millennial kingdom of Christ here on this earth are seen in Isaiah 25. It’s called the Millennium because it will last for 1000 years, and then it will merge with the Eternal State.

That’s why Isaiah looked even beyond the Millennium to the Eternal State (v8). Then there will be no more death and no more tears, as we read in Revelation 21:4. During the Millennium, the curse will be greatly lifted, and at the end of the Millennium it will be completely removed as we enter the Eternal State.

Cities and nations will exist during the Millennium, but there will be great changes in these cities and nations (v1-5). All rebellion and ruthlessness and unrighteousness will be put down and silenced.

In verse 6 the Millennium is likened as to a wonderful banquet! A veil of satanic blindness covers the nations now, but in that day it will be removed (v7). Remember, Satan will be bound in the abyss for the entire 1000 years of the Millennium. All anti-Semitism will be removed during the millennial kingdom: "*The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken*" (v8).

In verse 10, "Moab" probably represents all the godless nations and all the enemies of God's people in history (v10). Those godless nations will not be present to spoil the blessings of the Millennium (v10-12). The proud unrighteous nations will try to "swim" their way out of judgment, but it will be to no avail. Righteousness and justice and blessing will prevail in Christ's kingdom here on this earth.

There will be a future Millennial kingdom.

Practical Application

Are you willing to wait?

Verse 9: "*And it will be said in that day: "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."*"

This will be our theme of praise during the Millennium! 1 Corinthians 2:9 says, "*Eye has not seen nor ear heard nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*"

Are you willing to wait? The present time is not the Millennium - in spite of what the preachers of the "health and wealth" gospel teach! The Bible does not guarantee health and wealth to the believer now. If we enjoy those blessings, we can be thankful for them, but they're **not guaranteed** for the Christian. In fact, now is the time of persecution and suffering - for the Lord, and for the kingdom, and for believers.

But the wonderful blessings of the Millennium and the Eternal State are coming in the future, for sure!

Are you willing to wait?