



ISAIAH 24

ISAIAH’S APOCALYPSE ~ THE SONG OF THE REMNANT ~ THE LORD ALMIGHTY WILL REIGN

You get the sense that things here on earth are literally winding down. The destruction cannot increase much more. Everything looks like it’s in a state of gloom and doom. Brian Simmons calls this time “Israel’s Apocalypse.” There’s never been a time on earth when the destruction was so wide-spread and devastating.

In the midst of the darkest night, the Son of Man enters and brings a sign of hope with him. The remnant of Israel cries out and the Messiah answers. But the devastation is overwhelming and even the brightest light can’t help. The cries from their hearts continue.

What would you do? Where would you turn? This is truly a time of terrible judgement and there’s no where to hide. Fortunately, we know how the story ends!

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 24:1 Behold, the LORD will empty the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. ² And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, 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 earth shall be utterly empty and utterly plundered; for the LORD has spoken this word.</p> <p>⁴ The earth mourns and withers; the world languishes and withers; the highest people of the earth languish. ⁵ The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶ Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.</p>	<p>a Isaiah 24–27 is known as Isaiah’s Apocalypse because it contains eschatological prophecies that are also found in the book of Revelation.</p> <p>b 24:2 Or “debtor and creditor.” See Rev. 6:15.</p> <p>c 24:4 The Hebrew homonym can mean the ground “mourns (over the sin of its inhabitants)” or “dries up (with drought).” This is a powerful play on words in the Hebrew.</p> <p>d 24:5 Or “moved past statutes.” See Mal. 2:5–7.</p> <p>e 24:5 See Rom. 1.</p> <p>f 24:6 Or “were burned up.” The Hebrew homonym kharah can mean “to diminish” or “to burn.”</p>	<p>Isaiah’s Apocalypse a</p> <p>Isaiah 24:1 Behold! The Lord Yahweh is about to devastate the earth and make it desolate. He will mar its surface and scatter the inhabitants. ² Everyone will experience the same fate—priests and people, masters and slaves, their maids and mistresses, buyers and sellers, lenders and borrowers, rich and poor. b ³ The earth will be utterly devastated and ruined, for the Lord Yahweh has spoken this word!</p> <p>⁴ The ground itself mourns c and withers; the soil languishes over the sins of its people, and the wealthy elite wither and languish. ⁵ The people have polluted the earth beneath their feet by disobeying laws, violating truth, d and breaking the ancient, everlasting covenant. e ⁶ Therefore a curse devours the earth; its people suffer under their guilt, causing earth’s inhabitants to dwindle, f and their number is reduced to so few.</p>

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Translation (TPT)	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>⁷ The wine mourns, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh. ⁸ The mirth of the tambourines is stilled, the noise of the jubilant has ceased, the mirth of the lyre is stilled. ⁹ No more do they drink wine with singing; strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.</p> <p>¹⁰ The wasted city is broken down; every house is shut up so that none can enter. ¹¹ There is an outcry in the streets for lack of wine; all joy has grown dark; the gladness of the earth is banished.</p> <p>¹² Desolation is left in the city; the gates are battered into ruins. ¹³ For thus it shall be in the midst of the earth among the nations, as when an olive tree is beaten, as at the gleaning when the grape harvest is done.</p> <p>¹⁴ They lift up their voices, they sing for joy; over the majesty of the LORD they shout from the west. ¹⁵ Therefore in the east give glory to the LORD; in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁶ From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise, of glory to the Righteous One. But I say, “I waste away, I waste away. Woe is me! For the traitors have betrayed, with betrayal the traitors have betrayed.”</p> <p>¹⁷ Terror and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth! ¹⁸ He who flees at the sound of the terror shall fall into the pit, and he who climbs out of the pit shall be caught in the snare. For the windows of heaven are opened, and the foundations of the earth tremble. ¹⁹ The earth is utterly broken, the earth is split apart, the earth is violently shaken. ²⁰ The earth staggers like a drunken man; it sways like a hut; its transgression lies heavy upon it, and it falls, and will not rise again.</p> <p>²¹ On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. ²² They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. ²³ Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders.</p>	<p>g 24:14 Or “they.” Vv. 14–16 are some of the more difficult verses to translate in Isaiah due to a number of textual variants.</p> <p>h 24:15 Or “in the lights (fires),” a possible metaphor for the sunrise (the east).</p> <p>k 24:16 These lines contain a notable wordplay, using five Hebrew words with the identical trilateral root, bgd.</p> <p>j 24:21 In this context, heaven’s host becomes a figure of speech for dark powers that operate in rebellion to God. See Eph. 6:10–14; Col. 2:14–15.</p> <p>k 24:22 Or “They will be remembered.”</p> <p>l 24:23 When God is unveiled in his glory-light, the sun and moon are nothing compared to him.</p>	<p>⁷ The new wine dries up, the vine withers, and all the party-goers groan with disappointment. ⁸ The joyful mirth of the tambourines is stilled, the jubilant noise of the revelers is ended, and the happy sound of the harp falls silent. ⁹ No more wine and song! Hard liquor has become bitter to those who drink it.</p> <p>¹⁰ The city lies in chaos, and no one can enter. ¹¹ Riots break out because there is no wine. The sun has set on their gladness and joy; celebrations have disappeared from the earth.</p> <p>¹² The city is left desolate with its gates battered down. ¹³ As an olive tree is shaken clean of its olives and a grapevine picked clean of its grapes, so will be the fate of the nations.</p> <p>The Song of the Remnant</p> <p>¹⁴ The remnant g lifts up its voice with a joyful shout. From the west they praise the majesty of the Lord Yahweh, ¹⁵ and in the east h they give glory to the Lord God! The coastlands magnify the name of Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel! ¹⁶ From all over the world we hear their songs of praise—songs of glory and beauty to the Righteous One! But I said, “I feel I’m wasting away. I’m doomed; I’m wasting away.” With deception, deceivers deceive! With treachery, the treacherous betray! i</p> <p>¹⁷ Terror, pit, and trap are waiting for you, inhabitants of the earth. ¹⁸ The one who flees from the report of terror will fall into the pit. And whoever crawls out of the pit will be caught by the trap. Heaven’s floodgates opened and earth’s foundations tremble. ¹⁹ The earth is breaking, breaking! The earth is crumbling, crumbling! The earth is tottering, tottering! ²⁰ The earth staggers like a drunkard, as a hut sways in a storm. Its sin lies heavy upon it; it falls to rise no more.</p> <p>The Lord Almighty Will Reign</p> <p>²¹ In that day, the Lord Yahweh will punish heaven’s host j and the kings of the earth. ²² They will be gathered together and locked up in a prison like prisoners in a pit, and after many days, they will be punished. k ²³ Then the sun and moon will hang their heads in shame, for Yahweh, Commander of Angel Armies, will reign! l He will manifest his glory on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, before all her elders!</p>

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY

JOHN A. MARTIN

A TIME OF JUDGMENT (CHAP. 24)

- **24:1-3.** The coming desolation and ruin of the whole earth (“earth” is mentioned 16 times in this chap.) will be by the direct intervention of the LORD, and will level all of society. No advantage will come from having a high rather than a low position, for all will come under God’s hand of judgment (v. 2). The world will be laid waste and totally plundered (v. 3; cf. Rev. 6; 8-9; 15-16). This is certain because the LORD said so.
- **24:4.** In this worldwide judgment, the earth will wither (dry up). Even important people (the exalted) will languish. No one will be spared from this eschatological judgment.
- **24:5.** The reason such devastation will come is that the people, not living as they should, will have defiled the earth. In creating the world God said it was “very good” (Gen. 1:31). But people in their sin defiled the good earth, by disobeying God’s laws, violating His statutes, and breaking His everlasting covenant. “The everlasting covenant” probably refers not to the Abrahamic or Mosaic Covenants but to the covenant people implicitly had with God to obey His Word. Right from the very beginning mankind refused to live according to God’s Word (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-6; cf. Hosea 6:7). And throughout history people have refused to obey God’s revelation.
- **24:6-13.** Because people have “defiled” the earth by their sins (v. 5), judgment will come. They must bear the consequences of their guilt. God’s judgment is likened to a burning fire that consumes all but a few on the earth (v. 6). In the earth’s devastation vineyards will wither and music (with tambourines and harps) and parties (vv. 7-9, 11) will stop. The fruit of the vine is often associated in the Bible with joy (e.g., 16:9; Zech. 10:7). The ... city (Isa. 24:10; cf. 25:2), representative of the whole earth (24:13), will be in ruins with all its houses uninhabited. When God pours out His wrath on the unbelieving world in the Tribulation, all will be desolate and gloomy. Little will be left, as after the harvesting of olives (cf. 17:6) or grapes.
- **24:14-16a.** The word they probably refers to the righteous who will be left after God’s judgment on the earth. Though few in number (v. 6) they will delight in the fact that the earth is cleansed from people’s sin. They will raise their voices and shout to proclaim glory to the LORD ... the God of Israel. Everywhere—in the west (v. 14), the east (v. 15), the islands of the sea (v. 15), and the ends of the earth (v. 16; cf. comments on 5:26)—the same song is proclaimed: Glory to God, the Righteous One. The believing remnant will view the earth’s desolation as a righteous act by the righteous God. It will not be viewed in the way the Assyrian advance was viewed—as a cruel, unfair punishment.
- **24:16b.** In contrast with the future joyful song of glory to the God of Israel (v. 16a), the distress in Isaiah’s day caused him to pronounce woe on himself (cf. 6:5). All around him were treacherous, unfaithful people on whom judgment must fall.
- **24:17-20.** Because of the people’s treachery (v. 16) and their other sins, they would suffer. They would fall into a pit used to capture animals or be caught by a snare (trap). Trying to escape one danger they will be overcome by another calamity. God’s judgment will be like a great rainstorm and earthquake. The earthquake will cause great crevices to open in the earth and swallow up people. In the earthquake the earth will reel like a drunkard and will sway like a temporary unsteady hut in a field, blowing in the wind. (This Heb. word for “hut” is used in the OT only here and in 1:8.) Judgment will come because of guilt (cf. 24:6), the guilt of the whole world in rebelling against God.

- **24:21-23.** Isaiah again (cf. v. 1) stated that the coming judgment will be God's direct intervention: the LORD will [Vol. 1, p. 1073] punish. Natural disasters will occur only because the Lord will cause them to happen. The powers in the heavens may refer to spiritual forces opposed to God (cf. Rev. 19:20; 20:2). The kings on the earth below undoubtedly refer to political forces that will be banished. Those powers in the heavens and on the earth will become like cattle when the Lord herds them together and places them like prisoners ... in a dungeon. Their punishment after many days refers to the great white throne judgment after the Millennium when all the unrighteous will have to stand before God and be judged for their evil deeds and lack of faith in Him (Rev. 20:11-15). When this judgment takes place the LORD, the Messiah, will be reigning on Mount Zion (Isa. 24:23; see comments on 1:8) and in Jerusalem. He will reign gloriously, that is, His glory will be manifest (cf. 24:15-16). In the 1,000-year kingdom the Messiah will reign as King over the earth (Zech. 14:9) from Jerusalem, God's "centerpiece" (Isa. 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-5). After the Millennium and the great white throne judgment God will reign for eternity from the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10), which will be filled with the glory of God and therefore will not need the light of the moon or the sun (Isa. 24:23; cf. Rev. 21:23).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. We have never witnessed anything like the prophecy of Isaiah in Chapter 24. In spite of the fact that we really have no place to put this kind of devastation, how do you think "the church" will respond to what they are not just seeing, but experiencing?
2. Who is "the remnant" in verse 14 and what is the song they are lifting up? It looks like a huge worship service. How do you explain Isaiah's response to the praise in verse 16?
3. How do you respond to someone who is going through a devastating time in their lives? What do you feel you have to offer someone who has lost everything? How can you not just comfort, but encourage someone who is "devastated?"
4. Describe what you think the "Great White Throne Judgement" might look like. Where is the description of this event in the book of Revelation?
5. Where do you turn when things in life get really, really hard? Where do you find consolation when there seems to be no solution to a problem?