

A New Vineyard that Fills the World – Isaiah 26:20 – 27:13

Introduction – In our study of chapters 24-27 we have seen how the New Testament writers have described the fulfillment of this “apocalypse” in the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the establishment of the New Covenant church over the entire world. We saw the decreation of the city/land and the world in chapter 24 and the establishment of a new city of salvation and peace in chapters 25-26. This vision comes to its completion here in chapter 27: “*Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit*” (v6).

Shut Your Doors (26:20-21) – The word of judgment upon Judah was final and so, as Noah and his family were told to go into the ark and wait, so the believing remnant is told to wait while the city and temple were destroyed. Just as the Israelites were told to go into their homes covered with the blood of the Passover lamb, so now the remnant would hide “*until the indignation is past*.” Jesus told the generation in His day that there would be a day that they should “*flee to the mountains*” (Matt 24:16) and historians tell that no Christians remained in Jerusalem when it was surrounded by Rome. The land (“*erets*”) would “*disclose her blood*” (v21) first in crucifying her Messiah and then by receiving the bloodshed for her iniquity. This was the land that killed her prophets (Matt 23:37).

Leviathan the Dragon (27:1) – Leviathan/Serpent/Dragon, images used throughout Scripture, point to Satan and the demon-possessed empires leading up to the first advent of Christ. The serpent was in the garden/vineyard in the beginning (Gen 3:1) and in Adam’s fall, man lost dominion over the dragon. But when the New Adam came, Satan was cast down (Luke 10:18, John 12:31, Rev 12:9-12). Jesus defeated Satan on the cross (Col 2:15). Isaiah 27:1 says “*in that day*,” which is one of four times the phrase is used in this chapter (v1, 2, 12, 13), all describing the same “*day*.”

A New Vineyard (27:2-6) – We have seen the contrast of the old/new creation, the old/new city, and now the old/new vineyard (contrasting with Isaiah 5:1-7). That vineyard was abandoned by the LORD, fruitless, filled with thorns, walls broken down. This vineyard is worthy of a song: continually tended by the LORD, fruitful, welcoming, and spreading to fill the face of the world. “*Fury is not*” in the LORD with this new vineyard (v4) and later verses describe why. Instead, this vineyard is well protected (v4b). Any who take hold of the LORD’s strength are able to make peace with Him, take root in Judah until Israel blossoms over the face of the world (vv4b-5, cf 11:9).

In the Face of an Atonement (vv7-11) – Old Israel would be struck down (and Isaiah has all of Israel/Judah in mind now, along with the central city, Jerusalem), but nothing compared to what He does to Judah’s enemies (v7). He sends them away (as Adam and Eve in Gen 3:23, and as in the coming exile from Babylon – v8). But ultimately, He is talking about another exile and destruction for, at the same time, atonement for sin is being made (v9a). While we might only see this in shadows here, the New Testament once again instructs us – Paul makes use of this phrase, quoting it alongside another verse from Isaiah in Romans 11:26-27. This means that Paul’s explanation of the near total judgment of Israel in his day and the imminent destruction of Jerusalem is the fulfillment of Isaiah 27:9b-11 (consider Rom 11:19-32).

Breaking Down the Idols of Men – Israel’s hope was not in the LORD, demonstrated by her rejection of His Messiah. Her hope was in her city, her temple, her status. Those things which were to be pointers to God, good things in themselves, were made into idols. The cleansing of a nation requires that their idols be crushed to powder. Ultimately, the fortified city is the City of Man, that great “*Jerusalem*” and our idolatry of ourselves. This is man’s greatest idolatry: worship of self. This is man’s greatest national idolatry: idolatry of the State (another tower of Babel) separated from any other god. But as verse 11 makes clear, a city that worships itself is easy pickings, and because it rejects the LORD, the LORD rejects the city.

An Efficacious Atonement (v12) – This is how God draws straight with crooked lines. The rejection of God by Israel brought about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the judgment upon Jerusalem, which brought about the spread of the gospel to the nations of the world because the Atonement was for the world through Jesus Christ. From the smallest channels to the north and the brooks to the south, the LORD carefully threshes and gathers, one by one, each and every member of the elect (v12). Not one is lost (John 6:39-40, 10:28-29).

The Great Trumpet (v13) – Here is the final picture to end this second section of Isaiah. The trumpet was sounded on the great Day of Atonement in the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:9). There also was a Feast of Trumpets on the first day of Tishri, the civil New Year’s day (Lev 25:23) which was also the day that Noah came out of the ark into the new world (Gen 8:13). Jesus teaches that after the ascension of the new King to the throne, that “*He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*” (Matt 24:31). The trumpet is the herald and the song of Jubilee is the gospel of Jesus Christ and the song is to be heard by those who are “*about to perish*” and to “*those who are outcasts*” for “*they shall all worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem*.” There is a New Jerusalem for a new humanity in a new world.

And here we are...