

(The Word for Today) Isaiah 23:15 - Part 2

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the themes of God's judgment, sin, and repentance, highlighting the importance of intercession and prayer in seeking God's mercy and restoration.

Duration: 25:59

Scripture: Isaiah 23:15, Ezekiel 22:30, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Revelation 5:9-10, Revelation 6:1, Revelation 21:1

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the events described in the book of Revelation. He mentions the sun darkening, the moon turning to blood, and other signs that will occur. He emphasizes the importance of praying to be worthy to escape these events and stand before the Son of Man. The preacher also highlights the scene in Revelation where John sees the throne of God and Jesus taking the scroll. He mentions the praises sung to the Lamb who is worthy to loose the seals. The sermon concludes with a discussion of the future visitation of Tyre and the transformation of its merchandise for the Lord's glory. The preacher also mentions the judgment and devastation that will come upon the earth, affecting all segments of society. He refers to the opening of the first four seals in Revelation, which result in the destruction of one fourth of the earth's population.

Transcript

Welcome to The Word for Today. The Word for Today is a continuous study of the Bible taught by Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently teaching from the Old Testament.

And for those of you following along in your Bibles, we'll be continuing today in Isaiah chapter 23, beginning with verse 15, as we continue with an in-depth message entitled, The Proclamation Against Tyre. One thing is needful, O my Father One thing is needful, O my God That I sit at your feet and pour out my love This thing is needful, O my God And now with today's study, here's Pastor Chuck. Singing as a harlot, the harlots often were entertainers.

They would play guitars or harps, and they would sing, and they had their songs. They were sort of, oh, minstrel type of songs. They were story types of songs.

They would sing of different events of history, different things. And so, take the harp and go about the city, thou harlot that has been forgotten, Tyre. Make a sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be

remembered.

And it shall come to pass, that after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre. So there is yet a future, after this indeterminate period of time. God is going to visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

And her merchandise, and here's the interesting thing, and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord. The real change in Tyre, as she uses the skills and the abilities in merchandising for the Lord's glory. It shall not be treasured nor laid up, for her merchandise shall be for them who dwell before the Lord to eat sufficiently and for durable clothing.

In other words, rather than enriching themselves, they will be doing it for others. It will be a thing where Tyre will shine out as a city that is providing for the needs of the Lord's people, and not selfishly enriching themselves or hoarding for themselves. This probably will have its fulfillment in the Kingdom Age, as so interesting, the prophets so often deal with what is going on, the darkness, the bleakness, and all that the immediate future holds, but always out at the end, in the day of the Lord, when He reigns in righteousness, then the glorious light, and they never leave you in the darkness, they never leave you in despair, they never leave you in the gloom of that destruction that is coming, that woe that is coming, but they always go on out to the light in the future, in the glorious day when the Lord shall reign over the earth.

And so with Tyre, the end, in the future, in the Kingdom, will be glorious. Now, in chapter 24, he looks at the dark days that are coming upon the earth. The days during the Great Tribulation.

The days when God's wrath is to be poured out upon the earth. The day when God is going to judge the earth for its iniquity. Putting together the whole picture from many passages throughout the Bible, we know that God had determined 77 year cycles for the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

That 69 of those 7 year cycles were fulfilled from the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem till the time that the Messiah came. It was to be 69 sevens or 483 years. Now, that leaves a 7 year cycle yet to be fulfilled.

A 7 year period in which God will deal again with the nation of Israel. Even as God has dealt with them as His people in the past, God will again deal with Israel in this future 7 year period of time. The last part of this 7 year period of time will be the time that is known in the scripture as the Great Tribulation.

And many of the prophets spoke of this period of Great Tribulation. Daniel made reference to it, as well as Amos, as well as Nahum, as well as Isaiah, as well as Jeremiah, all throughout the Old Testament. There's a lot of references to this period of Great Tribulation, this 3 1/2 year.

It's a short period as far as man's history is concerned, but it is so packed with the judgments of God that it takes up a major portion of the scripture, deals with this 3 1/2 year period of time, especially the last 3 1/2 of the 7 year. But a major portion of the scripture deals with this. In fact, the majority of the book of Revelation centers in on this 3 1/2 year period of time.

From the 6th chapter of the book of Revelation through the 18th chapter, it zeroes in on just a 3 1/2 year period of history. And so the events are so momentous that much of the scripture is devoted to it. Jesus spoke about it in many places, especially in Matthew 24 and Luke 21.

And so there is this Great Tribulation in which the earth is to be judged by God and the wrath of God is to be poured out upon the earth in cataclysmic judgments, such as the world has never experienced before or will ever experience again. Great cataclysmic judgments. So chapter 24 deals with this great period of God's judgment that will precede the glorious reign of Jesus Christ, the coming again of the Messiah to reign.

As Jesus in talking about the Great Tribulation said, and immediately after the tribulation of those days shall they see the sign of the Son of Man coming with clouds and great glory. In fact, the coming of Jesus Christ will bring an end to the Great Tribulation. And the Great Tribulation will end in that Battle of Armageddon, which you've heard so much about.

And perhaps it's sort of ambiguous in your mind just what the Battle of Armageddon is all about. But that will culminate the Great Tribulation period. It'll all lead up to the Battle of Armageddon and then the return of Jesus Christ in glory.

So as we get into chapter 24, he tells us things that are going to happen upon the earth during this Great Tribulation. Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty. Now, John tells us that in the four seals in the book of Revelation chapter 6, as the Lord opens up this scroll that has the seven seals, as he opens the first four seals, there is a corresponding judgment of God upon the earth.

And we read that in the opening of the first four seals, that one-fourth of the earth's population will be destroyed. That's heavy. Over a billion people will be destroyed in just the beginning of this Tribulation period.

Later on in the book of Revelation, as these demonic hordes are unleashed upon the earth, some 200 million, by these, one-third of the remaining population of the earth will be destroyed, or another billion people. So that's just in two of the events of which there are many, many events. So this Great Tribulation period will pretty much empty the earth of inhabitants.

It'll pretty much wipe out mankind. There will be very few who will survive the Great Tribulation period. If you're banking on survival in the Great Tribulation period, good luck.

You'll need it. People I know are building little survival places up in Oregon, and they've got food stored up for seven years, and they've got water, and they've got all of these supplies, and they have their M-16s and all too, because they figure that when everybody else runs out of food, they're going to have to defend their supplies of food. And all of these survivalists, and they're really making plans, and they write books on how to survive and so forth.

Thank God I don't have to worry about that. I've got an escape clause in my contract with the Lord that I'm not worried about surviving through. As Jesus is talking about the Great Tribulation in Luke 21, He says, Pray ye always that you'll be accounted worthy to escape these things.

He was telling you what's going to happen in the Great Tribulation. The sun darkened, the moon turned to blood, and these things. He said, Pray that you'll be accounted worthy to escape these things that you might be standing before the Son of Man.

And in Revelation chapter 4 and 5, John is taken into the heavenly scene, and there he sees the throne of God. And he sees the scroll in the right hand of him who sits upon the throne. And he hears the angel proclaiming with a strong voice, Who is worthy to take the scroll and loose the seals? And John sees

Jesus as he steps forth and takes the scroll.

And he hears the praises when this takes place. Worthy is the Lamb to take the scroll and loose the seals thereof. For He was slain and has redeemed us by His blood out of every nation and family and tongue and people.

And He has made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign with Him upon the earth. That's the song of the church. Only the church can sing that song.

It's not the song of Israel. The song of the church. I expect to be there singing the song.

I've memorized the lyrics. I'm just waiting to get the tune. But I plan to be standing before the Son of Man there in glory.

The tribulation does not begin until chapter 6 when He begins to loose the seals from this scroll. And that's when things break loose. Actually, all hell breaks loose on earth.

That's more than figurative. But all hell will break loose on earth before heaven comes to earth. And again, the end of the chapter, heaven comes to earth.

And so they always look through the darkness, but there's light on the other side. And so the chapter ends with the glorious reign of the king of kings, our Lord. So the Lord makes the earth empty.

He makes it a waste. He turns it upside down. He scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof.

So very few people surviving this great holocaust that will come from heaven. It shall be as with the people, so with the priest and with the servant, with his master, with the maid and her mistress, with the buyer and the seller, with the lender and the borrower, with the taker of usury and the giver of usury. In other words, it's going to cross all segments of society.

No one is going to escape. The rich will be in the same boat as the poor. It's going to affect everybody.

No one, their riches won't be of any value. No one will be able to escape from these judgments that are coming. It'll happen to all of the people, regardless their background.

The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled, for the Lord has spoken His word. And as we said, many places in the scripture has He spoken concerning this. The earth mourns and fades away.

The world languishes and fades away. The haughty people of the earth do languish. And then He tells you the reason for this great judgment.

For the earth also is defiled by the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, they have changed the ordinance, and they have broken the everlasting covenant. So these three things. They've transgressed the laws of God.

They've changed the ordinances of God. God has ordained certain things. They've changed those ordinances of God.

God has ordained marriage. God has ordained the family institution. Man is guilty of changing those ordinances of God.

And so the rebuke is coming, because they've transgressed the laws of God. And look at the world today. Look at our land, which is given an appellation, which is truly a misnomer, a Christian America.

Any resemblance is purely coincidental. We're so far from a Christian nation. Yes, there are Christians in this nation.

Thank God for that. And if you're not a Christian, you better thank God for that. Because you're living under benefits that have accrued because of the strong body of Christ in America.

Even here, we see more and more and more the changing of the ordinances of God and the breaking down of law, God's law, and the breaking of God's everlasting covenant. Therefore, because of this, has the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

We read in Revelation about these stars that fall from heaven and burn a third part of the earth, the trees that are upon the earth. We realize that God once judged the earth by water and destroyed the earth with a flood. God promised he would never destroy it with a flood again, but he didn't promise he'd never destroy it.

The next destruction of the earth will be by fire, not by flood. And thus the reference to the earth being burned. Few men are left.

The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, and all the merry-hearted do sigh. There's no more partying. Everybody is in misery.

You know, they talk about an atomic war and how to survive, how to build a bomb shelter and how to store the food and water and how to survive an atomic war. You know the people who will really be hurting are those who do survive. Should the earth ever see such a horrible holocaust as an atomic war, I hope I'm in the epicenter of the blast.

Because to survive will be horrible. If you would go over to Russia today and around Chernobyl and you could see the devastation still and you could see the horrible things that have transpired as a result of that meltdown of that nuclear facility, you would realize that it is the survivors who really go through torment and suffering. They shall not drink wine with a song.

All the partying will cease. The strong drink will be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down.

Every house is shut up that no man may come in. There's a crying for wine in the streets and all the joy is darkened and the partying of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation and the gate is smitten with destruction.

When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as a shaking of an olive tree and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done. Now, when they would shake the olive trees, when they would harvest their olives, they would shake the branches to shake the olives down. Now, there would always be a few berries up, you know, in the top branches after they've gone through and harvested the olives.

There would always be a few olives left and the poor of the land could come in and take those few olives. But he's saying that so there will only be a few inhabitants of the earth left, just as few as there are a few olives left when the tree has been harvested or when the grapes have been harvested. They always forget or leave a little bunch here or there, but just a very few in comparison with the population that once was.

And thus, there will be like the gleaning, just a few left upon the earth. They shall lift up their voice and they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord and they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore, glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the coast of the sea.

Face to face, Lord, let me know. Face to face, Lord, let me see You. Pastor Chuck Smith will return with a few closing comments.

But first, I'd like to remind you that today's message is available in its unedited form on cassette or CD. Simply write or call and ask for ordering details on tape or CD, number C-3252. Again, that's tape or CD, number C-3252.

Well, as the holiday season is approaching, we'd like to bring to your attention a very helpful resource for families, knowing it's the time of year when families gather together. Undoubtedly, one of the most glaring signs that our society is in trouble is the breakdown of the family unit. Marriages just aren't making it today and kids are suffering as they watch the breakup of their homes.

The word for today would like to present Pastor Chuck Smith's Marriage and Family Bible Study. In this series, Pastor Chuck discusses basic principles designed to keep your family's love alive. Each member of the family has a different set of needs and responsibilities.

And when you know and apply God's principles, everyone in your family can experience real peace, real joy, and unconditional love. And when you call and order Pastor Chuck's Marriage and Family Series, the word for today would like to bless you with a resource entitled Christian Family Relationships. Taken from the books of Ephesians and Colossians, this study reveals the secret to a solid and biblically-based Christian family relationship.

And right now you can get it for free when you order the Marriage and Family Series. And remember, the word for today would like to assist you this Christmas in spreading the gospel of Jesus to your family, friends, and co-workers. Please call our customer service department to help you in finding that perfect gift that will reflect the true meaning of Christmas.

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judgment proceeded May God really call us unto prayer and may we obey and respond to that call of God and may each of us spend time this week in prayer for our city for our state and for our country that we might see a real spiritual awakening a move of God's spirit and a return unto the Lord May the Lord be with you Bless and keep you through this week This program is sponsored by The Word for Today The Radio Ministry of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, California

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