

# (Isaiah) Judgment and Praise in the Great Tribulation

by David Guzik

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*The sermon emphasizes the universal scope of God's judgment in the Great Tribulation, which will affect everyone, and highlights the importance of faith in Jesus Christ as the only way to escape judgment.*

**Duration:** 45:28

**Scripture:** Isaiah 24:1, Isaiah 24:23 - 25:1, Revelation 8:7, Revelation 9:1

**Topics:** "Gods Judgment", "End Times"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the scene of judgment and the distinction between the fate of the wicked and the righteous. The wicked will face destruction and desolation, while the righteous will experience joy and singing. The preacher emphasizes that God's judgment is a result of man's rejection of Him and will bring about the great tribulation. The ultimate fulfillment of this judgment is described in Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation.

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## Transcript

We've just finished a longer section in the book of Isaiah, encompassing several chapters, which deals with God's judgment upon the nations. Now, a broader scope of judgment is in view. A broader scope of judgment, which speaks of the ultimate judgment.

Now, we're going to find in the chapters that we cover tonight, principles revealed that apply universally to the judgment of the Lord. But the ultimate fulfillment of this judgment will be in the time of the Great Tribulation, which is described for us most pointedly in Matthew chapter 24 and in Revelation, the book of Revelation. So let's jump into it.

Isaiah chapter 24, verse 1. Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface, and scatters abroad its inhabitants. 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. The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word.

Now, in a shorter term, we may say that Isaiah had in mind the judgment that was going to come upon the southern kingdom of Judah at the hand of the Babylonians. And certainly, because the principles of

judgment that we're talking about in these two chapters have application to all of God's judgments. But, in a more ultimate sense, Isaiah has in view here the great tribulation, because if you notice here, he says in verse 1, not just, Behold, the Lord makes Judah empty, he says, Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste.

In the days of the great tribulation, the earth will not be literally empty, but Isaiah's poetic description applies nonetheless. Because more than, fasten your seatbelts, more than one-third of humanity is going to perish on the face of the earth during the time of the great tribulation. Do you understand that? You're talking about billions of people dead by the judgments of the Lord.

And so this will make the areas of the world that seem hardest hit empty. And that's what Isaiah has in view. And so he goes on in verses 2 and 3 to describe the scope of the judgment.

Who's included in this judgment? And the bottom line, everybody. As with the people, so with the priest. As with the servant, so with the master.

In these comparisons, Isaiah shows that a high station in life, are you a priest? Are you a master? Are you a mistress? Are you a seller? That high station in life, that won't protect you from the judgments of the Lord. As well, a lower station in life, as he goes in the bottom ones, he says the lender or the creditor. The lower station will not protect you either.

With the judgment of the great tribulation, when it comes, it's going to be complete in its scope. Everybody on the earth will suffer under that time of great tribulation. Now some who believe that the church will be left on the earth to endure the great tribulation.

Believe that God will miraculously protect Christians during that time. So that they will face none of the judgments of the Lord, but only, perhaps, persecution from the Antichrist. In other words, the book of Revelation describes ecological catastrophes that happen as a result of the great tribulation, or not as a result, in the midst of the great tribulation.

Such as a third of the fresh water is on the earth. Turning to blood. Massive famines, massive plagues, massive things coming upon the earth.

And some people say, well, you know, the Lord will protect his people in that. They just won't suffer at all through those things. No, my friends.

Listen to what the word says. As with the people, so with the priest. As with the servants, so with the master.

As with the maid, so with the mistress. My friends, everybody is going to be touched. And that's why it is appropriate, it makes sense for God to remove his redeemed before this period of the great tribulation.

So only those who trust in him during the great tribulation will have to suffer under these judgments. Now why? Why this devastating period of judgment upon the earth? It's told to us simply here in verses 4, 5 and 6. The earth mourns and fades away. The world languishes and fades away.

The haughty people of the earth languish. The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. 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. Why does the earth mourn? Because in the great tribulation the earth will be terribly afflicted by the judgments of the Lord.

You want an example of this? Keep your finger here in Isaiah chapter 24. Turn to Revelation chapter 8. The book of Revelation chapter 8 beginning at verse 7. These are trumpets of God's judgment coming upon the earth during the time of the great tribulation. It says, Then the first angel sounded and hail and fire followed mingled with blood and they were thrown to the earth and a third of the trees were burned up and all the green grass was burned up.

Then the second angel sounded and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea and a third of the sea became blood and a third of the living creatures in the sea died and a third of the ships were destroyed. Then the third angel sounded and a great star fell from heaven burning like a torch and it fell on a third of the waters and on the springs of water. And the name of the star is Wormwood and a third of the waters became wormwood and many men died from the water because it was made bitter.

Then the fourth angel sounded and a third of the sun was struck and a third of the moon and a third of the stars and a third of them were darkened and a third of the day did not shine and likewise the night. And I looked and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth because of the remaining blast of the trumpet of the three angels who were about to sound. That's heavy, isn't it? The earth is taking a beating in the days of the great tribulation.

The Lord is laying it on planet earth. Why? Is this the fault of God? Does God hate the earth? No! This is the fault of man. Go back to Isaiah chapter 24.

Look at it right there in verse 4. Excuse me, verse 5. The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants. That's why. It's because of its inhabitants.

Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant. Man has defiled the earth with his sin and his great wickedness, so the earth must endure some of the righteous judgment of God also. Might I say this? In this sense, the most ecologically responsible thing anyone could do is honor the Lord God and walk right with Him in obedience to Him.

Do that before you fill up that recycling bin. If you really love the earth, get right with God. That will take it easier on the earth.

There will be less judgment for the Lord to put upon the earth. By the way, might I add this as well? That this passage is a good reminder of an important principle that sometimes gets lost in our day and age. And the simple principle is that God is greater than His creation.

The Bible never teaches the New Age idea that God is somehow bound up together with what He has created. My friends, the Bible tells us that God is separate from His creation. And when the earth, look at it there in verse 4, when the earth fades away, and when the world fades away, God is undiminished.

He's separate from His creation. There really is no such thing as Mother Earth. There's Father God that we have to answer to.

But there's no Mother Earth. And notice this here. Why? Verse 5, the earth is also defiled under its inhabitants because they have transgressed the laws.

Do you know what the idea of transgression is? The idea is that you have a line drawn, a barrier established, and you go over the line. You jump the barrier. It's as if God has set a fence and He says, stay here.

Here's My boundary. Go no farther. And we've said no.

I'm going over your boundary, God. We've stepped over a line that God has established. God has set boundaries for us, hasn't He? But many of us don't want to or don't want to see or respect God's boundaries.

Transgression is the spirit of our age. Friends, notice the slogans from recent national advertising campaigns. Nothing is taboo.

Break all the rules. To know no boundaries. Relax.

No rules here. Peel off inhibitions. Find your own road.

We're all hedonists and want to do what feels good. That's what makes us human. Living without boundaries.

Do you know why advertisers use those kind of slogans? They may not know the theological reason, but I know it. It's because we are transgressors by nature. And we can be appealed to to not respect any boundary that God has given us, but rather to do whatever we want and to make our own boundaries or to know no boundaries.

The idea is constant. You don't have to respect God's boundaries and you can make your own boundaries and live by them. You know how it is when you make your own boundaries, right? You shift them a lot, don't you? That's not the only reason.

Look at there, verse 5. The earth is also defiled under inhabitants because they transgressed the laws because they have changed the ordinance. You know what the Hebrew word for ordinance is there? Torah. Which means the law of God, the Word of God.

My friends, mankind is ripe for judgment because we have changed God's Word into something lighter, into something more acceptable. I believe that there's two ways primarily in which we have changed the law of God. We've changed the law of God in the sense of changing the basic moral code which men have recognized and lived by for centuries.

I'm going to shock some of you right now, but there was a time when it was once universally recognized that it was wrong to lie, wrong to cheat, wrong to be sexually immoral, wrong to do so many other things. There actually was a time when people believed that. Now, let's face it, not everybody lived up to it, right? People still lied when everybody said lying's wrong.

People still cheated when everybody said cheating's wrong. But at least people believed that those things were wrong. Today, those things are not only approved, they're celebrated.

We have changed the ordinance and we're ripe for judgment. Friends, mankind is also changing the ordinance by changing the Word of God, by replacing it with substitutes or fashioning it into something more suitable to our liking. Every time a preacher soft-peddles the Gospel, every time a politician twists the Scriptures to rise in the opinion polls, every time a counselor wrenches the context of God's Word to make it fit a crazy psychological theory, they've changed the ordinance.

They're ripe for judgment. Two reasons we've seen so far because they've transgressed the laws, they've changed the ordinance. Now, look at the end of verse 5. They've broken the everlasting covenant.

God has entered into covenant with man. And man has turned his back on God's covenant. Instead of receiving God's everlasting covenant, we'd prefer to make up our own covenant with the Lord.

For all these reasons, look at verse 6, the curse has devoured the earth. Man's hardened, repeated rejection of God will bring the ultimate judgment upon this earth, the great tribulation. See what Campbell Morgan says of this brief passage.

This is the interpretation of all disease, all insanity, all the things of waste, of disorder, of strife, of misery in human history and human experience. A polluted race pollutes the earth and chaos is the result. So God will judge.

Look at verse 7. The new wine fails. The vine languishes. All the merry-hearted sigh.

The mirth of the tambourine ceases. The noise of the jubilant ends. The joy of the harp ceases.

They should not drink wine with a song. Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. The city of confusion is broken down.

Every house is shut up so that none may go in. There's crying for wine in the streets. All joy is darkened.

The mirth of the land is gone. In the city, desolation is left and the gate is stricken with destruction. 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.

Did you see that? All the merry-hearted sigh. When the Lord brings the judgment of the great tribulation, there's not going to be partying as usual. The days for eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage, that's for before the great tribulation.

When the great tribulation comes, the noise of the jubilant ends. The joy of the harp ceases. The party's over.

Man has to deal with the worst hangover. The hangover of God's judgment. The world has ever known.

During the great tribulation, God's judgment will bring destruction everywhere. It says, in the city, desolation is left and the gate is stricken with destruction and the judgment will be so complete that the cities will look, look at verse 13, the cities will look like olive trees bare, like the shaking of an olive tree. You see the olive tree.

Oh, look at all the great fruit, all the olives. Isn't it wonderful? It's shaken and everything's gone. It's desolate.

It's a skeleton. There's nothing there. If that's not enough, then he says it's like verse 13, like the gleaning of grapes from the vintage is done.

The grape vines are stripped of everything. There's no fruit. There's nothing.

You see one wrinkled little raisin on there. You think, oh wow, that's something. Because everything's gone.

Everything's subjected to the judgment of God. So the scene of judgment is powerful, isn't it? The party's over. Verse 14.

Well, excuse me. The party isn't over. The party's over for the wicked.

For the righteous, it's just beginning. Verse 14. This is of the righteous.

They shall lift up their voice, and they shall sing. For the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Therefore glorify the Lord in the dawning light.

The name of the Lord and the God of Israel and the coastlands of the sea. From the ends of the earth, we've heard Saul's glory to the righteous. But I said, I am ruined.

I'm ruined. Woe to me. The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously.

Indeed, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. See, my friends, even in the midst of great judgment, God has His own that praise Him. Before the great tribulation, God will remove all His people, but many will come to trust in Jesus during the great tribulation, and these people will praise Him even in the midst of His judgment.

And why do they praise Him? Because even in His judgment, or perhaps especially in His judgment, the Lord shows His majesty. He shows His glory. Friends, during the great tribulation, when we've already been taken to heaven, when we're already there in blessedness with the Lord, and millions across the face of the earth turn and come to faith in Jesus Christ because they realize that the Christians are gone and everything they've known was true and they're faced with the seriousness of it.

When these people come to Christ during the great tribulation, they're going to love God so much that when the stars fall from the sky and the heathen are running in terror, they're going to say, man, my God is big. I serve a majestic God to be able to do that. See, the godly can see the goodness, the greatness, and the glory of God, even in judgment.

Even when the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously, they can see God's power and glory. Look at this, the character of the judgment of the Lord. First of all, the judgment of the Lord will always be completed.

Look at this, verses 17 and 18. Fear in the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth, 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. You get the idea here? The judgment of the Lord is inescapable.

If you escape the fear, you'll fall into the pit. If you escape the pit, you'll fall into the snare. God's judgment has enough backup plans to catch everybody.

Nobody's going to slip through the cracks. Friends, there is only one way to escape the judgment of God, and that's to satisfy it. The only place that God's judgment was ever satisfied was on the cross at Calvary.

There His judgment was already poured out. There it's already been settled. And because His judgment has already passed over Calvary, His judgment has already passed over the cross, it's been satisfied there.

Now we come and we cling to the cross because it's a safe haven. I've told this story before, but I think it illustrates it perfectly. Some duck hunters were out crossing a great, big, wide, grassy field on their way from one pond to another.

In the midst of this great, big, grassy field, the grass was high and it was dry and the grass was up to their waist. And all of a sudden, they saw off in the distance that a brush fire was moving rapidly their way. And we could tell from the way the wind was blowing and the way that the smoke was coming, that fire was charging down quickly on them.

And they took a quick survey of the place. There's no way they could outrun the fire. It would overtake them in just a few minutes.

And so they had to think very quickly. And so what they did was they took out matches and they burned a place all around them right there. They burned a burned out zone right there.

And they huddled on the ground that had already been burned over. And when the fire passed, they escaped because the ground they were on had already been burned over. So the fire didn't have anything more to burn on the ground they were standing on.

Well, friends, that's what the cross is. It's the burned over zone. That's where the judgment of God has already been poured out and satisfied.

So when you come and God pours out His judgment upon the earth, as you cling to the cross, it's as if it's been burned over there already. And you can find safety. You can find refuge.

No other place. And who is this upon? Look at verse 17. Fear and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth.

I find that phrase fascinating because in the book of Revelation, writing of this great time of tribulation, makes constant reference to those who dwell on the earth. Revelation 3.10, 6.10, 11.10, 13.12, 13.14. And it contrasts those who dwell on the earth to those who dwell in heaven. If you're an earth dweller, that's your home and you're going to be judged.

I hope nobody here tonight is an earth dweller. I hope you're seated in heavenly places in Jesus Christ. I hope that's where you're seated.

I hope that's where you live. Are you an inhabitant of this earth or do you sit with Jesus in heavenly places? That's our calling. That's our destiny.

I hope when it says right there, O inhabitant of the earth, you say, that's not me. That's talking to somebody else. Because you've escaped the judgment of God because it's been satisfied at the cross.

And look at the intensity of the judgment of God. It says, verse 19 and 20, the earth is violently broken. The earth is split open.

The earth is shaken exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard and shall totter like a huss. Its transgression shall be heavy upon it and it will fall and not rise again.

Remember that earthquake four or five years ago? Did that scare some folks? Let me read you Revelation chapter 16. It mentions a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. That's how God's going to shake the earth during the tribulation.

That's enough right there to make you want to get saved right now and escape the great tribulation. You want to live through an earthquake like that? Friends, the Bible says that the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. That's how it's going to be rocked.

Literally, God is going to rock this world in judgment. Verse 21-23 speaks of the universal character of God's judgment. It's going to touch everyone.

Look at it. 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. They will be gathered together as prisoners and gathered in the pit and will be shut up in the prison.

After many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed. For the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders gloriously.

You're rich. You're powerful. You're influential.

You think that's going to make you escape the judgment of God? Forget it. One of the more frustrating aspects of this life is to see the rich, powerful, wicked people escape the present consequences of their sin. Doesn't that burn you? You're in God's great judgment during the great tribulation.

Nobody's going to be able to go to some high-priced lawyer to escape judgment. Nobody's going to be able to bribe a politician to come out without being hurt. Everybody's going to have to face the judgment.

And not just human beings. I want you to look carefully again at verse 21. 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.

Isaiah is speaking of something even higher than the exalted ones of this earth. We have good reason to believe that the phrase the host of the exalted ones refers to the rebellious angels that are judged at the end of the age and imprisoned in the pit until the final rebellion at the end of the millennium. Matter of fact, if you have an NIV translation, it translates the phrase the host of exalted ones as the powers in the heavens above.

Even the rebellious angelic beings are going to be subject to this great judgment. If you notice, it says there, the kings of the earth will be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit under God's great and final judgment when status on this earth will buy them nothing. And poetically speaking, even the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed.

No degree of earthly greatness will help a man on that day. You could be as bright shining as the sun. You could be as beautiful as the moon.

It won't help you. Even they'll be judged. No degree of heavenly greatness will help an angelic being on that day.

No, instead, verse 23, the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem before His elders gloriously. At the end of the great tribulation, God will usher in a thousand years of His glorious reign on this earth from Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. I want you to notice something in that, friends.

Sometimes when we see the judgment of the Lord here during the great tribulation, sometimes we think it's like our judgments. We think that there's an element of vengeance or vindictiveness in it all. Like God's the big bully who finally got to whoop on the other kid, you know? Friends, it's not like that at all.

God's purpose in judgment isn't simple vengeance or vindictiveness. It's to bring about a glorious new world. The world's going to have to be cleansed of its sin and its sinners before it can bring about a glorious new world.

And that's why the end of it isn't judgment. The end of it is, look at it there, verse 23, for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem before His elders gloriously. I can't wait.

Isaiah chapter 25. Now, in verse 14 of Isaiah 24, we saw that they shall lift up their voice and they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord. We don't know exactly what they'll sing, but I wouldn't be surprised if they sing Isaiah chapter 25 because this is the kind of heart that's displayed there.

Look at it here. 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. Isn't that beautiful? O Lord, You are my God, knowing that the Lord, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God who revealed Himself in and by Jesus Christ, knowing that the Lord is our God makes us want to praise Him.

Now, friends, when something other than the Lord is your God, we call that idolatry. No. But that's not where Isaiah is at.

O Lord, You are my God. And what's He going to do? I will exalt You. I will praise Your name.

The worshipper here makes a decision to praise God. You know what He says? I will. I am going to do it.

I will praise You. I will exalt You. Worship is never to be just a feeling, even if it is an intense feeling.

We are to worship God with a decision. You may not feel like worshiping the Lord at all. All the more reason for you to do it.

To decide. To say with Isaiah, I will exalt You. I will praise Your name.

Charles Spurgeon said, If I did not praise and bless Christ my Lord, I should deserve to have my tongue torn out by its roots from my mouth. If I did not bless and magnify His name, I should deserve that every stone I tread on in the streets should rise up to curse my ingratitude, for I am a drowned debtor to the mercy of God. Overhead and ears to infinite love and boundless compassion, I am a debtor.

Are you not the same? Then I charge you by the love of Christ. Awake, awake your hearts now to magnify His glorious name. He deserves it.

We say, I will exalt You. I will praise You. Why? Verse one again.

For you have done wonderful things. You know, when we think about all the wonderful things that the Lord has done, it's pretty easy to worship Him. You want some help in deciding to worship the Lord and saying, I will worship Him.

I will praise Him. I will exalt Him. Think about the wonderful things that He's done.

Think about that breath that you just drew. You drew it at the pleasure of God. God wants our worship to be filled with thought and remembrance of God's great works, not only with an emotional response.

And He says, your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. When we remember the greatness and the permanence of God's Word, it makes us want to praise Him. What's more reliable, more everlasting, more enduring than the Word of God? Nothing.

Now look, He praises God here for His righteous judgment in verse 2. For you have made a city of ruin, a fortified city of ruin, a palace of foreigners to be a city no more. It will never be rebuilt. Therefore, the strong people will glorify you.

The city of terrible nations will fear you. You've made a city of ruin. We can worship God for His judgment because we have confidence in His fairness.

As was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah. That's a city God made a ruin, right? God did it righteously. God never judges unless it's deserved.

And when He does judge righteously, He always makes a provision for the righteous. He got Lot and his family out of there, right? You can praise God even in the midst of His judgments. Matter of fact, the righteous judgments of God has two effects.

If you notice here, it says, verse 3, Therefore, the strong people will glorify you. I mean, the people of the Lord see His work and they glorify Him. But secondly, the righteous judgment of God, it says, the city of the terrible nations will fear you.

The unrighteous fear God when they see His righteous judgment. So you can praise God for His righteous judgments. But verses 4 and 5 speak of how you can praise God for His goodness to the weak.

It says, For you've been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in His distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat, from the blast of the terrible ones, as a storm against the wall. You will reduce the noise of aliens as a heat in a dry place, as the heat in the shadow of a cloud. The song of the terrible ones will be diminished.

God is worthy of our praise because He brings strength to the poor and needy. We can praise Him because He's a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat, and even the strangers, that is the aliens, are blessed by His goodness. God will even quiet the song of the terrible ones.

No, that's not the latest pop music group out there. The terrible ones. God will quiet their song too, whoever they are.

No, the wicked, the ungodly. God will quiet their song. They'll have nothing to sing about in that day.

Instead, look here at verse 6. And in this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wine on the lees. Do you want that feast? You know, the Bible speaks repeatedly about what's often called the marriage supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19, verse 9 says, Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

I suppose some commentators might argue whether or not Isaiah 25, verse 6 describes the marriage supper of the Lamb or some other great feast in the age to come. But I say, why not? What's interesting about it is that if this does in fact describe the marriage supper of the Lamb, isn't it interesting that it takes place on earth, not in heaven? Look at it there. And in this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast.

And what a feast it will be. A feast of choice pieces, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow. The diets are out the window on that feast, my friends.

Everything. Everything. It's all a gift from the Lord.

You know, for God's people, this is the victory banquet. This is the awards banquet after the final battle is over. This is when we whoop it up.

This is when we have that great time with the Lord. And my friends, Jesus is really looking forward to this banquet. He says to His disciples at the last supper, He said, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

And this Jesus spoke of His longing expectation of the day when He'd take communion with His people at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Jesus is excited about this event. Are you? You should be.

Verse 7, He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people and the veil that is spread over all nations. 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.

Well, what will the Lord destroy? The Lord will destroy the veil that is spread over all nations. The picture is that there's a veil spread over all nations that keeps them from seeing God, from loving God and obeying God. And in that glorious day, the Lord will destroy that veil.

In the New Testament, Paul speaks of Israel being blinded by a veil. He says, but even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. But in Isaiah's day, it was more apparent that the nations were veiled.

In Paul's day, it was more apparent that Israel was veiled. But both for the nations and both for Israel, the remedy is the same. 2 Corinthians 3.16 says, Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

So He'll destroy. But He'll also destroy death. Did you see that there? Verse 8. He will swallow up death forever.

The day will come when death is powerless. Death was introduced by Adam's rebellion and will one day be completely eliminated by God. Paul knew this.

Paul looked forward to this day. He proclaimed in 1 Corinthians 15.54, death is swallowed up in victory. This will be true for every believer.

When death is defeated by resurrection. Friends, a resurrection body is not a resuscitated corpse. It's a new order of life that will never die again.

Friends, ever since life came by Jesus Christ, death is dead. Sigmund Freud said, And finally, there is the painful riddle of death for which no remedy at all has yet been found nor probably ever will be. Wrong.

Death is swallowed up in victory. He will swallow death up forever. And ancient commentator John Traft said, Ever since death ran through the veins of Jesus Christ, who is life essential, it is destroyed or swallowed up like a bee dies when she's left her sting in the wound.

Death gave Jesus its best shot. It's like a bee stings and kills itself when it imparts the stinger. That's exactly what happened to death when it tried to sting the Son of God.

It's not only that. Did you see verse 8? The Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces. How much more glorious could the tender mercy of God be? It isn't just that He takes away the things that make us sad.

That would be great, right? We'd settle for that. It isn't just that He gives us a handkerchief to dry our eyes and blow our nose. Do you see what it says the Lord does? He gently and lovingly will wipe away tears from all faces.

That's a tender act, isn't it? The child's crying. The mother reaches out her hand and puts her hand on the face of the child to wipe away the tears. What a beautiful expression of love and tender mercy towards that child.

That's how much the Lord loves you. That's how much the Lord cares for you. And then, I don't know if this is better, but it's great too, verse 8. The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth.

Now, right now, we need the rebuke of His people. If God did not rebuke and correct us, we could drift further and further from Him. But you know what? There's going to come a day when we're no longer troubled by sin.

No longer in a place where we can rebel in that glorious day. The rebuke of His people He will take away. Thank God for that coming day.

Now, there's going to come a day where you're just not going to sin anymore. You're not going to rebel anymore. And that's when God's going to take His rebuke away.

He'll put it away. No need for it then, right? It'll be gone. So, thank God for that day.

But, thank God for His faithful rebuke until then. So this is the testimony of God's people. 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've waited for Him.

We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. We will proclaim it then because we've proclaimed it now. We'll say, Behold, this is our God.

These are the people who are unafraid to confess Jesus before men on earth. And they're going to be blessed to hear Him confess us before our Father in heaven. Can you say it? Behold, this is our God.

And then He goes on. We've waited for Him and He will save us. Isn't it great it is to wait on the Lord and to see Him bring us salvation? Sometimes God seems cruel or distant to us when He compels us to wait on Him.

But His ways really are best. And they're going to be shown to be the best. And then we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

I love it. Rejoice in whose salvation? His. Friends, it's not His salvation because God needs saving.

It's His salvation because it comes from Him. If it's our salvation, a salvation of our own making, our own creation, there's nothing to be glad and rejoice in. But since it is His salvation, there's everything to be glad in.

Every one of those things. Look at verse 9. It says, And it will be set in that day. Every one of these things.

Confessing that He's our God. The fulfillment of patient waiting. And rejoicing in His salvation.

Each one of those things will be ultimately fulfilled in that day. But they can be substantially fulfilled right now. Friends, you don't have to wait until the great tribulation is over and Jesus has returned in glory to say, Behold, this is our God.

You don't have to wait until then to say we've waited for Him and He will save us. You don't have to wait until then to say, This is the Lord. We've waited for Him and we'll be glad in His salvation.

As we do, we bring some of the glory of that day to pass in our lives right now. Friends, when we're in glory with God, this will be the environment that we live in all the time. Do you want to live in some of that environment right now? You know, right now we live on this earth and this environment is all around us.

The air we breathe. You've seen the movies, you know, where they go to another planet and they have to wear the spacesuit. The spacesuit carries an environment that they can live in with you.

Well, friends, the environment of heaven, we should be living it like a spacesuit with us right now, right? We're aliens here. And you know what you need? Just as much as you need oxygen pumped into that spacesuit. You need the right pressure.

Man, in the spacesuit we have with us right now, we have some of the environment of heaven with us right now. The praise of heaven. The love of heaven.

The glory of heaven. I see Christians sometimes, they look like an astronaut out of his spacesuit. They're dying.

You know, they're languishing. Man, you've got to get in that spacesuit so you live some of heaven's environment with you right now. Charles Spurgeon said, to be wrapped in praise to God is the highest state of the soul.

To receive the mercy for which we praise God for is something. But to be wholly clothed with praise to God for the mercy received is far more. Praise is heaven and heaven is praise.

To pray is heaven below. But praise is the essence of heaven above when you bow in adoration. You're at your very highest.

That's the environment God wants us to live in. Let's conclude it here, starting at verse 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.

He will spread out his hands in their midst, as he who swims spreads out his hands to swim, and he will bring down their pride, together with the trickery of the hands, 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 Lord God will settle his hand of favor and power and glory on Mount Zion. After the great tribulation, when Jesus Christ reigns from Jerusalem, then the whole creation will know that the hand of the Lord does rest on this mountain.

And the nations that have rejected him, they're like Moab. They will be trampled down. See the figure we're left with here as we conclude this chapter? The Lord's hand is on Mount Zion.

It's on Jerusalem. It's on his habitation. That's where his hand of love and care and protection is.

That's where his hand is. His feet are on top of his enemies. So that's the question.

What do you want? Do you want to be under the loving hand of God? Or do you want to be under his feet? Know the love and the power and the care of the hand of God in your life tonight. Father, we thank you. We want to praise you together tonight, Lord.

For you, O Lord, are a great God, glorious and strong. We worship you tonight, Lord. We thank you for all your goodness, all your power, all your presence in our lives.

You've shown us more of yourself, Lord, than we probably, Lord, had any right to see. Lord, just draw us closer to you so that we can see you more clearly than ever. We love you.

We praise you tonight. In Jesus' name.

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