

Isaiah Chapters 24-27 - John Karmelich

Title: The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man!

One of the things that has bothered me all of my Christian life is why does God want to wrap up life on earth with a big "destructive show" (for a lack of a better term), as the book of Revelation describes the end of the world as we know it! If God's God, He'll do what He wants when He wants! Let's be honest, He could end the world as easily as He created it. Why does it end such a big, horrible event involving the world at war with lots of death? I'm getting into all this as much of this text is in effect a version of "Revelation". Isaiah gives a vision that'll include world destruction, praise for ending all the "bad stuff" and in effect a discussion of Jesus ruling from Israel after it's over! I suspect most of my readers accept all that as fact! I love the "why question" and ponder it pretty much every time I study my Bible.

Let me start with the fact that evil has pretty much always existed. So why have one specific time spot where God pours out fury on the world? It is not that some specific point in time deserves God's wrath more than other times! One reason it occurs this way is God wants to make it obvious to the world that He is going to rule so "deal with it"! Another way to look at it, is God's being patient with the world as all of us would not be saved if this happened say a generation ago! A reason for the world to end as the way the Bible states is for the world to realize that God exists and there's no escaping His judgment. If God's God can't He just return and rule? Why the big "floor show"? Think of this as making it obvious there's no getting around sin and judgment. Religious Christians and Jews accept the Bible as inspired by God (obviously religious Israelites believe only the Old Testament is God inspired!) My point is all of us who trust the Bible believe the world as we know it will end as God says it will! We are called to warn people of the danger of ignoring God or else suffer for eternity!

With all that out of my system, I'm taking on 4 chapters here. (My last big chunk in one lesson!) They all focus on the same end-time vision. One point is to understand that the Revelation "bad stuff" is not just a New Testament thing! It is here in Isaiah as well! As most of you know, no chapter breaks were in the original text. Anyway, Chapter 24 focuses on world destruction. Chapter 25 is a praise for it and even includes a hint of the rapture! Chapters 26 and 27 focus on Jesus ruling after all that! That's what is in focus here. My question is why should we care? We must accept all this as reality as much as we care about the existence of Jesus. If He is going to rule the world one day, understanding how that will occur is a necessity for the future! It affects our lives here and now as a motivation factor of how Jesus expects us to live as a witness for Him! To quote the late Walter Martin (a famous bible teacher from a generation ago), "If they won't listen to Jesus, give them Moses", referring to the judgment to come!

Let's begin with the fact the last bunch of chapters had Isaiah describing judgement on Israel but also a bunch of nations in the "neighborhood". Chapter 25 says in effect, "You can't escape His judgment by traveling beyond the nations just described!" Again, remember Bible predictions are in "patterns". Yes, Israel suffered collectively from turning by God as the "North" was destroyed by the Assyrian Empire, and the "South" will be destroyed by the Babylonian Empire roughly a century after Isaiah wrote. The pattern of destruction will have an ultimate fulfillment when God will say one day in effect, enough of this, I'm going to rule over all the world Myself from Jerusalem and here's a big "floor show" to prove it's a God thing! Deal with it!

By the way, if you're thinking I don't want to hear another end-time lecture, remember this is our future so accept it. As I state a lot, if people aren't willing to hear the good news of Jesus, they must know the bad news of what waits for rejecting Him. Enough of that, onto Chapter 24! Isaiah refers to the world

as empty one day. Revelation 21:1 says John saw a new heaven (sky etc.) and new earth. That implies the destruction of this one. Whether it means most, or all the population gone is debated. Isaiah then is saying in effect it doesn't matter your status, it'll affect everyone! He discusses a lack of wine, which in the bible is associated with joy! Bottom line, it's an ugly chapter that focuses on destruction.

Then of all things Isaiah switches to praise! The essential idea is God will win, so we might as well be a part of the winning team and praise God for coming down hard on people who turn from Him. Keep in mind people living in Isaiah's day pretty much ignored Him! Think about those we know who don't take God seriously. A key point is judgment day is coming "deal with it"! Of all places, Isaiah singles out Moab, a nation that's part of Jordan today! They're singled out as they're close! Since judgement's going to affect the whole world think of them as an example of "betting on the wrong horse" when that nation (Moab) is aware of who God is, and what He has done in the past, can do, and will do!

Chapter 25 also implies a great feast which may be the same as the one described in Revelation 19:6-9. I have always argued in our resurrected bodies we will exist in more than three dimensions, which will allow many people to get close to Jesus. I have always wondered if we eat in the next life, does it mean we have a digestive system, and toilets exist? In First Corinthians 6:13-17 it says God will destroy our stomachs which implies we can eat what we want and never get fat! That's eternal good news!

Chapter 26 more praise but it's future focused. It's written as if THE Messiah (Jesus) has come into the city of Jerusalem to set up the kingdom promised. The text emphasizes the peace that Christians grasp as we trust in that promise of His salvation! It's a big set of praises for what God will do once all that's set up (ruling the world from Jerusalem) one day! The text also emphasizes the destruction of those in the world who refuse to acknowledge Him. It's a "do you want to accept the good news or bad news as both will happen" question! The last two verses of this chapter hint of the rapture, as it asks His people to hide themselves until the wrath has past! It could refer to the invasion of the Assyrians and Babylon, but I suspect it's more end times focused. Daniel 11:41 says in effect Jordan will be spared from all of the end time destruction, and I suspect Isaiah is hinting at the idea that Israel should run and hide there, to wait for the Messiah to say, "Time to come back home, it's safe to return now!"

Chapter 27 is more praise and the focus is on life after Jesus returns to rule the world from Israel. What always amazes me is despite Israel's corporate rejection of God (Israel today is mostly secular), He still will keep His unconditional promises that He'll rule the world one day from Israel. For that to occur, it is obvious Israel must exist as a nation (fulfilled), and they (corporately) must beg for Him to return for Him to rule. (I suspect seeing all the bad Revelation stuff encourages that!) What all this means for us is a reminder that despite how much we mess up, we CANNOT LOSE OUR SALVATION! I realize it is possible to mess up our heavenly rewards by a lack of obedience but not our salvation. In effect, this is a big message of positive hope of WHAT WILL HAPPEN, despite the disobedience of believers! In short, the message is, "Bet on God, and be part of the winning team!"

I realize I went lightly through four chapters and there's a lot more one can glean from a detailed study of this text. I want to close by explaining why I chose my lesson title: The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man! We may think it's strange for God to end the world the way He plans to do it and explain in both the Old and New Testament! My point is simply that what seems foolish to us, say to have a big "Revelation show" (for a lack of a better term) shows His wisdom in that it will prove the foolishness of God is greater as He orchestrates all of this to show "He is God, and we must accept it!" With that said, hope this sinks in so we can tell people about the judgment Moses taught, and the only way to escape that judgement is trusting in God Himself paying for our sins!

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on one of the links below. It is still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for you reading this. The rest of this email is links to questions you may have. If you're new here, realize you're always welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again for reading this!

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That's it. Hope you enjoy it. Don't forget to fire up a prayer prior to your reading.