

## A Trek Through Isaiah 22 - 26:1-21

Bruce Pike

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### The Strong City 26:1-21

<b><u>The Kingdom Panorama - Where is True Security? (13 - 27)</u></b>					
	<b>One-world Government</b>	<b>Davidic Monarchy</b>	<b>Collective Security and Self-sufficiency</b>	<b>The People of God</b>	<b>Triumphant End</b>
1	13:1 – 14:27 Oracle of Babylon	14:28-32 Oracle of Philistia	15:1 - 16:14 Oracle of Moab	17:1 – 18:7 Oracle of Damascus	19:1 – 20:6 Oracle of Egypt
2	21:1-10 Oracle of the wilderness of the sea	21:11-12 Oracle of silence	21:13-17 Oracle of Arabia	22:1-25 Oracle of the valley of vision	23:1-18 Oracle of Tyre
3	24:1-20 The city of chaos	24:21-23 The King of glory	25:1-12 Salvation for all peoples	26:1-21 The strong city	27:1-13 Universal Israel

In the kingdom panorama: “Where is true security?”

Fourth oracle in the third series

Resolution of God’s people in the world.

- In the Oracle of Damascus 17:1 - 18:7 Ephraim chose to trust in Aram, found her cities forsaken and deserted.
- In the Oracle of the Valley of Vision 22:1-25 Judah chose self-reliance, Jerusalem was overrun.
- In the Oracle of the Strong City 26:1-21 God’s people will be characterized by righteousness, faith, peace, salvation, and inhabit a strong city.

Structure

- The strong city and the fallen city 26:1-6
- Dependence on Yahweh 26:7-19
- Coming Judgment 26:20-21

The song of Judah 26:1-6

- A song of praise: God’s people secure in a strong city with their enemies destroyed.

## Security in the strong city 26:1-4

Isaiah 26:1-4 (LSB)

1 In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; He sets up walls and ramparts for salvation.

2 "Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter, The one that keeps faithfulness.

3 "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace Because he trusts in You.

4 "Trust in Yahweh forever, For in Yah—Yahweh Himself—we have an everlasting Rock.

- V1 A strong city
  - In that day.
    - When Israel returns to their God
  - This song will be sung in the land of Judah
    - Yahweh's adulterous people transformed into His faithful people.
  - We have a strong city
    - Not the world city. The city of God.
  - He sets up walls and ramparts for salvation
    - He sets up. All of God
    - Walls and ramparts for salvation. Better "of salvation". God's salvation is the city's fortification.
    - As Eph 6:17 (armor of God)...the helmet of salvation (which protects the head)
  - Contrast the outcome for the world city in 25:2: a heap...a ruin...it will never be rebuilt.
- V2 Entrance into the city
  - Open the gates.
    - Picture of pilgrims requesting entrance to a city prepared for them.
  - that the righteous nation may enter, The one that keeps faithfulness
    - Righteousness through faith manifesting in right behavior
  - As [Psa 24:3-4 LSB] 3 Who may ascend into the mountain of Yahweh? And who may rise in His holy place? 4 He who has innocent hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to worthlessness And has not sworn deceitfully.
- V3 Perfect peace
  - The steadfast of mind
    - Internal. A settled decision.
  - You will keep
    - Done by Yahweh.
  - in perfect peace
    - Lit peace, peace: Complete.
  - Because he trusts in You
    - Exercising faith.
  - Here is the strong city.
  - Opposite of [Jas 1:6-8 LSB] ...the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 [being] a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

- V4 Exhortation
  - Based on the truths in v1-3
  - Trust in Yahweh forever
    - Have the settled decision of v3.
  - For in Yah, Yahweh Himself
    - Repeated for emphasis
  - We have an everlasting rock
    - Basis is God's character.
    - Everlasting stability and provision.
- Note the progression
  - V1 God has provided a strong city
  - V2 The righteous who keep faith enter into it.
  - V3 The one who is steadfast He keeps in perfect peace
  - V4 Do it!
- Here is Isaiah's answer to his question: Where is true security? True security is found in the strong city provided by God and available to all who are steadfast in their faith in Him.

Destruction of the world city 26:5-6

Isaiah 26:5-6 (LSB)

5"For He has laid low those who settle on high, the exalted city; He brings it low, He brings it low to the ground, He casts it to the dust.

6"The foot will trample it, The feet of the afflicted, the steps of the poor."

- V5 The world city brought down.
  - For He has laid low.
    - Done by Yahweh.
    - Perfect of certainty: "He has determined to". A sure thing not yet accomplished.
  - Those who settle on high, the exalted city.
    - Not named. The world city opposed to God.
    - On high...exalted. Proud.
    - Those who settle. Those who choose the way of the world rather than the way of faith.
  - He brings it low, He brings it low to the ground, He casts it to the dust.
    - Three descriptions of complete destruction
- V6 The role of the believers
  - The foot will trample it
    - After the victory
    - Only to walk on the remains.
  - The afflicted...the poor. The believing remnant.

Dependence on Yahweh 26:7-19

The Way of the Righteous: Straight and Growing 26:7-9

Isaiah 26:7-9 (LSB)

7The way of the righteous is upright; O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.

8Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O Yahweh, We have hoped for You eagerly; Your name—the memory of You—is the desire of our souls.

9At night my soul longs for You, Indeed, my spirit within me seeks You earnestly; For when the earth experiences Your judgments, The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

- Here is the way of the righteous: in the world, preserved through faith, longing for God, growing in grace.
- V7 The way of the righteous
  - The righteous.
    - Those who have entered the strong city (v2) and are steadfast of mind (v3).
  - Upright...level
    - Made straight by the Upright One.
    - Very different from the winding roads of Judah.
    - Clear and not deceptive. Not necessarily easy.
- V8-9a The desire of the righteous
  - While following the way of your judgments.
    - Following the upright path of v7. Not seeking their own way.
  - we have hoped
    - Eager expectation
    - Acknowledgment of dependence on God. Waiting for Him.
  - for You eagerly..
    - Desire is to know God personally.
    - Not to come to righteousness on their own.
  - Your name—the memory of You—is the desire of our souls
    - Your name. What God reveals about Himself as His people meet Him on the way of the righteous.
    - Memory. Cultivated memory of what He has revealed.
  - At night my soul longs for You... seeks you earnestly
    - Continuing v8. Intense desire night and day.
- V9b The school of experience
  - For when the earth experiences Your judgments, The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.
    - The earth. All the people on the earth
    - Experiences Your judgments. How people encounter Yahweh. What the prophet desires in v8-9a.
    - Learn righteousness. What true righteousness is. How to grow in righteousness.

## The Way of the Wicked: Blindness and Destruction 26:10-11

Isaiah 26:10–11 (LSB)

10 Though the wicked is shown favor, He does not learn righteousness; He deals unjustly in the land of uprightness, And does not perceive the majesty of Yahweh.

11 O Yahweh, Your hand is raised up high, yet they do not behold it. They behold Your zeal for the people and are put to shame; Indeed, fire will devour Your adversaries.

- Here is the way of unbelievers: in a world ordered by God, they do not see Him.
- V10, 11 Three ways that God shows Himself to the world
  - favor is shown. Providence.
  - In the land of uprightness. A world ordered by God.
  - Your hand is raised up high. In acts of blessing or chastisement.
- V10,11 Four descriptions of the blindness of unbelievers
  - He does not learn righteousness.
  - He deals unjustly.
  - He does not perceive the majesty of Yahweh
  - He does not behold God's hand at work.
- V11 The result of willful ignorance
  - They behold your zeal for your people.
    - Come to understand that God meant what He said.
  - They suffer the consequences
    - Are put to shame. Because they had the opportunity to repent and learn righteousness but refused.
    - Are devoured by fire.
- Note the two responses to the "land of uprightness"
  - Believers learn righteousness
  - Unbelievers do not learn righteousness. They persist in willful ignorance, come to shame and destruction.

God establishes His people 26:12-15

Isaiah 26:12–15 (LSB)

12Yahweh, You will establish peace for us, Since You have also performed for us all our works.

13O Yahweh our God, other masters besides You have ruled us; But through You alone we bring Your name to remembrance.

14The dead will not live; the departed spirits will not rise; Therefore You have visited and destroyed them, And You have made all remembrance of them perish.

15You have increased the nation, O Yahweh; You have increased the nation, You are glorified; You have extended all the borders of the land.

- Back to the believing remnant. Glorious outcome for Yahweh's people. All by Him.
- V12 God establishes peace for His people
  - Peace.
    - Heb shalom. Complete well-being and peace. With God and with each other.
    - The result of walking on the way of the righteous.
  - You have also performed for us all our works.
    - Salvation is entirely of God.
    - Yahweh will complete His work with them
- V13 God keeps them faithful
  - Other masters besides You have ruled over us
    - Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians
  - But through You alone we bring Your name to remembrance
    - God keeps His people faithful to Him throughout their history.
- V14 God removes their oppression
  - The dead will not live...And You have made all remembrance of them perish. .
    - Changes to past tense. Prophetic certainty.
    - The oppressors are gone. Even their memory is gone.
- V15 God enlarges their nation
  - You have increased the nation
    - 2x for emphasis
    - Contrast the fate of the oppressors.
  - You have extended all the borders of the land
    - National boundaries will be increased in size
  - You are glorified.
    - All for God's glory.

God accomplishes His purpose 26:16-18

Isaiah 26:16–19 (LSB)

16 O Yahweh, they visited You in distress; They could only whisper a prayer; Your chastening was upon them.

17 As the woman with child draws near to the time to give birth, She writhes and cries out in her pangs of labor, Thus were we before You, O Yahweh.

18 We were with child, we writhed in labor; We gave birth, as it seems, only to wind. We could not accomplish salvation for the earth, And the inhabitants of the world were not born.

19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

- Israel could not accomplish either their deliverance or the defeat of the world city.
- v16-17 God's people in distress
  - they visited You in distress...Your chastening was upon them. Re the Assyrian oppression
  - They could only whisper a prayer. As Hannah before Samuel. Many words spoken in a low voice.
  - As the woman with child. Illustration of childbirth pain
- v18 Unable to accomplish their purpose
  - V18a We gave birth only to wind. Labor with no result
  - V18b
    - Two translations
      - NASB We could not accomplish deliverance for the earth, Nor were inhabitants of the world born.
        - Israel could not bring about the salvation and resurrection of the world.
      - NKJV We have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth, Nor have the inhabitants of the world fallen.
        - Israel could not deliver herself or bring down the world city.
        - Preferred
- V19 Yahweh will accomplish their purpose
  - Your dead will live. Dead saints live again
  - Their corpses will rise. Bodily resurrection.
  - You who dwell in the dust, awake and shout for joy
    - The prophet speaks to those dead.
    - By faith before Christ
  - Two pictures of new life
    - A picture of dew refreshing plants
    - A picture of a mother giving birth
  - Refers to the resurrection of the saints at the Lord's first return.
    - 1 Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Refuge from Judgment 26:20-21

Isaiah 26:20-21 (LSB)

20Come, my people, enter into your rooms And close your doors behind you; Hide for a little while Until indignation passes by.

21For behold, Yahweh is about to come out from His place To visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth; And the earth will reveal her bloodshed And will no longer cover those of hers who were killed.

- Security for believers and judgment for unbelievers.
- V20 Security for believers
  - My people.
    - The believing remnant
    - Term of endearment
  - Enter into your rooms...close your doors...hide for a little while.
    - Picture of taking refuge in a secure place
      - A time of trial
      - A refuge provided
      - Entering into it
      - Locking the doors against the outside world.
      - Waiting for the trial to pass
    - Re the ark in Gen 7: God's remnant preserved in the midst of worldwide judgment.
  - Until indignation passes by
    - Re the Passover in Ex 12: God's people protected from the destroyer.
      - "pass over" in Ex 12 is the same verb as "passes by" here.
      - Each family killed an unblemished lamb and sprinkled its blood on their doorframe. The family stayed inside the house and was protected from the destroyer.
      - Is 53 will describe the death of the Lamb whose blood saves the world.
- V21 Judgment for unbelievers
  - Yahweh is about to come.
    - The Day of the Lord.
  - Iniquity.
    - Heb awon. The corrupt nature.
  - reveal...no longer cover
    - All sins will be revealed, even those long-forgotten by men.
    - As Gen 4:10 The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.



## Application: Getting to know our God

Look at Is 26:7-10. What are the truths there?

- V7 The way of the righteous is level. Not winding but also not easy.
- V8-9a While following that way, we eagerly hope to meet our God. In God's time.
- V9b When He meets us and we experience His judgments, we learn righteousness more and more.
- V10-11 When the wicked experience God's favor, they do not learn righteousness. They refuse to learn. They are put to shame and destroyed.

Look at Gen 50:19-20 Joseph reassuring his brothers after Jacob's death.

- What happened. Joseph was Jacob's favorite. His brothers hated him and sold him into slavery. He was bought by Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard. Joseph found favor with him, was made head of his household. Potiphar's wife wanted to sleep with him but he refused. So she had him thrown into prison. There he correctly interpreted the dreams of the chief cupbearer (who would be released) and chief baker (who would be hanged). The chief cupbearer promised to remember him to Pharaoh, but did not until two years later when Pharaoh had a dream which none could interpret. Joseph interpreted the dream as being instruction from God about a coming famine. Pharaoh then made him head over all Egypt. He was able to bring Jacob and his entire family to Egypt, where they escaped the famine and prospered, becoming a great people.
- What did Joseph not do when Potiphar's wife approached him?
  - Deny his God. Gen 39:9 How could I do this great evil and sin against God"
- What would that have looked like?
  - Accepted her advance.
  - Used her favor to advance himself at the court
  - Gotten rich from his position
  - Lorded it over those beneath him
- What would have been the result for him?
  - Shame and destruction. In this life or the next.
- What did he do?
  - Remained faithful to God
  - Followed the way of righteousness
  - Persevered
- Because he was faithful to God, what did Joseph learn from his experiences?
  - He was not God.
  - God is faithful to His people.
  - God is able to turn evil to good.
  - God can do mighty works through those who remain faithful to Him.
- How can we learn from our experiences?
  - Purpose to please our Lord in all things
  - Be alert. Every situation brings opportunity.
  - Follow the way of righteousness
  - Persevere to the end

## References

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