

A Trek Through Isaiah 23 - 27:1-13

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Universal Israel 27:1-13

The Kingdom Panorama - Where is True Security? (13 - 27)					
	One-world Government	Davidic Monarchy	Collective Security and Self-sufficiency	The People of God	Triumphant End
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

Fifth oracle in the third series: Triumphant End

Question: Where is true security? Resolving the answer One world, one people, one God

- 19:1 - 20:6 Oracle of Egypt: Egypt will be judged, then will come to know Yahweh. They will worship Him alongside Assyria and Judah.
- 23:1-18 Oracle of Tyre: Proud Tyre will be brought low, then restored, and her commerce will provide for Yahweh's people
- 27:1-13 Universal Israel: All nations will worship Yahweh at His holy mountain in Jerusalem

In 26:20-21 God's people were to hide and wait. Here is their final outcome.

Fourth elaboration of the downfall of the world city.

Structure

- A1 Heavenly victory v1
 - B1 Vineyard people v2-6
 - C1 God's people redeemed v7-9
 - C2 The desolate city v10-11
 - B2 Harvested people v12
- A2 Earthly jubilee v13

A1 Heavenly victory 27:1

Isaiah 27:1 (LSB)

1In that day Yahweh will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.

- Here is the final victory over the forces of evil.
- Picture of a hero killing a monster. Borrowed from Canaanite mythology but this is real.
- Yahweh. All His victory
- Leviathan...serpent...dragon
 - Three-fold designation common in Canaanite mythology
 - Satan and the heavenly forces of evil.
- Sword. Symbolizes His action
 - Fierce and great and mighty.
 - Unrelenting. Equal to any task. Greater than any foe. Fit for the hand of Yahweh.,
 - As Dt 32:39-41 See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; 40 For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, As I live forever, 41 if I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and will repay those who hate me.
- Fleeing serpent...twisted serpent
 - Serpent. Satan. Same word as Gen 3:1
 - Fleeing. Seeking to escape
 - Twisted. Morally twisted and/or coiling as a snake.
- In the sea.
 - The place of chaos

B1 Vineyard people 27:2-6

Isaiah 27:2-6 (LSB)

2 In that day, "A vineyard of delight, sing of it!

3 "I, Yahweh, am its keeper; I water it every moment. Lest anyone damage it, I keep it night and day.

4 "I have no wrath. Who would ever give Me briars and thorns in the battle? I would step on them, I would burn them completely.

5 "Or let him rely on My strong defense, Let him make peace with Me, Let him make peace with Me."

6 In the days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom and bud, And they will fill the whole world with produce.

- Here is what God will do with His people in the end times, using the figure of a vineyard. Israel is protected and cared for by Yahweh, and bears fruit that fills the whole world.
- Contrast Is 5:1-6 the vineyard of the failed nation under God's wrath: worthless grapes, laid waste
- V2 vineyard of delight.
 - Heb vineyard of wine. Successful where the previous vineyard had failed.
- V3 Its Keeper.
 - Kept by Yahweh Himself
 - Watered continually where previously rain was withheld.
 - Now protected; previously open to enemies
 - Cared for continually night and day.
- V4-5 Plea to the unbelieving nation
 - I have no wrath.
 - Now all sins forgiven where before there was only judgment.
 - But how? Stay tuned.
 - Briars and thorns.
 - Picture of enemies defeated. Before, the vineyard was given over to them.
 - Let him rely on My strong defense
 - Lit take hold of
 - Picture of taking hold of the horns of the altar. As 1 Ki 1:50 Adonijah seeking refuge from Solomon. Complete seeking of refuge.
 - Let him make peace with me
 - Offer of peace 2x for emphasis
 - Yahweh desires all to be saved.
- V6 Fruitfulness
 - Picture of a fruitful plant
 - Jacob...Israel. All the children of Abraham, Jew and Gentile.
 - fill the whole world. Influence all peoples. Fulfilled by the gospel.
 - Contrast Is 14:21-22 the sons of Babylon: "Prepare for his sons a place of slaughter Because of the iniquity of their fathers. They must not arise and take possession of the earth And fill the face of the world with cities." "I will rise up against them," declares Yahweh of hosts, "and will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, offspring and posterity," declares Yahweh.

C1 God's people redeemed 27:7-9

Isaiah 27:7-9 (LSB)

7 Like the striking of Him who has struck them, has He struck them? Or like the slaughter of those of His who were killed, have they been killed?

8 You contended with them by driving them away, by making them forlorn. With His fierce wind He has expelled them on the day of the east wind.

9 Therefore through this, Jacob's iniquity will be atoned for; And this will be the whole fruit of the turning away of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones, When Asherim and incense altars will not stand.

- Here the prophet shows how God will fulfill His plan for his people.
- V7 Raising an objection
 - Phrased as a question: Has God treated His people in the same manner as the pagan nations.
 - A: No. Isaiah will show that God's people see discipline while unbelievers get destruction.
- V8 Discipline rather than destruction
 - You contended with them. Yahweh's discipline according to His purpose.
 - By driving them away, by making them forlorn.
 - Rather than death. With a promise to bring them back. Speaking of the exile.
 - "By driving them away" may also be "in exact measure". Exactly as needed to achieve the purpose.
 - Fierce wind...east wind. Strong but temporary.
- V9 Holiness achieved and expressed
 - Therefore. Since Yahweh acted with restraint, chastening rather than destroying.
 - through this, Jacob's iniquity will be atoned for
 - Alongside the discipline, atonement will be achieved.
 - Discipline rather than destruction indicated that Yahweh would achieve their atonement
 - Jacob: the believing remnant
 - this will be the whole fruit of the turning away of his sin: altar stones pulverized...Asherim and incense alters will not stand.
 - Resulting change in behavior.
 - The exile was the means by which idolatry would be removed from Judah.
- Note the contrasting result of trials
 - For believers, discipline leading to holiness and life.
 - For unbelievers, hardening leading to sin and death

C2 The desolate city 27:10-11

Isaiah 27:10–11 (LSB)

10For the fortified city is isolated, A haunt forlorn and forsaken like the desert; There the calf will graze, And there it will lie down and feed on its twigs.

11When its limbs are dry, they are broken off; Women come and light a fire with them, For they are not a people of discernment, Therefore their Maker will not have compassion on them. And their Creator will not be gracious to them.

- Here is a picture of an unnamed city judged by God. May refer the world city or to Jerusalem.
- V10-11a. The city in ruins
 - picture of livestock grazing among deserted ruins.
 - picture of a dead tree used for firewood.
- V11b. Reason for the judgment.
 - not a people of discernment. Of the things of God.
- V11c. Result of the judgment
 - No compassion. No mercy (withholding the judgment that is deserved)
 - No grace. No good given even though undeserved..

B2 Harvested people 27:12

Isaiah 27:12 (LSB)

12And it will be in that day, that Yahweh will start His threshing from the flowing stream of the River to the brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered up one by one, O sons of Israel.

- Here God's people are carefully gathered
- River (Euphrates) to the Brook of Egypt.
 - From the entire world
- Start His threshing
 - Lit beating. Picture of an olive harvest
- and you will be gathered one by one, O sons of Israel.
 - As olives, carefully and tenderly gathered

A2 Earthly Jubilee 27:13

Isaiah 27:13 (LSB)

13 And it will be in that day, that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were banished in the land of Egypt will come and worship Yahweh in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

- Here God's people are gathered to worship Him.
- a great trumpet will be blown
 - As the Jubilee feast Lv 25:9-10 Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. 10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.
- Assyria...Egypt
 - From the whole world.
- come and worship Yahweh in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.
 - The remnant all together.
 - Worshiping the true God in His city.

Application: Pulverizing our altar stones

Look at v8-9

Isaiah 27:8–9 (LSB)

8You contended with them by driving them away, by making them forlorn. With His fierce wind He has expelled them on the day of the east wind.

9Therefore through this, Jacob's iniquity will be atoned for; And this will be the whole fruit of the turning away of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones, When Asherim and incense altars will not stand.

- Yahweh would discipline Israel with the exile.
- Alongside His discipline would be His atonement for their sins.
- The result would be that they would pulverize their altar stones (set aside their worship of pagan gods). This was fulfilled in the exile and return to Jerusalem.

Consider Paul's thorn in the flesh in 2 Cor 12:7-10

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (LSB)

7Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!

8Concerning this I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might leave me.

9And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

10Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions and hardships, for the sake of Christ, for when I am weak, then I am strong.

- V1-6 Paul speaks of his vision of heaven
- V7 He was given a thorn in the flesh to torment him, to keep him from exalting himself. The Lord knew that without the thorn, he would exalt himself.
- V8 He pleaded that it be taken from him.
- V9a The Lord refused: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
- V9b-10 Paul has made good use of his experience. Once he boasted in his strengths (orator, debater, missionary). Now he boasts in his weakness. He is content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions and hardships, for the sake of Christ. He has learned that when he is weak, then he is strong.
- Not like Cain (Gen 4). He made a wrong offering, was disciplined, refused to repent, went out from the presence of the Lord.

What altars do we worship at? What trials is the Lord taking us through to destroy them? How will we respond?

Object lesson (9 min)

Materials: altar model made of sugar cubes glued together, pan, hammer

[Show altar model] Here is a model of an altar to an idol. We all have them in our hearts. Maybe health, wealth, position, competence, pornography, Bible knowledge. The possibilities are endless.

This altar is small. Don't be fooled. These can get very big in our heart.

When Cain was rebuked by the Lord, he guarded the altar of his sovereignty [Hug the altar], and eventually left the presence of the Lord. Bad move.

We want to be the remnant who will pulverize their altars. How do we do that?

The Lord brings a trial. Rejoice, here is an opportunity to be made perfect and complete. One of our altars is going to get it. [Place the altar model in the pan]

Things get hard. Our heart complains: "I don't deserve this". We apply the sword of the Spirit [Show hammer]: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Ro 3:23) ... the wages of sin is death (Ro 6:23), and we smash the altar of the idol that we are worthy. [Smash the altar model]

Our heart complains again: "It's too much for me." Again we apply the sword of the Spirit: "... God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it." (1 Cor 10:13), and we smash the altar [smash the altar model].

Our heart complains yet again: "God doesn't love me. If He did, He would never allow this." Again we apply the sword of the Spirit: "It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?... He disciplines us for our benefit, so that we may share His holiness." (Heb 12:7,10), and we smash the altar [smash the altar model].

Might take a long time. We are diligent (as Peter says) to keep on until the altar is pulverized to dust.

This process goes on as long as we live. Calvin described the human heart as an idol factory. We must always be on the lookout for our heart starting to pile up stones to make an altar to some new idol. [pile up some sugar cubes] Best to pulverize it while it's little. [Smash the pile] Happy is he who kills Babylonian babies while they are still infants. (Ps 137:8-9)

Parents, watch your children. They will start to make altars to their idols as soon as they are born. Your job is to teach them to come to Christ, recognize their altars and smash them.

So let us be diligent to pulverize our altars, so that we are among those who come to the Lord's banquet.

References

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