

Isaiah 24,25

9-16-04

“The Last Word is with God!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Pray** – Doctors leaving tonight to Haiti.
- 1.2. **Prayer** – For “*things of earth to grow strangely dim.*”
- 1.3. The **May 1984 National Geographic** showed through color photos and drawings the swift and terrible destruction that wiped out the Roman Cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in A.D. 79. **The explosion of Mount Vesuvius was so sudden, the residents were killed while in their routine:** men and women were at the market, the rich in their luxurious baths, slaves at toil. They died amid volcanic ash and superheated gasses. Even family pets suffered the same quick and final fate. The saddest part is that these people did not have to die. Scientists confirm what ancient Roman writer’s record--*weeks of rumblings and shakings preceded the actual explosion. Even an ominous plume of smoke was clearly visible from the mountain days before the eruption.* If only they had been able to read and respond to Vesuvius's warning!
 - 1.3.1. **God warns and provides an escape** to those who will **heed the rumblings.**
 - 1.3.2. **People need not be caught unprepared!**
- 1.4. **Q: When is a national or personal insurance policy of no help?**
 - 1.4.1. During the Tribulation time! – There will be no immunity on that day.
- 1.5. **Some call this “Isaiah’s Apocalypse”.**
 - 1.5.1. This is **earth’s finale**. The **grand crescendo**.
 - 1.5.2. This deals with the Tribulation, Jesus’ Second Coming, His Millennial reign, & His ultimate victory over the forces of evil.
 - 1.5.3. On your car on the **right-hand door mirror** on your car says “Objects are closer than they appear”. (**Reason?**) The mirror is convex, allowing a much wider angle of vision.
 - 1.5.3.1. These 2 chapters give us the **wide angle** & thus all the more “Jesus, the main Object of our love,...He’s closer than it appears!”
- 1.6. **Outline: The Great Tribulation & The Great Liberation!**

2. **THE GREAT TRIBULATION! (24)**

- 2.1. **NO PARTIALITY!** (1-6)
 - 2.1.1. (1) **Behold** – always anticipates a future event!¹

¹ Shepherds Notes; pg.34

- 2.1.2. (2) Judgment not only on **nations** but on **individuals**...covering "all" classes of people.
 - 2.1.2.1. **God only sees 2 classes of people:** And it's not rich & poor it's [1] **wicked/unsaved** [2] **Faithful/people of God.**
 - 2.1.2.2. **God only sees 2 races of people:** It isn't by color. It isn't black & white...it is **Jew & Gentile.**
 - 2.1.2.3. He will pay no attention to **economic** or **social status.**
- 2.1.3. (4) **See 2 Pet.3:10.**
- 2.1.4. (5) **Q: So why the punishment of the Tribulation?**
 - 2.1.4.1. [1] They **weren't good stewards** of earth.
 - 2.1.4.2. [2] They **twisted** the instructions of God.
 - 2.1.4.3. [3] They violated his **laws.**
 - 2.1.4.4. [4] They broke his **everlasting covenant.**
- 2.2. **ALL CREATION GROANS!** (7-13)
 - 2.2.1.
- 2.3. **A WORSHIPING REMNANT!** (14-16)
 - 2.3.1. **Wow! Worshiping & glorifying...in the midst of utter chaos.**
 - 2.3.1.1. **This is the godly remnant** that survives the tribulation.
 - 2.3.1.2. They will **praise the Lord** for His righteous judgments.
 - 2.3.2. He pronounced **Woe** on himself as he saw the sinfulness around him.
- 2.4. **WORLD WIDE WRECKAGE!** (17-20)
 - 2.4.1. It is very clear that this **cosmic judgment** is **world wide!**
 - 2.4.1.1. (i.e. not local) Note: **Earth** 6 x's in these 4 verses. [15 in ch]
 - 2.4.1.2. **See also Rev.3:10**
 - 2.4.2. I think this is the best argument against the **Preterist view** of Eschatology.
 - 2.4.2.1. **Preterism** is the teaching that places much New Testament prophetic fulfillment in and around 70 AD and in particular the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - 2.4.2.2. I read a good cartoon: **Frantic man on the phone:** "My wife just left me, I lost my job, I need surgery, and my spirits have hit bottom! Pastor, you've gotta help me. What's the difference between pre-, post-, and amillennialism?"
 - 2.4.3. **No escape!** – If you escape 1 terror, another will get you.
- 2.5. **How foolish then to live as if this world were everything!**

- 2.6. **Our contemporary problem?** – We live in a world that believes that “we can fix ourselves”!
- 2.6.1. **If we change our environment!** (what changes do mom & dad see when they move their gang kid to a more rural environment? Nothing!)
- 2.6.2. **If we change our political structure!** (Communism to capitalism; dictatorship to democracy)
- 2.6.3. **If we change our economic status!** (kids in Beverly Hills aren't doing better than kids in downtown LA)
- 2.6.4. We are not fatalists, but we know that this world cannot save itself!
- These things **will** happen!
- 2.6.4.1. We don't have a **Nineveh** situation(i.e. God going to relent)...we have a **Sodom & Gomorrah** situation!
- 2.7. **But the end is not with hell but with the glory of heaven!** (Keep reading!)
- 2.8. **THE RETURN & REIGN!** (21-23)
- 2.8.1. (22) Interesting, put in **prison**(Hell) & then **punished** after many days(Gehenna).
- 2.8.2. Isaiah ends on a note of triumph. *The Lord will reign gloriously!*
- 2.8.3. The last word is with God!
- 2.8.4. **Read** Luke 21:25-28
- 2.8.4.1. **Q: What do we do with this info on end times? Ask!** (*Inform, Warn, Live Holy, Look up, Watch, & Pray*)
- 2.8.5. *Alexander Maclaren* said, The primitive church thought more about the **Second Coming** of Jesus Christ than about **death** or about **heaven**. The early Christians were looking not for a **cleft in the ground** called a **grave** but for a **cleavage in the sky** called **Glory**. They were watching not for the **undertaker** but for the **uppertaker**.

3. **THE GREAT LIBERATION! (25)**

- 3.1. **Eastern Mindset...not Western!** (re: Victory!)
- 3.1.1. **Victory** is often seen as the end of all that spoils on earth.
- 3.1.1.1. Then comes the final celebration!
- 3.1.2. Part of **the biblical picture of triumph** involves the downfall of all God's enemies.
- 3.2. Ch.25 & most 26 are a **song** that the godly remnant sings who made it through the Tribulation & inherit the kingdom.
- 3.2.1. **So Isaiah** shifts from addressing the people to addressing God.
- 3.2.1.1. **Who He is & what He's done!**

- 3.3. **TRIUMPH OVER THE TERRIBLE!** (1-5)
- 3.3.1. (1) We ought to have a response of **worship** when we think on God's greatness & faithfulness also!
- 3.3.2. Note: "terrible" 3 x's(or, "ruthless")
- 3.3.2.1. This sums up the world's **oppression** in every age.
- 3.3.3. (2) One day the **ruthless** enemy will fall.
- 3.3.3.1. This "city" is Babylon, or any stronghold in opposition to God.
- 3.3.4. (4) This is not a promise of **immunity from trouble**, but of **ultimate safety**, & this is promised for all.
- 3.3.4.1. Tribulation is like a **storm**, but He is the **Refuge!**
- 3.3.4.2. Tribulation is like a **desert heat**, but He is the **cloud** that blocks hot rays!(shade)
- 3.3.5. (4b) **A strength to the needy in distress** - In their efforts to suppress circulation of **Tyndale's** first edition of an English New Testament, the English Catholic authorities wasted the equivalent of several thousand dollars trying to buy up and burn all the copies he had printed. They did this twice. The waste to them was that their funds, funneled secretly back to Tyndale, made it possible for him to print up even more copies of subsequent editions.²
- 3.3.6. (5) The enemy's taunts will be silenced by God.
- 3.4. **THE DANCE OVER DEATH!** (6-8)
- 3.4.1. Feasting together in peace & prosperity.
- 3.4.1.1. Rev.19:9 "Blessed are those who are called to the **marriage supper** of the Lamb!"
- 3.4.2. The Jews pictured the future kingdom as a great feast w/God the Most High.
- 3.4.2.1. "I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will **take their places at the feast** with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Mt.8:11 NIV
- 3.4.2.2. Ps.23:5 "You prepare **a table** before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; **My cup** runs over."
- 3.4.3. (7,8) Note the "all's"!
- 3.4.3.1. Reminds us of Rev.7:9 "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of **all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb,"

² William Tyndale; Christian History, Issue 16.

- 3.4.4. (8a) The final victory of death itself is prefigured.
- 3.4.4.1. 1 Cor.15:26 "The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."
- 3.4.4.2. 1 Cor.15:54,55 "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "**Death is swallowed up in victory.**"(Is.25:8) "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"(Hos.13:14)
- 3.4.4.3. Death which swallowed up, will now be swallowed up!
- 3.4.5. (8b) "the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces"
- 3.4.5.1. Rev.7:17; 21:4
- 3.4.5.1.1.No more Death but Life forevermore!
- 3.4.5.1.2.No more Sorrow but Joy!
- 3.4.5.1.3.No more Crying but Laughter!
- 3.4.5.1.4.No more Pain but Pleasure!
- 3.4.5.2. John Venn, a British social reformer, once lamented that a **drawback** of entering heaven might be the **lost opportunities to do good**: "There will be no sick to visit, no naked to clothe, no afflicted to relieve, no weak to succor, no faint to encourage, nor corrupt to rebuke or *reckless* to reclaim."³
- 3.4.5.2.1.Q: What do you think about that statement?
Q: How does it make you want to respond?
- 3.4.5.3. "The tragedy of life is not that it **ends so soon**, but that we **wait so long to begin it.**"
- 3.4.5.4. Never forget that **the gospel** is about one's **eternal destiny**.
- 3.4.5.4.1.**Temporal concerns** make fine bridges for conversations, but they are not the **end-all**.
- 3.4.5.4.2.(i.e.) God's got a wonderful plan for your life; Your life will be better w/Jesus; You'll be free from the weight of your sins; etc.
- 3.5. **POUNCING PRIDE!** (9-12)
- 3.5.1. (9) This song anticipates the final victory of those who wait in positive expectation.
- 3.5.1.1. It is song of hope, but in context of vs.10-12.
- 3.5.2. Q: Can you join the Praise expressed here?

³ William Wilberforce, Christian History, no. 53.

- 3.5.3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (*writing from prison to his fiancée Maria von Wedemeyer*) wrote: "A **prison cell**, in which one waits, hopes, does various unessential things, and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened "**from the outside**," is not a bad picture of Advent(2nd coming)."
- 3.5.4. (10) **Moab** – represents all who oppose God.
- 3.5.5. (12) All the fortifications of the rebellious word will prove powerless against God.⁴
- 3.6. **End:** During his 1960 presidential campaign, **John F. Kennedy** often closed his speeches with the story of **Colonel Davenport**, *the Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives*.
One day in 1789, the sky of Hartford darkened ominously, and some of the representatives, glancing out the windows, feared the end was at hand. Quelling a clamor for immediate adjournment, Davenport rose and said, "The Day of Judgement is either **approaching or it is not**. If it is **not**, there is no cause for adjournment. If it **is**, I choose to be found doing my duty. Therefore, I wish that candles be brought."⁵
- 3.6.1. Rather than **fearing** what is to come, we are to be **faithful doing our duty** till Christ returns.
- 3.6.2. Instead of **fearing the dark**, we're to be **lights** as we watch and wait.
- 3.7. **Prayer:** How will the things of earth will grow strangely dim?
A: In the light of **His Glory** and **Grace**.
- 3.7.1. [**Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face**]
- 3.7.2. Lord, we seek your return because of **our love** not **our escape!**

⁴ Wycliffe Bible Commentary; pg.627

⁵ Henry Heintz, Troy, New York. Leadership, Vol. 5, no. 2.