

# THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

## PROPHECIES AGAINST THE EARTH: ISAIAH 24



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*A Scriptorium Study*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

Prophecies against the Earth: Isaiah 24  
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## Introduction to *Isaiah 24*

We slow our pace a bit now to consider the message of Isaiah 24. Here the prophet expands the vision of God's judgment from Israel to the whole earth, and extends the time of judgment from his day to "that day" and unto the end of the world.

God is faithful to His Word and covenant. He must judge His rebellious people, having warned them that disobedience would lead to discipline and expulsion from the land. But because He is faithful to His covenant, a day of restoration is coming. When the full judgment of God is finally satisfied, then God will come to reign gloriously from in the midst of His people.

We are living "in that day" when the glory of God is spreading out over the world and the powers of darkness have been taken prisoner, awaiting their final judgment.

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## 1 A Great Leveling

*Pray Psalm 79.5, 8, 9.*

How long, LORD?

Will You be angry forever?

Will Your jealousy burn like fire?

Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us!

Let Your tender mercies come speedily to meet us,

For we have been brought very low.

Help us, O God of our salvation,

For the glory of Your name;

And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins,

For Your name's sake!

*Read Isaiah 24.*

*Reflect.*

1. This chapter is like a hand-held telescope: The more you pull it out, the further you can see. Meditate on verses 1-3. Notice the two verbs that have God as subject in verses 1 and 3. How do they go together?

2. What are the effects of God's judgment against the people and land of Israel?

*Meditate.*

We have raced through Isaiah 1-23, gulping, like marathoners, at every intermittent cup of refreshment the prophet holds as we press on through the pain of God's judgment. It's time to slow down and catch our breath, which we will do by taking this whole week to consider the teaching of Isaiah 24.

The judgment of God, which is coming on Judah and Jerusalem, has a powerful leveling effect. All the distinctions that separated the people into various groups and classes – religious, economic, social status – will be wiped away, and every citizen of the nation will be reduced to one class: captive.

In a real sense, this reminds us what we all have in common as human beings. We are all sinners, rebels against God, and deserving of His wrath and judgment. It is only because of His patience and grace that we are not marched off into the eternal captivity of the grave and hell.

All the destruction that is coming upon Judah and Jerusalem is from one source: the Word of the Lord. We should pay more attention to this living and powerful Word, lest what happened to Judah and Jerusalem happen to us as well (Heb. 4.12; 2.1-3).

The judgment on the land of Israel is severe, and it serves as a judgment on the whole earth, which is yet to come.

*Prepare.*

1. Imagine yourself among the people of these verses, as you are being marched away to Babylon. What would you feel? What would you be thinking? Do you ever experience such thoughts and feelings? Are they related to sin in your life?

2. The Hebrew verb here translated *plundered* (v. 3, רָבַח) means *despised*. The particular construction in which it appears strengthens the sense so that something like *utterly and completely despised* is closer to the meaning. How

did the people come to such a dreadful state? Many of our contemporaries regard Christians this way today. Does this suggest anything to you?

3. Two ideas bookend this passage: “the LORD *makes*” and “the LORD has spoken.” What does this suggest about the relationship between the Scriptures and the events they describe? The writer of the *Didache*, a first-century Christian discipleship manual, instructed his readers, “Thy speech shall not be false or vain, but completed in action.” How do God’s words and deeds serve as a guideline for our own discipleship?

*We ought therefore not only to acknowledge the dreadful vengeance of God, but also to lay it to the blame of our own sins, whenever he breaks down order and takes away instruction and courts of law; for when these fall, civilisation itself falls along with them. It ought also to be considered that, when the Lord executes his judgments, he spares no rank, not even the most sacred.*  
John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*Lord, let me never forget that a day of wrath is coming, and so I need to...*

*Pray Psalm 79.*

In Asaph’s day, when this psalm was written, things in Jerusalem looked outwardly strong and happy. But Asaph saw into the souls of God’s people, that they had compromised with the world, left off full obedience to His Word, and were on their way to destruction. Pray this psalm for the Church today, when persecution is on the rise, the nations of the world mock our faith and deny our God, and we have not been faithful. Cry out to the Lord for revival!

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 79** (*Passion Chorale: O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*)

O God the nations all Your inheritance have spoiled!  
Your City have they ruined, Your temple they have soiled!  
Your servants’ bodies all to the birds of heav’n are thrown;  
The flesh of all Your faithful the jaws of beasts now own.

The blood of faithful servants like water flows around;  
And none are there Your saints to commit into the ground.  
Our neighbors mock and scorn us: How long, O Lord, how long?  
How long will You be angry and scorn our mournful song?

Pour out, O Lord, Your wrath on all who deny Your Name;  
Who trust You not nor seek You, bring down to deepest shame!  
For they have with great rancor Your precious saints devoured;  
Lay waste their habitation at this late dreadful hour.

Why should the nations mock and say, “Where now is their God?”  
Let there be known among them harsh vengeance for our blood!  
Hear, Lord, our groans and sighing; preserve us by Your pow’r.  
For we are fairly dying each day and hour by hour.

Reproach those who reproach us with judgment sevenfold!  
Let thanks and praise to You by Your precious flock be told.  
We are Your sheep, O Savior, we thank You all our days.  
Look on us with Your favor as we declare Your praise.

## 2 A Failure of Stewardship

*Pray Psalm 8:1*

O LORD, our Lord,  
How excellent *is* Your name in all the earth,  
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!

*Read Isaiah 24:4-6.*

*Reflect.*

1. The earth is wasted. It mourns and languishes, and is defiled and cursed. What would that have looked like? How did it come about?

2. If we neglect God's Law or transgress His covenant, what suffers? How far-reaching are the ramifications of our sin?

*Meditate.*

The people of Judah and Jerusalem, like the people of Israel to the north, had broken God's covenant. They set aside His Law, compromised pure worship with all kinds of worldly accretions, and sought to rewrite their morality to fit the desires of their pagan neighbors.

God's judgment against them was obviously just. He promised that, if they denied and abandoned Him, they would suffer judgment and disappointment in every area of life, and ultimately would be "vomited out" of the land of promise (Lev. 18:24-30). They had become sick with sin; their sickness made the land itself sick, and it would only be healed once the sickness of Israel and Judah was cast out from it.

We tend to think that sin only hurts us, and since God will forgive us anyway, we don't think much about sin. That's right where Israel and Judah were. Like them, we fail to see that our turning away from God, His Law, and His covenant has far-reaching and tragic consequences, even for the very earth we inhabit.

Governments are spending billions today trying to rescue the earth from the consequences of our sin. They can't buy off God, however, Who is allowing the earth to fall into ruin because of our sinful self-indulgence. Unless we repent of sin and come back to the Lord and His Word, we will have neither the power nor the will to cease taking advantage of and corrupting everything we touch in order to spend everything on our selfish desires.

Israel and Judah learned this the hard way. We may have to as well.

*Prepare.*

1. Should Christians participate in conservation efforts? Explain.

2. How do God's Law and His covenant guide you in caring for that portion of the earth which is under your control?

3. Disobedience to God has spiritual and cosmic consequences. Explain.

*There is a kind of mutual bargain between the land and the husbandmen, that it gives back with usury what it has received: if it does not, it deceives those who cultivate it. But he assigns a reason, imputing blame to them, that they render it barren by their wickedness. It is owing to our fault that it does not nourish us or bring forth fruit, as God appointed to be done by the regular order of nature; for he wished that it should hold the place of a mother to us, to supply us with food; and if it change its nature*

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*and order, or lose its fertility, we ought to attribute it to our sins, since we ourselves have reversed the order which God had appointed; otherwise the earth would never deceive us, but would perform her duty.* John Calvin (1509-1564 AD), *Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*Search me, O God, and bring to light any sins that are lingering in my soul, so that...*

*Pray Psalm 8.*

We are called to the Kingdom and glory of God (1 Thess. 2.12), to rule over everything in our world so that it can fulfill God's good purpose and glorify Him. Pray about the day ahead, and how the rule of God in heaven will come to earth through you today.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 8** (*Aurelia: The Church's One Foundation*)

O Savior, how majestic, Your Name in all the earth!  
The heav'ns display Your glory, and tell Your wondrous worth!  
From babes and nursing infants, Lord, let Your strength increase,  
Till all Your foes surrender, and all their boasting cease.

When I regard Your heavens, Your handiwork above,  
Ordained by Your good pleasure, according to Your love,  
Then what am I, O Savior, that You take thought of me?  
Or I should know Your favor and thus delivered be?

Yet we in Your own image with glory have been crowned,  
To worship and to serve You throughout creation 'round.  
These works that sing Your glory in our poor hands are placed,  
That we may rule before You to magnify Your grace.

Let every beast and creature, in sky or sea or field,  
In our hands bring You glory as we Your favor wield.  
Let all things sing Your praises, let all declare Your worth!  
O Savior, how majestic, Your Name in all the earth!

### 3 It's All Fun and Games Until...

*Pray Psalm 73.25-28.*

Whom have I in heaven *but You*?

And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.

My flesh and my heart fail;

*But God is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish;

You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

But *it is* good for me to draw near to God;

I have put my trust in the Lord God,

That I may declare all Your works.

*Read Isaiah 24.7-13.*

*Reflect.*

1. Fun can take various forms. What forms did it take in these verses?
2. Why did God consider it necessary to bring an end to His people's fun? What did He bring them instead?

*Meditate.*

Ours is not the first fun-seeking generation.

These days, even within the Christian community, we can hardly conceive of doing anything that isn't fun. Fun is the opposite of work – which we do throughout the week, and from which we retire as soon as possible, so that we can get on with more fun. Being a Christian must be fun. Worship that isn't fun doesn't draw "worshippers". Church activities that aren't fun don't succeed. Everything has to be fun – Bible study has to be fun, mission trips have to be fun, even the Lord's Day needs some fun activities for us to do together. If it ain't fun, it's work, and we are not a generation who wants to work any more than is necessary, and especially not where our faith is concerned.

We're right where the people of Judah and Jerusalem were in Isaiah's day. Our fun may not be as raucous, ribald, rank, and wretched as that of the merry-hearted, wine-guzzling, mirth-seeking people of ancient Israel, but we're on the same spectrum as they were.

And it's all fun and games until God decides He's had enough. Fun had become the god of the people of Judah and Jerusalem, just as it is rapidly becoming the god of putative Christians in our day. Take away the fun of going to church, and, frankly, we're just not going to go. If church involves work, or sacrifice, or sorrowing for sins, or devoting ourselves to seeking the Lord for revival, or risking mockery and scorn for our witness, or giving up anything of fun in our lives, then we'll find another church, or simply stop going.

God may shake down this fun-seeking generation of His people, but if He does, a gleanings will remain (v. 13), a remnant of the poor, the humble, the repentant, and of all those who cry out to God for mercy (vv. 14-16).

*Prepare.*

1. God is not opposed to our having fun. He's opposed to making everything *be* fun. Explain.
2. God turned Jerusalem's fun into bitterness (v. 9), yet the people sought it still (v. 11). If having fun is not the goal of our Christian faith, what is? What do we have to go through to achieve that goal?

3. God likened His judgment on Jerusalem to a violent “shaking of an olive tree” (v. 13). If God were to shake His Church violently in our day, what would that look like? Who would be among the remnant that survive such a shaking?

*...the Prophet does not censure joy simply considered, but excessive and immoderate mirth. When men are merry, they lay no restraint on themselves on account of that dissoluteness or love of disorder (ἀταξία) which is natural to them. The Jews, having behaved insolently and lived luxuriously, are deservedly threatened with the vengeance of God, because most justly is joy taken from us when we know not how to make a right use of the Lord's benefits, or to rejoice in him. It thus becomes necessary that he should take away our pleasures and delights, and compel us to sigh and groan. John Calvin (1509-1564 AD), Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*Help me to delight in You, Lord, to rejoice in Your mercy, grace, and goodness, and in my daily life to...*

*Pray Psalm 73.*

The psalmist shows us various ways of escape (1 Cor. 10.13) through temptation. Pray that God will help you recognize and resist temptation in all its forms today.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 73** (*Ellacombe: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna*)

To us our God is only good, to all the pure in heart!  
But as for me, I nearly stood in sin from Him apart.  
I nearly stumbled, nearly slipped as I the proud observed,  
How they with ease and riches dripped while I, impoverished, served.

The wicked know in death no pain; with fat their bodies surge.  
The plagues and trials of other men their ease do not disturb.  
In fury, wrath, and pride they dwell; their minds run where they will.  
Their tongues of sin and mocking tell; with earth their mouths they fill.

They never change but fill their soul with earth's abundant charms,  
And laugh to think that God might know or do them any harm.  
For thus do they themselves appease with riches and good health;  
The wicked ever dwell in ease, in pleasure and in wealth.

“Surely in vain have I kept pure my heart, or cleansed my hands!  
What troubles daily I endure while thus with God I stand!”  
But had I spoken thus I would Your children have betrayed.  
When this at last I understood, my troubled soul obeyed.

Into Your presence, Lord, I come and see the sinner's end:  
In slippery places they must run; to judgment them You send.  
Destruction all at once must fall when You Your anger raise;  
And terror will beset them all both now and all their days.

When my poor sad, embittered heart was pierced within by grace,  
I saw how beastly was the part I chose before Your face.  
But I am ever with You, Lord, You hold me by the hand,  
And guide me daily by Your Word; in glory I e'er shall stand.

Then what have I in heav'n above but You, my God and Lord?  
And on this earth what shall I love besides You and Your Word?  
My flesh and heart shall surely fail, and death my soul release;

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Your strength for me will e'er avail and grant eternal peace.

Then let them perish who depart from You and from Your Word.

All those unfaithful in their heart You shall destroy, O Lord!

But as for me, Your presence, Lord, is where I e'er will dwell!

I hide myself within Your Word, Your wondrous works to tell.

## 4 What the Righteous Seek

*Pray Psalm 75.1.*

We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks!  
For Your wondrous works declare *that* Your name is near.

*Read Isaiah 24.14-16.*

*Reflect.*

1. To whom does “they” refer in verse 14? What are they doing in these verses?
2. According to verse 16, what is the condition of these people? When God judges His people, are all judged?

*Meditate.*

The “they” of verse 14 points back to verse 13 and the promise of a remnant. God judges the wickedness of His people, but that does not mean that all the people are equally wicked, or that none of them have been faithful. Nevertheless, when judgment falls, even those who long for His majesty and glory are subjected to leanness (v. 16, “I am ruined, ruined!” or, literally, “Leanness to me!”).

The suffering of Jerusalem is thus a type of the suffering of Christ. Wickedness brings judgment, but those who look to the Lord are kept through wrath for a new beginning. Jesus bore the judgment of God against our wickedness, but He kept looking to the joy that was set before Him, trusting Himself to the Lord (Heb. 12.1-3). He is both the judged people of the Lord and the faithful remnant, and as we have seen, the Branch from which grows a new people unto the Lord.

The “sea” of verse 14 symbolizes God’s judgment, sweeping over His people. In the midst of this sea of wrath, the faithful remnant continues seeking the “majesty of the LORD.” Their desire is to “glorify the LORD” as day dawns after the night of judgment, and to proclaim His Name to the world (vv. 14, 15). Already, “from the ends of the earth” – that is, in their captivity in Babylon – the righteous are claiming the promise of “Glory (literally, “beauty” or “dignity”) to the righteous!” and looking forward to the return of God’s blessings, even though, for the time, they must endure the judgment of God (v. 16).

God may judge His Church in our day, but His faithful people will always seek His glory, worship His majesty, and live toward the day of His promises. Even though they may experience His judgment against His people, they will never relinquish their commitment to seeking His glory.

*Prepare.*

1. The faithful remnant continue to honor and worship God in the midst of the “sea” of His judgment. What does it mean to seek the glory and majesty of God?
2. The faithful remnant looks forward to the day of God bringing them into His beauty and dignity. Is this what you look forward to in your daily walk with the Lord? How do you envision the beauty and dignity of the Lord increasing to and through you?
3. It is possible, in the midst of leanness and woe, to worship God and cling to His promises. What should we be doing daily to make sure that we can do this, should judgment come to the Church of our Lord?

*He follows out and increases the consolations which he had briefly sketched; for, having formerly (Isaiah 10:19-22) said that, out of that vast multitude, a few drops would be left, which would nevertheless overflow the whole world, in like manner he now says,*

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*that the small number of the godly, which shall be left out of an abundant vintage, will nevertheless rejoice and utter a voice so loud that it will be heard in the most distant countries.* John Calvin (1509-1564 AD), *Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*Today, Lord, keep me alert to opportunities to proclaim Your Name in my Personal Mission Field, and help me to...*

*Pray Psalm 75.*

Give thanks for the nearness of the Lord, and call on Him to give you strength to praise Him, even in the midst of difficult times.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 75** (*Galilee: Jesus Calls Us*)

We give thanks, Lord, we give thanks for Your all-glorious Name is near!  
Men Your wondrous works declare, Lord; let all living creatures hear!

When you choose the time of judgment, You will judge with equity.  
Then the earth and all within it by Your hand no more shall be.

Warn the boastful, warn the wicked: "Do not boast or raise your horn!  
Do not raise your boastful voices; do not speak with pride and scorn!"

Neither east nor west nor desert shall exalting bring to man.  
God is Judge, He puts one down and makes another one to stand.

For the cup of judgment foams in Jesus' sovereign, holy hand.  
He has mixed it and will pour it out on every wicked man.

As for me, I will declare it: Evermore to God be praise!  
He abases all the wicked, but His righteous ones He saves!

## 5 The Earth Shaken

*Pray Psalm 46.1-3.*

God is our refuge and strength,  
A very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear,  
Even though the earth be removed,  
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;  
*Though* its waters roar and be troubled,  
*Though* the mountains shake with its swelling.

*Read Isaiah 24.17-20.*

*Reflect.*

1. The scene seems to have become enlarged here. How can you see that?
2. There is also a kind of finality to the situation described in these verses. How does that show up?

*Meditate.*

Whereas at the beginning of the chapter Isaiah was using “the land” (Hebrew: אֶרֶץ, *land*) in a local sense – Judah and Jerusalem – as the chapter has unfolded, a kind of expanding outward is suggested. We see this, for example, in verse 4, where “the land” is coupled with “the inhabited world” (Hebrew: תִּבְּלָה), and in the mention of the “ends of the earth” in verse 16. Isaiah is expanding the scope of his prophecy, but he is also stretching it out over a longer period of history (note the mention of “in that day” in v. 21).

The judgment of God in these verses seems total and final. No one can escape (vv. 17, 18), and the earth – אֶרֶץ, *earth*, in a now more universal sense – is collapsing under the weight of sin and wrath. The mention of “the windows from on high” being open and “the fountains of the earth” being shaken reminds us of the story of the flood, a universal disaster of judgment, and suggests the cosmic scope of the judgment which is in focus here. When God thus judges the earth, “it will fail, and not rise again” (v. 20). As we shall learn later, the collapse of the earth is simply to make way for a new one, which God will create once His wrath has been satisfied.

The judgment of God against Israel and Judah thus serves as a warning to all the nations and peoples of the world, from all times. God Who brought such wrath against His own people will do so again, and when He does, none shall escape His judgment.

The Good News of Jesus Christ is that there is therefore now no condemnation – no wrath or judgment – for those who are in Jesus (Rom. 8.1). This Good News only makes sense against the backdrop of the bad news of our sin, the weight of which will destroy us unless we repent and look to the Lord. We should not offer the Good News of Christ without also explaining that a day of judgment is coming, and Jesus is the only way to survive it (cf. Acts 17.30, 31).

*Prepare.*

1. The world under sin “groans” in our day (Rom. 19-21), and this itself a kind of judgment from God. Explain.
2. When Paul mentioned the coming judgment of God in Acts 17.30, 31, he received three kinds of responses (vv. 32-34). Describe each. Should we expect anything other than this when we explain the coming judgment of God? Are you prepared to deal with each of these responses?

3. Both sin and the glory of God are described as crushing weights (Is. 24.20, and cf. 2 Cor. 4.17). What's the difference?

*When he says that "the earth is laden with its iniquity," he has very appropriately assigned this reason, that we may understand that God is never angry with men without a cause; for we ourselves are the authors of all the evils which we suffer. God is by nature disposed to kindness, and regards us with a father's love; and therefore it is our own fault that we are treated with sharpness and severity, and we have no reason to blame him.* John Calvin (1509-1564 AD), *Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*Lord, shake me free of the snares of sin, that I may live for Your glory by...*

*Pray Psalm 46.*

This psalm envisions world cataclysms – the shaking of the earth under God's wrath. But in the midst, God's people know peace and gladness as they take refuge in Him. Seek the Lord for each activity of the day ahead, that you might know His presence and rest in His peace.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 46** (*St. Chrysostom: We Have Not Known Thee As We Ought*)

God is our refuge and our strength; He is our help in times of need.

Thus though the earth beneath us should change, the sea consume the mountain range;  
waters may roar with raging speed; yet God will rescue us at length.

God's everlasting, joyous grace gladdens the city where He dwells.

Safely in Him, we will not be moved; when morning dawns, His love will be proved.

Fears and distresses Jesus dispels for His beloved, chosen race.

Kingdoms arise and rage and roar, threat'ning the earth with sore distress;

nations may fall, earth melt away, His Word is yet our hope and stay.

God is among us, ever to bless; He is our stronghold evermore.

Come see the works of God's Right Hand! He breaks the nations of the earth,

Shatters their foolish weapons and pride, sets all their sinful strength aside;

Them He will show His infinite worth as they before His judgment stand.

Rest in the Lord and be at peace, all who are mired in sore travail:

Lift up our God, praise Jesus our Lord; proclaim to all the earth His Word!

God is our stronghold, never to fail; thus may our hope and joy increase!

## 6 Judgment and Rule

*Pray Psalm 146.1, 2.*

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

While I live I will praise the LORD;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

*Read Isaiah 24.21-23.*

*Reflect.*

1. To what does the phrase “in that day” refer (cf. Is. 2.1-4)?

2. Judgment and rule come “in that day,” and Jesus is at the center of both. Explain.

*Meditate.*

Now Isaiah’s prophecy against the earth addresses events that will occur “in that day.” This is a reference, as we have seen, to the coming day of the Lord’s redemption. Here it is described as a day of judgment against the high and haughty, of glory outshining the moon and sun, and of God’s beginning to reign in Mt. Zion and Jerusalem.

This promise of the rule of God comes after His judgment is exercised against the earth. (The reference to “the host of the exalted ones” could refer to the rebellious angels whom Lucifer commands.) When God comes to reign, it will be from among His people, Mt. Zion and Jerusalem; and the beauty, brilliance, and power of His reign will put the sun and moon to shame.

The judgment of God against the world came on the cross of Calvary, where all the wickedness of the world was exposed, condemned, and finished in our Lord Jesus’ suffering, and where Satan and his minions were put to shame and routed (Col. 2.13-15). Fifty days later, the Lord established His Kingdom on earth, in the midst of His people, who began to radiate His rule and glory throughout the Roman world.

The wrath of God continues to be revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, who suppress the truth in their unrighteous ways (Rom. 1.18ff). And the rule of God continues from within His people, although its brilliance and power are not what they have been in the past, for most of those who profess to believe in the Lord have not truly made the Kingdom turn into a life of seeking and advancing the rule of King Jesus. This sad situation is why proclaiming the Kingdom and calling people to recover their Kingdom-and-glory calling from the Lord is so important today.

We are the “in that day” people within and among whom Christ is advancing His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. We are called to His Kingdom and glory (1 Thess. 2.12), and that calling entails seeking the Kingdom in every facet and aspect of our lives (Matt. 6.33). As we do, the glory of God is made known and shines more significantly than the sun, moon, and stars.

*Prepare.*

1. What does it mean for you to seek the Kingdom of God as the defining priority of your life?

2. The “elders” mentioned in verse 23 are the representatives of the people of God, and thus stand for all those who truly believe (cf. Rev. 4, 5). In what sense or ways do the elders of a church represent the people of the congregation? What does this suggest about how we select people to be elders?

3. Isaiah compares the glory of God with the light of the sun and the moon. In what ways is glory like this? What does this suggest about what Paul means in 1 Corinthians 10.31?

*I have no doubt that he continues to give the consolation which he had glanced at in the former verse; "When the Lord shall visit his people, and cleanse the Church from its defilement, he will establish a kingdom so illustrious that it will darken the sun and stars by its brightness." John Calvin (1509-1564 AD), Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*You have called me to Your Kingdom and glory, Lord. Help me today to...*

*Pray Psalm 146.*

Let this psalm lead you to focus on the works of the Lord. Call upon Him to lead you more completely into the life of faith, and commit your day to seeking His Kingdom.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 146** (*Hallelujah! What a Savior: Man of Sorrows*)

Praise the Lord, my soul, give praise! While I live, His Name I'll raise,  
and exalt Him all my days – God forever reigns in Zion!

Trust we not in prince or man – no salvation's in their hand.  
Death shall take them, breath and plans – God forever reigns in Zion!

Blessed are they whose hope resides in the Lord, Christ at His side.  
By Him heav'n and earth abide – God forever reigns in Zion!

He is faithful evermore; He gives justice to the poor,  
Feeds the hungry from His store – God forever reigns in Zion!

Jesus sets the pris'ner free, heals blind eyes that they may see,  
lifts those burdened painfully – God forever reigns in Zion!

He the righteous loves the best; wand'ers in His grace are blessed;  
Needy ones in Him find rest – God forever reigns in Zion!

But the wicked who defame His eternal blessed Name,  
Them He brings to ruin and shame – God forever reigns in Zion!

## 7 The Lord of Hosts Will Reign

*Pray Psalm 81.1, 2.*

Sing aloud to God our strength;  
Make a joyful shout to the God of Jacob.  
Raise a song and strike the timbrel,  
The pleasant harp with the lute.

*Review Isaiah chapter 24.*

*Reflect.*

1. As you review this chapter, what seems crystal clear to you? What remains a little murky?
2. Would you say the overall thrust of this chapter is negative or positive? Why?

*Meditate.*

The judgment which came upon Judah and Jerusalem demonstrates the sovereignty of God over the nations, and His faithfulness to His Word of promise.

In Deuteronomy 14, God promised His people blessings for obedience, but troubles and discipline if they transgressed against His covenant and Law. They had fair warning, but they chose the route of rebellion nonetheless.

Now God had no choice but to keep His Word and remove His people from the land of promise. In the process, He would judge all the nations that had troubled His people and scorned His ways. When all this came to pass, the people would know that God ruled all the nations, and that His covenant remained intact.

Then chapter 24 begins to look down the corridors of history, all the way past the judgment of God “in that day” to the judgment of God at the end of time. The message is clear for the generations that read this book: God is unchanging. What He has promised in the past, He will fulfill. What He has done in the past, He will do again.

The chapter ends on a note of hope, with God reigning in the midst of His people in glory. Faithful believers cling to that hope, and live faithfully within the guidelines of God’s covenant and Law, trusting Him to be faithful and to bring them through all their trials to a place of rest with Him.

The followers of Christ today continue to cling to that hope, and to walk the path of obedience God has marked out for His in His Law and all His Word.

*Prepare.*

1. What is the “everyday” lesson of Isaiah 24 for you?
2. How do you expect to see God’s reign (v. 23) advancing through you today?
3. The message of the Gospel is one of judgment and hope. Explain.

*He shews how great will be the splendor and glory of God, when the kingdom of Christ shall be established, because all that is brilliant must be obscured, and the glory of Christ alone must hold a high and prominent place. Hence it follows, that then only*

*Prophecies against the Earth: Isaiah 24*

*does God receive his just rights, and the honor due to him, when all creatures are placed in subjection, and he alone shines before our eyes. John Calvin (1509-1564 AD), Commentary on Isaiah 24*

*Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You have borne God's wrath against me, and fulfilled all righteousness for me, so that now I...*

*Pray Psalm 81.*

God calls us to hear and heed His Word. Claim the promises He holds out in this psalm for those who are willing and obedient, then commit the day ahead to realizing those promises as fully as possible.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 81** (*St. Petersburg: My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*)

O sing for joy to Jesus our strength; to Jacob's great God shout joyfully at length!

And strike the drum, and offer a song; all instruments, your glad music prolong.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

Let every kind of instrument play to celebrate God's deliverance today.

It is His statute and His command to worship and praise all over the land.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

Declare His mercy, tell of His grace; our enemies flee the look of His face.

In mighty deeds strong witness He gave, and powerfully did His chosen ones save.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

God set us free from bondage to sin and graciously brought us near Him again;

He rescued us whenever we cried and often our faltering confidence tried:

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

"Let no false gods among you be found; but scatter their altars over the ground.

Pursue not wealth, nor leisure nor fame, but worship the Savior's glorious Name:

O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

For You are God, Your Name is the Lord, who faithfully keeps His covenant Word,

Who rescued us from bondage and pride; our mouths He would fill, we open them wide.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

"My people would not listen to Me, but hardened their hearts most hideously;

I cursed them for their hard-hearted ways to wander in darkness all of their days:

O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

Now let us all abandon our ways and listen to God, and offer Him praise!

Our foes He will so quickly subdue, extending His hand to save and renew.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

Then even those despising the Lord would falsely obey and follow His Word;

In vain they seem to follow His way, yet judgment awaits on God's chosen day.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

The finest foods for us He will buy, and furnish us an abundant supply;

How sweet our lives can be in the Lord, when only we heed His glorious Word.

"O Israel, hear, admonished now be; My people, repent, return to Me!"

*Prophecies against the Earth: Isaiah 24*

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. Why does the Good News of Jesus necessarily involve both a word of judgment and a word of hope?
2. What are we supposed to learn about ourselves from Israel's disobedience and rebellion?
3. What are we supposed to learn about God?
4. What is the glory of God, and what does it mean for us to be called to His glory?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Isaiah 24? How are you putting that lesson to work in your life?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

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Thank you.