

Isaiah 27-28

- We stopped in the middle of the Isaiah's Little Apocalypse
- Now in Chapter 27, the song moves to talking to another event associated with the end of Tribulation
 - The binding of Satan for 1,000 years

[Is. 27:1](#) ¶ In that day the LORD 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.

- The Lord punishes Leviathan
 - The word Leviathan is the same word in Hebrew
 - It is a name for a serpent or sea dragon
 - This is the serpent of old
 - Leviathan is also mention in Job, always as a reference to Satan (3:8, 41:1-34)
 - Satan is connected to the sea and to dragons because Satan took the form of a serpent in the garden
 - And the sea is used throughout Scripture as a picture of the deep, black depths of eternal death in hell
 - Sometimes called the abyss or in Hebrew tehalm
 - It means the deep or the sea
 - But it's also a picture for death and Hell

[Psa. 86:13](#) For Your lovingkindness toward me is great,
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

- Speaking of Tyre, Ezekiel says...

[Ezek. 26:19](#) For thus says the Lord GOD, "When I make you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters cover you,

[Ezek. 26:20](#) then I will bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set glory in the land of the living.

- So a sea dragon is a melding of those two pictures
- In keeping with the order of events in Revelation, Isaiah continues with Satan out of the way
 - The Lord can now plant a fruitful vineyard
 - Do you remember in chapter 5 we saw that description of Israel as a vineyard that produced no fruit, so God judged the vineyard?
 - He broke down the walls and caused briars and thorn to grow in place of grapes
 - He stopped watering it so that it dried up
 - Now in the Kingdom, with Satan gone, here's what happens:

[Is. 27:2](#) ¶ In that day,
"A vineyard of wine, sing of it!

[Is. 27:3](#) "I, the LORD, am its keeper;
I water it every moment.
So that no one will damage it,
I guard it night and day.

[Is. 27:4](#) "I have no wrath.
Should someone give Me briars and thorns in battle,
Then I would step on them, I would burn them completely.

[Is. 27:5](#) "Or let him rely on My protection,
Let him make peace with Me,
Let him make peace with Me."

[Is. 27:6](#) In the days to come Jacob will take root,
Israel will blossom and sprout,
And they will fill the whole world with fruit.

- You can see the opposites throughout this passages, as Israel returns to being fruitful
 - It is now a kingdom of believers following their Messiah
 - And He protects and nurtures them as a nation
- And now the song of the Little Apocalypse ends with Isaiah summarizing the Lord's plan regarding Israel

- And in this summary, Isaiah returns to his own day to speak of things to come for Israel

[Is. 27:7](#) ¶ Like the striking of Him who has struck them, has He struck them?
Or like the slaughter of His slain, have they been slain?

[Is. 27:8](#) You contended with them by banishing them, by driving them away.
With His fierce wind He has expelled them on the day of the east wind.

[Is. 27:9](#) Therefore through this Jacob's iniquity will be forgiven;
And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin:
When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones;
When Asherim and incense altars will not stand.

[Is. 27:10](#) For the fortified city is isolated,
A homestead forlorn and forsaken like the desert;
There the calf will graze,
And there it will lie down and feed on its branches.

[Is. 27:11](#) When its limbs are dry, they are broken off;
Women come and make 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.

[Is. 27:12](#) ¶ In that day the LORD will start His threshing from the flowing stream of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered up one by one, O sons of Israel.

[Is. 27:13](#) It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

- Isaiah asks when God struck Israel in judgment, did He strike them so as to destroy them?
 - Has God dealt with Israel as He dealt with His true enemies over time?
 - No, God has taken a different approach, a measured approach
 - He banished them and drove them away (the exiles)
 - He expelled them from their land for a time
 - Then in verse 9, Isaiah explains the plan to pardon Jacob's sin and bring them back into this Kingdom
 - Only after God has destroyed all the idols and the nation's affections for such things
 - He will isolate Jerusalem and destroy it, speaking of the coming destruction at the hands of the Babylonians and later the Romans

- It will become desolate for a time
- And the reason for the judgment to come was a lack of discernment in the people of Israel
 - The word discernment simply means understanding, in the sense of knowing the Lord and knowing the way of righteousness
 - Because they were blind and dead in the sin, they were under judgment
 - Notice, Isaiah says “in that day” the Lord is not kind or gracious
 - Meaning His wrath is temporary and in that day only
 - In a future day, the Lord returns to His people
- In verse 12 Isaiah shows that turn, as the Lord begins a threshing process, that starts at the waters of the Euphrates and extends to the brook of Egypt
 - Remember, those references define the borders of the Land of Israel in fullness
 - So here it’s a way of describing all Israel, the people
 - Isaiah is stressing that in a certain day of judgment, all Israel will be caught up in a period of judgment
 - And the beginning of that threshing process (the judgment process) will be a regathering
 - In v.13 he says that all the Jews perishing outside the land will return and ultimately worship the Lord there
 - This is the picture of Israel regathering in the years leading up to Tribulation (today)
 - And the subsequent transition into the 1,000 Kingdom
- So the Little Apocalypse of Isaiah showed snapshots of Tribulation, of the 144,000 evangelists, the return of Christ, the setting up of His kingdom, the binding of Satan and the Jews living in peace and stability in their land
- Now Chapter 28 begins a new section of the book...
 - It runs from Chapter 28-35, called the book of woes

- Explains the circumstances in Judah that led to the problems during Hezekiah's reign
 - In the Book of Immanuel, we studied about King Ahaz who didn't trust in God, but instead sought an alliance with Assyria
 - After destroying Syria and Israel, it turned on Judah and captured many cities and surrounded Jerusalem
 - The nation of Judah was subjected to Assyrian domination for the remainder of Ahaz's rule
 - And the first fourteen years of Hezekiah's reign following Ahaz, the Assyrians remained in the Land
 - After 14 years, the nation became focused on finding a way to expel the Assyrians from the land
 - One faction in the government of Hezekiah believed that the nation should seek an alliance with Egypt to repel Assyrian
 - Another faction, led by the prophet Isaiah, counseled that Assyrian shouldn't be resisted,
 - They taught that Assyria's domination of Judah was God's judgment against them because of Ahaz's faithlessness
 - Hezekiah sided with the Egyptian alliance, going against the prophet
 - This was an uncharacteristically poor judgment on Hezekiah's part
 - So under Hezekiah's leadership, the nation of Israel make a pact with the devil, so to speak
 - They enter into a covenant with Egypt for protection, getting into bed with one of their historic enemies
- So Isaiah speaks against this covenant and how it will lead to the downfall and destruction of Judah
 - And in typical fashion, Isaiah uses these contemporary events to draw a parallel to a future time
 - The parallel is between this covenant between Judah and Egypt

- And a future covenant between a regathered Israel and another powerful enemy who offers protection for the Jews
 - The future enemy is the Antichrist
 - And this future covenant is the covenant mentioned in Daniel 9 that begins Tribulation
- So the book of woes is a section of Isaiah describing the woes that befall Judah because they enter into these two ill-advised covenants
 - The beginning of chapter 28 is an indictment against the leaders who ignored Isaiah's counsel and made this covenant with Egypt
 - Then chapter 28 flows into a description of the woes that will come upon Israel for making that future covenant with the antichrist

[Is. 28:1](#) Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim,
 And to the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
 Which is at the head of the fertile valley
 Of those who are overcome with wine!

[Is. 28:2](#) Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty agent;
 As a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction,
 Like a storm of mighty overflowing waters,
 He has cast it down to the earth with His hand.

[Is. 28:3](#) The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim is trodden under foot.

[Is. 28:4](#) And the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
 Which is at the head of the fertile valley,
 Will be like the first-ripe fig prior to summer,
 Which one sees,
 And as soon as it is in his hand,
 He swallows it.

[Is. 28:5](#) In that day the LORD of hosts will become a beautiful crown
 And a glorious diadem to the remnant of His people;

[Is. 28:6](#) A spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment,
 A strength to those who repel the onslaught at the gate.

- The introduction of this woe uses the northern kingdom of Israel as a negative example for Judah
 - Notice the focus is on the leadership of Ephraim
 - The princes who are described as drunkards

- The fading flower is a reference to their capital city, Samaria
- They are to be destroyed by the mighty overflowing waters, a euphemism for an invading army, which we know is Assyria
 - The speed of the invasion is pictured in verse 4, as fast as you can eat a ripe fig the city will be gone
- But the believing remnant left in Northern Israel, God's justice is a delight to His people who desire His justice (vs.5-6)

[Is. 28:7](#) And these also reel with wine and stagger from strong drink:

The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink,
They are confused by wine, they stagger from strong drink;
They reel while having visions,
They totter when rendering judgment.

[Is. 28:8](#) For all the tables are full of filthy vomit, without a single clean place.

- Now Judah says to "these also" meaning to a new group that shares the same qualities of the earlier group in Northern Israel
 - We're talking about Judah now
 - Like Ephraim, Judah staggers drunk with wine
 - So much drinking and debauchery that they vomit leaving no clean place
 - Graphic way to picture how God views their sad state
 - These are the leaders who ignored Isaiah's counsel to avoid making a covenant with the enemy Egypt

[Is. 28:9](#) "To whom would He teach knowledge,
And to whom would He interpret the message?
Those just weaned from milk?
Those just taken from the breast?"

[Is. 28:10](#) "For He says,
' Order on order, order on order,
Line on line, line on line,
A little here, a little there.'"

[Is. 28:11](#) Indeed, He will speak to this people
Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue,

[Is. 28:12](#) He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary,"
And, "Here is repose," but they would not listen.

[Is. 28:13](#) So the word of the LORD to them will be,
 “ Order on order, order on order,
 Line on line, line on line,
 A little here, a little there,”
 That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive.

- This is actually a bit humorous
 - My translation actually confuses the meaning a little here, because it proposes that the person speaking (“he”) is the Lord Himself
 - To whom would “He” teach, as in God
 - But in reality, the context tells us this is actually Isaiah recording how he was mocked by the leaders of Judah when he told them not to oppose Assyrian
 - The sense is clearer in the Hebrew
 - Read verses 9 & 10 as if spoken by Isaiah’s detractors
 - They ask Isaiah who does he (Isaiah) expect to teach knowledge and wisdom?
 - Who does he presume to interpret God’s words?
 - Does he (Isaiah) think these leaders are just weaned from milk and taken from the breast?
 - In other words, does Isaiah think they were born yesterday?
 - Then they mock him by mimicking the sound of Isaiah stuttering out his prophecies
 - Order on order, order on order, line on line, etc.
 - In the Hebrew these are all single syllable words
 - And the words “on” don’t appear in the Hebrew text
 - It’s the same Hebrew word for order (tsav) repeated four times
 - Followed by line (qav) repeated four times
 - The effect if you read this aloud in Hebrew would be the sound of someone stuttering

- Making Isaiah sound like a fool or village idiot
- So Isaiah responds to their mocking of him in verse 11-13
 - Indeed, the prophet Isaiah will speak to these people through stuttering lips
 - But it won't be Isaiah's lips that will sound strange to them
 - It will be a foreign tongue that sounds strange to them that will produce the sounds they hear
 - In other words, Judah will know that Isaiah speaks God's truth when they hear the voices of the Assyrians speaking in their land and at their city walls
 - Though the Prophet spoke words of relief to them, they would not listen
 - So the Lord will speak to them Himself
 - And it will sound like stuttering
 - Tsav, tsav, etc.
 - And they will stumble backward and be snared and captive of the Assyrians
 - And the sounds of the captors will sound like the stuttering they mocked Isaiah with
- In 1Cor 14, Paul draws reference to this section of Isaiah to make a similar point concerning how God intended to use the gift of tongues in the early church
 - In Isaiah's day, the Jews failed to believe the message they heard and they mocked the messenger
 - So their unbelief is answered with a strange people speaking in tongues that sound odd to the ears of unbelieving Jews
 - But just as in Isaiah's day, the effect of this experience is not to set the Jews free and bring them to an understanding
 - Rather, it is judgment against them to their own destruction

- In Isaiah's day, the judgment came at the hands of the Assyrians because they rejected God's message through the prophet Isaiah's
 - In the early church, the destruction was the Roman invasion of Jerusalem because the Jewish people had rejected God's message through the Messiah
- This is another reason we can say that the gift of tongues was short-lived and intended for the early church only
 - Once the judgment signified by the tongues had arrived for the Jewish generation that rejected Christ, the gift had met its purpose and was no longer relevant
- Then Isaiah jumps forward prophetically to describe the effect of a future day when the nation will repeat this mistake in an even more serious way...

[Is. 28:14](#) Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers,
Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem,

[Is. 28:15](#) Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death,
And with Sheol we have made a pact.

The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by,
For we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves
with deception."

[Is. 28:16](#) Therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,
A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed.
He who believes in it will not be disturbed.

[Is. 28:17](#) "I will make justice the measuring line
And righteousness the level;
Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies
And the waters will overflow the secret place.

[Is. 28:18](#) "Your covenant with death will be canceled,
And your pact with Sheol will not stand;
When the overwhelming scourge passes through,
Then you become its trampling place.

[Is. 28:19](#) "As often as it passes through, it will seize you;
For morning after morning it will pass through, anytime during the day or
night,
And it will be sheer terror to understand what it means."

[Is. 28:20](#) The bed is too short on which to stretch out,
And the blanket is too small to wrap oneself in.

[Is. 28:21](#) For the LORD will rise up as at Mount Perazim,
He will be stirred up as in the valley of Gibeon,
To do His task, His unusual task,
And to work His work, His extraordinary work.

[Is. 28:22](#) And now do not carry on as scoffers,
Or your fetters will be made stronger;
For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts
Of decisive destruction on all the earth.

- Therefore, hear the word of the Lord all you scoffers who lead Israel
 - Remember, the leaders of Israel in Jerusalem in the last days are simply the last in the line of leaders who scoff at the truth of God's prophets
 - But in v.15, Isaiah says they enter into a covenant with death
 - And with Hell itself
 - This is the moment Daniel predicts in chapter 9

[Dan. 9:26](#) "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

[Dan. 9:27](#) "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

- After a period of time, Daniel says the Messiah will be cut off, which refers to Jesus' crucifixion and rejection by Israel
 - And a people will come to destroy Jerusalem, which was the Romans
 - Their advance is like a flood of water, a picture of a rapidly advancing army
 - But sometime following this event, "he" will make a covenant with the many for one seven year period
 - The he is the prince in verse 26, the Antichrist
 - And the many are apostate Israel who accept this agreement
 - It's many rather than all because the remnant of Israel rejects any alliance with the antichrist
 - This event of the signing of the covenant between Israel and the antichrist begins the seven years of Tribulation

- And in the “middle of the week” or at the 3.5 year point, the Antichrist betrays his agreement with Israel and begins to persecute them
 - Isaiah describes the leaders as scoffers who shake off any warnings in their day, just as before
 - They make the agreement intended to gain security for the nation
 - They say that the overwhelming scourge that they sense is coming at the hands of this world leader will pass them by
 - For they have saved themselves by aligning with deception and falsehood
- Now in contrast to that kind of false security, where does the remnant of Israel turn to seek security and refuge from the scourge of the Antichrist?
 - In verses 16-17 God describes the security He is providing to His faithful remnant in that coming day of Tribulation
 - He lays a cornerstone in Zion, firmly places
 - Anyone who believes in this stone will not be disturbed
 - Justice is the measuring line and righteousness the standard for measurement
 - And the waters of God’s judgment in Tribulation wash away those who trusted in the Antichrist rather than the true Christ
 - Isaiah then says that covenant that the many rested in will be cancelled
 - By the Anitchrist of course
 - In mid Tribulation, the Antichrist is murdered, according to Revelation 13:3 and comes back to life because Satan indwells him and brings his body back to life
 - At this point, Satan takes over and causes the Antichrist to break the covenant as Daniel predicts and begins to persecute the Jews
 - And they are trampled in place says Isaiah

- Followed by insecurity and fear everywhere they go during those final 3.5 years
- In describing this period of destruction, Isaiah draws comparison to their history of Israel
 - Isaiah describes Mt. Perazim and valley of Gibeon
 - These were places where David and Joshua won great victories against enemies of God and Israel
 - We know both these men are types of Christ, Joshua shares the Lord's earthly name
 - And Isaiah says that the effect of Israel's covenant with God's enemy is to see the Lord fight against them as when He fights against the enemies of God
 - And furthermore, the decree from God is a decisive destruction of the Earth as a whole

[Is. 28:23](#) ¶ Give ear and hear my voice,
Listen and hear my words.

[Is. 28:24](#) Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed?
Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?

[Is. 28:25](#) Does he not level its surface
And sow dill and scatter cummin
And plant wheat in rows,
Barley in its place and rye within its area?

[Is. 28:26](#) For his God instructs and teaches him properly.

[Is. 28:27](#) For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin;
But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club.

[Is. 28:28](#) Grain for bread is crushed,
Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever.
Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it,
He does not thresh it longer.

[Is. 28:29](#) This also comes from the LORD of hosts,
Who has made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.

- Isaiah ends this chapter with two parables to explain God's actions and purposes during this judgment in the end times
 - First, when the farmer stirs up the soil and plows, it's a destructive process
 - But does the farmer plow forever?

- No. Though it's destructive, it's meant for good in that it prepares for a planting and harvest
- So the first point is that the judgment of God against Israel is not a never ending judgment
 - It has a good purpose and it eventually comes to an end so that a planting and harvest might result
 - For God teaches and instructs properly
- Secondly, Isaiah uses a parable of threshing
 - When threshing grain, the farmer beats at the seeds in the grain in varying degrees of harshness
 - Some seeds need greater force than others
 - Some grain is intentionally crushed while others are just shaken loose
 - You don't thresh too long on every grain otherwise it will be destroyed
 - So the second principle is that God's judgment is for different outcomes in different groups within Israel
 - Some in Israel will be subjected to God's wrath so that they might be destroyed or crushed
 - Others are experienced a more limited threshing so that they might be brought through it intact
- In Tribulation, God brings His wrath to destroy some Jews and to chasten others
 - Ultimately, the nation survives and is brought through to their glory in the kingdom