

ISAIAH 25 | Zion Feast

Ruin of the Ruthless

1 Yahweh, you are my God. I will exalt you. I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful (פְּלֵא)¹ things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. 2 For you have made the city (עִיר)² a heap, the fortified city a ruin. The foreigners' palace is a city no more. It will never be rebuilt. 3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify you. Cities of ruthless/violent/powerful/tyrannical (עָרִיץ) nations will fear you. 4 For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless (עָרִיץ) is like a storm against a wall, 5 like heat in a dry place. You subdue the noise of the foreigners. As heat by the shade of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless (עָרִיץ) is put down.

Zion Feast

6 On this mountain [Zion] Yahweh of armies will make for all peoples (עַמִּים) a feast/drinking banquet/meal (מִשְׁתֶּה)³ of rich food, a feast (מִשְׁתֶּה) of well-aged wine (שֵׁמֶר), of greasy food (שָׁמֶן) flavoured with fat (מִחֵה), of aged wine (שֵׁמֶר) well refined/purified/filtered (זָקָה).⁴ 7 And he will swallow up/engulf/destroy (בִּלַע)⁵ on this mountain [Zion] the covering (לוֹט) that is cast over all peoples, the veil (מַסְכָּה) that is spread over all nations (גוֹיִם). 8 He will swallow up (בִּלַע) death (מָוֶת) forever, and Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people [Israel] he will take away from all the earth/land (אֲרֶץ), for Yahweh has spoken. 9 It will be said on that day,

Behold, this is our God. We have waited/hoped (קוּה) for him, that he might save (יִשַׁע) us. This is Yahweh. We have waited/hoped (קוּה) for him. Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation (יִשׁוּעָה).

10 For the hand of Yahweh will rest/settle down/repose (נוּחַ)⁶ on this mountain [Zion].

¹ The Hebrew word פְּלֵא means something unusual, like a miracle. **Ex 15:11** 11 Who is like you, Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders (פְּלֵא)? **Ps 77:14** 14 You are the God who works wonders (פְּלֵא). You have made known your might among the peoples. **Is 29:14** 14 Behold, I will again do wonderful (פְּלֵא) things with this people, with wonder (פְּלֵא) upon wonder (פְּלֵא).

² Isaiah has in mind the great cities of the world—Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, etc.

³ We can party now or party later. It's our choice. **Is 5:12** 12 They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts, but they do not regard the deeds of Yahweh, or see the work of his hands.

⁴ **Jn 2:10-11** 10 ...And said to him, Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now. 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

⁵ **Ps 21:10** 10 You will swallow/engulf/destroy (בִּלַע) their descendants from the earth, and their offspring from among the children of man. **Job 2:3** 3 And Yahweh said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to swallow up/engulf/destroy (בִּלַע) him without reason.

⁶ Noah's name comes from the same root word.

Moab Trampled

And Moab will be trampled down in his place, as straw is trampled down in a dunghill, 11 and he will spread out his hands in the midst of it as a swimmer spreads his hands out to swim. But Yahweh will lay low his pompous pride together with the skill of his hands. 12 And the high fortifications of his walls he will bring down, lay low, and cast to the ground, to the dust.

Commentary

1. Overview

- a. This chapter corresponds to the end of the seven-year Tribulation and the beginning of the 1000-year Messianic kingdom. In general, Is 24 is about the Tribulation. Is 25 is about the beginning of the Millennium.
- b. Is 25 contains songs of joy and triumph sung by the elders (and all believers) of Is 24:23. It carries on the song begun in Is 24:16.
- c. Probably this song will be sung as Jewish and Gentile believers begin their pilgrimage to Zion after the great victory of Re 19.

2. Ruin of the Ruthless (Is 25:1-5).

- a. **Is 25:1-5** 1 Yahweh, you are my God. I will exalt you. I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful (פְּלִאָה) things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. 2 For you have made the city (עִיר) a heap, the fortified city a ruin. The foreigners' palace is a city no more. It will never be rebuilt. 3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify you. Cities of ruthless/violent/powerful/tyrannical (עָרֵי) nations will fear you. 4 For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless (עָרֵי) is like a storm against a wall, 5 like heat in a dry place. You subdue the noise of the foreigners. As heat by the shade of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless (עָרֵי) is put down.
- b. Isaiah's song is intensely personal (v. 1).
 - (1) The individual voice (vv. 1-5) becomes a communal voice (vv. 9-10). Believers will enter Zion's gates one by one, but within Zion's walls will become a company of the saved with a common testimony.⁷
- c. Yahweh's plans are wonderful, ancient, faithful, and sure (v. 1).
 - (1) God doesn't act off the cuff. He has a plan. He has a plan for the humanity, a plan for our city and our church, and a plan for us as individual believers.
 - (2) God is determined to fulfil the Abrahamic (Ge 12:3), Davidic (Is 16:5), and New (Is 59:20-21) covenants.
- d. Yahweh will bring to ruin the city of man, and it will never be rebuilt (v. 2).
 - (1) Babel was the first city to represent the city of man.
 - (a) **Ge 11:2-4** 2 As people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ...4 Then they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves.
 - (2) The city of man is all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.
 - (a) **Mt 4:8-9** 8 The devil took [Jesus] to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.
 - (3) Jesus is not of the world, the city of man.
 - (a) **Jn 8:23** 23 [Jesus] said to [the Jewish leaders], You are from below. I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world.
 - (4) The city of man has been judged and its ruler cast out.

⁷ J. A. Motyer, *Isaiah*, 207.

- (a) **Jn 12:31** 31 Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.
- (5) The city of man hates Jesus, and it hates us.
 - (a) **Jn 15:18-19** 18 If the [city of man] hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the [city of man], the [city of man] would love you as its own. But because you are not of the [city of man], but I chose you out of the [city of man], therefore the [city of man] hates you.
- (6) Jesus has overcome the city of man.
 - (a) **Jn 16:33** 33 In the [city of man] you [disciples] will have tribulation. But take heart. I have overcome the [city of man].
- (7) We have overcome the city of man.
 - (a) **1 Jn 5:4-5** 4 Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the [city of man]. And this is the victory that has overcome the [city of man]—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the [city of man] except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
- e. The mightiest of nations today will glorify and fear Yahweh (v. 3).
 - (1) The destruction of the city of man will result in the recognition of God by all. Every creature will bow the knee to Jesus and confess he is Lord. Today's world powers will be forced to submit to God.
 - (2) **Php 2:10-11** 10 ... At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- f. Yahweh is a stronghold for the poor and needy who take refuge in him (vv. 4-5).
 - (1) The word **מָעוֹז** means mountain stronghold, place of refuge, fortress.
 - (a) Israel forgot her stronghold.
 - 1) **Is 17:10** 10 You [Israel] have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge (**מָעוֹז**).
 - (b) God will destroy the strongholds of the city of man.
 - 1) **Is 23:11** 11 Yahweh has given command concerning Canaan to destroy its strongholds (**מָעוֹז**).
 - 2) **Is 23:14** 14 Wail, ships of Tarshish, for your stronghold (**מָעוֹז**) is laid waste.
 - (c) God invites all humanity to lay hold of his stronghold.
 - 1) **Is 27:5** 5 Let them lay hold of my stronghold (**מָעוֹז**), let them make peace (**שָׁלוֹם**) with me, let them make peace (**שָׁלוֹם**) with me.
 - (2) The word **מְחֻסָּה** means a place of refuge.
 - (a) **Is 4:5-6** 5 Yahweh will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for over all the glory there will be a canopy. 6 There will be a booth for shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge (**מְחֻסָּה**) and a shelter from the storm and rain.
 - (b) Lies and falsehood don't make a good refuge.
 - 1) **Is 28:15-17** 15 Because you have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have an agreement, when the overwhelming whip passes through it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge (**מְחֻסָּה**), and in falsehood we have taken shelter— 16 therefore thus

says Lord Yahweh, Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: Whoever believes will not be in haste. 17 And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plumb line. And hail will sweep away the refuge (מִחְסֵה) of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter.

(c) God is a refuge for the poor and oppressed.

1) **Ps 46:1** 1 God is our refuge (מִחְסֵה) and strength, a very present help in trouble.

(3) To be sheltered by God, one must believe in Jesus. If you say, “I don’t need God to be my shelter. I can shelter myself”—you are truly lost.

(a) **Mt 9:12** 12 Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

3. Zion Feast (Is 25:6-10).

a. **Is 25:6-10** 6 On this mountain [Zion] Yahweh of armies will make for all peoples (עַמִּים) a feast/drinking banquet/meal (מִשְׁתֶּה) of rich food, a feast (מִשְׁתֶּה) of well-aged wine (שֵׁמֶר), of greasy food (שֶׁמֶן) flavoured with fat (מִחֵה), of aged wine (שֵׁמֶר) well refined/purified/filtered (זָקַק). 7 And he will swallow up/engulf/destroy (בִּלַע) on this mountain [Zion] the covering (לוֹט) that is cast over all peoples, the veil (מַסְכָּה) that is spread over all nations (גוֹיִם). 8 He will swallow up (בִּלַע) death (מָוֶת) forever, and Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people [Israel] he will take away from all the earth/land (אֶרֶץ), for Yahweh has spoken. 9 It will be said on that day, Behold, this is our God. We have waited/hoped (קוּה) for him, that he might save (יִשַׁע) us. This is Yahweh. We have waited/hoped (קוּה) for him. Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation (יִשׁוּעָה). 10 For the hand of Yahweh will rest/settle down/repose (נָוָה) on this mountain [Zion].

b. As believers, we have a place reserved for us at the great Zion feast to come (v. 6).

(1) All is repeated four times, indicating God’s total victory over sin and death.

(2) We are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

(a) **Re 19:7-9** 7 Let us rejoice, exult, and give [God] the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb [Jesus] has come, and his Bride [the church] has made herself ready.

8 It was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. 9 And the angel said to me,

Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.

(3) We will come to Zion as to a festal gathering.

(a) **Heb 12:22-24** 22 You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23 to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, to God, the judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.

(4) We will dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

(a) **Mt 8:10-11** 10 When Jesus heard this [from the Roman centurion], he marvelled and said to those who followed him, Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. 11 I tell you, many will come from east and

west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

- (5) Jesus will drink new wine with us.
 - (a) **Mt 26:29** 29 I [Jesus] tell you [disciples] I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.
 - (b) **Jn 2:10-11** 10 ...And said to him, Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now. 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.
- (6) Our soul will be satisfied with fat and rich food.
 - (a) **Ps 63:5** 5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.
- (7) We can party now or party later. It's our choice.
 - (a) **Is 5:12** 12 They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts/drinking banquets/meals (הַשְׂמֵרָה), but they do not regard the deeds of Yahweh, or see the work of his hands.
- c. Yahweh is in the process of swallowing up death (vv. 7-8).
 - (1) At the fall, death enslaved humanity.
 - (a) **Ge 2:17** 17 In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.
 - (b) **Ge 3:19** 19 You are dust, and to dust you shall return.
 - (c) **Ge 5:5** 5 All the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.
 - (d) **Ro 5:12** 12 Just as sin came into the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned....
 - (2) Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross was humanity's strategic victory over death.
 - (a) **Heb 2:14-15** 14 [Jesus] himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
 - (3) Jesus' resurrection is the historical proof of humanity's victory over death.
 - (a) **Re 1:18** 18 I [Jesus] died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.
 - (4) Believers may experience a first death, but they won't experience the second death.
 - (a) **Re 20:4-6** 4 They came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power.
 - (5) Death will be the last enemy to be destroyed.
 - (a) **1 Co 15:25-26** 25 [Jesus] must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.
- d. There will be no more tears (v. 8).
 - (1) **Re 21:4** 4 [God] will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.
- e. Yahweh will take away Israel's reproach (v. 8).

- (1) **Eze 36:6-7** 6 Prophecy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, Thus says Lord Yahweh: Behold, I have spoken in my jealous wrath, because you have suffered the reproach of the nations. 7 Therefore thus says Lord Yahweh: I swear that the nations that are all around you will themselves suffer reproach.
- (2) **Ro 11:15** 15 If [Israel's] rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will [Israel's] acceptance mean but life from the dead?
- f. It is our job to wait, and God's job to save.
 - (1) We are to wait in confident expectation of God's final victory. Learning to wait patiently is absolutely necessary for spiritual maturity. The Christian life is not one of instant gratification.
 - (2) **Is 40:31** 31 Those who wait (קוה) for Yahweh will gain new strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not become weary.
 - (3) **Is 49:23** 23 Those who wait (קוה) for me [Yahweh] will not be put to shame.
- g. Jerusalem is ground zero for God's saving activity in the world (v. 10).
 - (1) God is active everywhere on earth, but it is in Jerusalem where he particularly acts.
 - (a) **Is 14:32** 32 Yahweh has founded Zion, and in her the afflicted of his people find refuge.
 - (2) Notice God's hand is on Zion, but his foot is on Moab (v. 10). In the end, every human being will be in God's hand or under his foot.

4. Moab Trampled (Is 25:10-12).

- a. **Is 25:10-12** 10 And Moab will be trampled down in his place, as straw is trampled down in a dunghill, 11 and he will spread out his hands in the midst of it as a swimmer spreads his hands out to swim. But Yahweh will lay low his pompous pride together with the skill of his hands. 12 And the high fortifications of his walls he will bring down, lay low, and cast to the ground, to the dust.
- b. Moab was taunting Judah because of Assyria, which Moab had so far resisted.
 - (1) In the Judah of Isaiah's day, Moab was the epitome of pride and arrogance.
 - (a) **Is 16:6** 6 We have heard of the pride of Moab—how proud he is!—of his arrogance, his pride, and his insolence. In his idle boasting he is not right.
 - (2) God offered to protect Moab, but she refused to take shelter in Jerusalem.
 - (a) **Is 16:1** 1 Send the lamb to the ruler of the land, from Sela, by way of the desert, to the mount of the daughter of Zion.
- c. Moab represents the pride, self-sufficiency, and false security of man (v. 11).
- d. Those who persist in human pride will end up swimming in sewage and being ground to dust (v. 11).

5. Application.

- a. Reject do-it-yourself salvation. Take shelter in Zion by believing in her Messiah.
- b. Wait patiently for God's Zion-centered triumph over death.
- c. Keep taking refuge in God when you face challenges and tests.