

ISAIAH 26 | Judah Song

Trust in Yahweh

1 In that day¹ this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

We have a strong/mighty/fortified/well-founded (עִז) city [Zion]. He [Yahweh] sets up salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) as walls and bulwarks. 2 Open the gates, that the righteous nation [the remnant of Israel] that keeps faith (אֱמִינָה) may enter in. 3 You keep him in perfect peace (שְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹם) whose mind (לֵב) is stayed on you, because he trusts (בָּטַח) in you. 4 Trust (בַּטַּח) in Yahweh forever, for Lord Yahweh is an everlasting rock. 5 For he has humbled the inhabitants of the height, the lofty city [of man]. He lays it low, lays it low to the ground, casts it to the dust. 6 The foot tramples it, the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.

Peace for the Righteous

7 The path of the righteous is level/easy/smooth (מִישָׁרִים). You make level/straight/smooth (יָשָׁר) the way of the righteous. 8 In the path of your judgments, Yahweh, we wait for you. Your name and remembrance are the desire of our soul. 9 My soul (נַפְשִׁי) yearns for you in the night. My spirit (רוּחִי) within me earnestly seeks you. For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn (לָמַד) righteousness. 10 If grace (חֲנּוּן) is shown to the wicked, he does not learn righteousness. In the land of uprightness he deals corruptly and does not see the majesty of Yahweh. 11 Yahweh, your hand is lifted up, but they do not see it. Let them see your zeal/jealousy/envy/competitive spirit (קִנְיָה) for your people and be ashamed. Let the fire for your adversaries consume them. 12 Yahweh, you will set up (שָׁפַת) peace (שְׁלוֹם) for us, for you have indeed done for us all our works.² 13 Yahweh our God, other lords (אֱלֹהִים) besides you have ruled/husbanded (בָּעַל) over us, but your name alone we bring to remembrance. 14 They are dead. They will not live. They are dead spirits (רְפָאִים). They will not rise. To that end you have visited them with destruction and wiped out all remembrance of them. 15 But you have increased the nation [of Israel], Yahweh. You have increased the nation [of Israel]. You are glorified. You have enlarged all the borders of the land [of Israel].

Yahweh's Dead Shall Live

16 Yahweh, in distress/anxiety/need (צָר) they [the righteous] sought you. They poured out a whispered prayer when your discipline/chastisement (מוֹסֵר)³ was upon them. 17 Like a pregnant woman who writhes and cries out in her pangs when she is near to giving birth, so were we because of you, Yahweh. 18 We were pregnant, we writhed, but we have given birth to wind (רוּחַ). We have accomplished no salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) in

¹ In the Messianic kingdom, after Jesus' second coming.

² See *God's Grace*.

³ See *Divine Discipline*.

the earth/land (אֶרֶץ), and the inhabitants (יֹשְׁבֵי) of the world (תְּבִל) have not fallen. 19 Your dead will live. Their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth/land (אֶרֶץ) will give birth to the dead.⁴

Hide until the Fury Passes

20 Come, my people, enter your chambers and shut your doors behind you.⁵ Hide yourselves for a little while until the fury has passed by. 21 For behold, Yahweh is coming out from his place to punish the inhabitants (יֹשְׁבֵי) of the earth (אֶרֶץ) for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no more cover its slain.

⁴ See *Resurrection*.

⁵ See Ex 12 and Mt 24.

Commentary

1. Overview.

- a. This song will be sung at the beginning of the Messianic kingdom, around the time of the great banquet described in Is 25.
- b. The foci of this chapter are believers and unbelievers of the tribulational period, but there is universal application to believers of every generation.
- c. The song has a future-present-future orientation. This is because what will certainly happen in the future is to govern how we live in the present.

2. Trust in Yahweh (Is 26:1-6).

- a. **Is 26:1-6** 1 In that day⁶ this song will be sung in the land of Judah: We [the remnant of Israel] have a strong/mighty/fortified/well-founded (עִיר) city [Zion]. He [Yahweh] sets up salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) as walls and bulwarks. 2 Open the gates, that the righteous nation [the remnant of Israel] that keeps faith (אֱמוּנָה) may enter in. 3 You keep him in perfect peace (שְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹם) whose mind (לֵב) is stayed on you, because he trusts (בְּטוּחָה) in you. 4 Trust (בַּטָּח) in Yahweh forever, for Lord Yahweh is an everlasting rock. 5 For he has humbled the inhabitants of the height, the lofty city [of man]. He lays it low, lays it low to the ground, casts it to the dust. 6 The foot tramples it, the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.
- b. The remnant of Israel has a strong city (v. 1).
 - (1) In the millennium and beyond, believers will live in cities, towns, villages, and farms across the earth. But Jesus will live and reign from Jerusalem, the strong city. All believers will have access to that city. But it will be especially for the remnant of Israel.
 - (2) **Is 2:2-3** 2 It will come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Yahweh will be established as the highest of the mountains and will be lifted up above the hills. And all the nations will flow to it, 3 and many peoples will come and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion will go forth the Torah, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.
- c. The righteous nation (v. 2) refers specifically to the remnant of Israel.
 - (1) **Is 4:3** 3 He who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem.
 - (2) Jewish believers will be able to enter the gates of Zion as they return to their designated inheritance. Jesus will lead the way.
 - (a) **Ps 24:7** 7 Lift up your heads, gates! And be lifted up, ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.
 - (b) **Ps 118:19** 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to Yahweh.
- d. From Israel Yahweh wants one thing above all—faith (vv. 2-4).
 - (1) Yahweh is worthy of Israel's trust because he is an everlasting rock (v. 4).

⁶ In the Messianic kingdom, after Jesus' second coming.

- (a) **Ps 18:2** 2 Yahweh is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- (2) God wants our faith in phase one (v. 2). See *Phase One Faith*.
 - (a) **Is 12:2** 2 Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and will not be afraid, for the Yah Yahweh (יְהוָה יְהוּי) is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.
- (3) God continues to want our faith in phase two (v. 3). See *Phase Two Faith*.
 - (a) **Ro 1:17** 17 In [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith into faith, as it is written, The righteous will live by faith.
 - (b) **Php 4:7** 7 The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Jesus.
- e. To experience Yahweh's perfect peace, Israel's mind must concentrate on him (v. 3).
 - (1) There is no peace for the unbeliever.
 - (2) **Is 57:21** 21 There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.
- f. Yahweh will trample the city of man and punish its inhabitants (vv. 5-6).
 - (1) In contrast to Zion (v. 1), the city of man is not a strong city.
 - (a) **Is 25:12** 12 The high fortifications of his walls he will bring down, lay low, and cast to the ground, to the dust.
- g. Believers, the poor and needy, will walk on dust that used to be the city of man (v. 6).
 - (1) **Mt 5:5** 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

3. Peace for the Righteous (Is 26:7-15).

- a. **Is 26:7-15** 7 The path of the righteous is level/easy/smooth (מִישָׁרִים). You make level/straight/smooth (יָשַׁר) the way of the righteous. 8 In the path of your judgments, Yahweh, we wait for you. Your name and remembrance are the desire of our soul. 9 My soul (נַפְשִׁי) yearns for you in the night. My spirit (רוּחִי) within me earnestly seeks you. For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn (לָמַד) righteousness. 10 If grace (חֲנּוּן) is shown to the wicked, he does not learn righteousness. In the land of uprightness he deals corruptly and does not see the majesty of Yahweh. 11 Yahweh, your hand is lifted up, but they do not see it. Let them see your zeal/jealousy/envy/competitive spirit (קִנְיָה) for your people and be ashamed. Let the fire for your adversaries consume them. 12 Yahweh, you will set up (שָׁפַת) peace (שָׁלוֹם) for us, for you have indeed done for us all our works.⁷ 13 Yahweh our God, other lords (אֱלֹהִים) besides you have ruled/husbanded (בָּעַל) over us, but your name alone we bring to remembrance. 14 They are dead. They will not live. They are dead spirits (רְפָאִים). They will not rise. To that end you have visited them with destruction and wiped out all remembrance of them. 15 But you have increased the nation [of Israel], Yahweh. You have increased the nation [of Israel]. You are glorified. You have enlarged all the borders of the land [of Israel].
- b. Yahweh levels the path his the righteous (v. 7).
 - (1) **Is 40:3-5** 3 In the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low. The uneven ground shall become level, and the

⁷ See *God's Grace*.

rough places a plain. 5 And the glory of Yahweh will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.

- c. The faith of the remnant of Israel is demonstrated by:
 - (1) Waiting for God while staying in his level path (v. 8).
 - (2) Remembering him in everything we do (v. 8).
 - (3) Longing for him in the night (v. 9).
 - (4) Earnestly seeking him in our spirit (v. 9).
- d. One result of Yahweh's judgments is that unbelievers finally learn righteousness (vv. 9-11).
- e. Unbelievers will be ashamed at Yahweh's zeal for Israel and be consumed by fire (v. 11).
- f. Yahweh will establish shalom (שָׁלוֹם) for Israel and do for her all her works (v. 12).
- g. Unbelievers will die and will exist into eternity future as dead spirits. They will not rise to live in the new creation. Yahweh will visit them with destruction, and there will be no memory of them (v. 14).
 - (1) **Re 21:6-8** 6 It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this inheritance, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death.
- h. Yahweh will increase the remnant of Israel and enlarge the borders of her land (v. 15).

4. Yahweh's Dead Shall Live (Is 26:16-19).

- a. **Is 26:16-19** 16 Yahweh, in distress/anxiety/need (צָרָה) they [the righteous] sought you. They poured out a whispered prayer when your discipline/chastisement (מוֹסָר) was upon them. 17 Like a pregnant woman who writhes and cries out in her pangs when she is near to giving birth, so were we because of you, Yahweh. 18 We were pregnant, we writhed, but we have given birth to wind (רוּחַ). We have accomplished no salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) in the earth/land (אֶרֶץ), and the inhabitants (יֹשְׁבֵי) of the world (תְּהוֹמֵי) have not fallen. 19 Your dead will live. Their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth/land (אֶרֶץ) will give birth to the dead.⁹
- b. As Yahweh disciplines Israel, all she can do is whisper a prayer (v. 16). On her own, Israel can only birth wind (v. 17-18). She cannot rescue herself (v. 18). She cannot overcome her enemies, the earth-dwellers (v. 18).
 - (1) On our own, we only birth wind. We cannot rescue ourselves, and we cannot overcome our enemies. We are helpless and seemingly at the mercy of our enemies in the world. The city of man seems to defeat us. God must give us the victory.
- c. Yahweh's dead will live (v. 19).
 - (1) This verse proves the doctrine of bodily resurrection was a key belief in OT times. It is one of the most significant resurrection verses in the Bible.

⁸ See *Divine Discipline*.

⁹ See *Resurrection*.

- (2) The Sadducees and Pharisees disputed over the doctrine of bodily resurrection.
 - (a) **Ac 23:6-8** 6 Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial. 7 And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.
- (3) Job asserted bodily resurrection.
 - (a) **Job 19:23-27** 23 Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! 24 Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! 25 For I [Job] know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. 26 And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, 27 whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!
- (4) The Psalms asserted bodily resurrection.
 - (a) **Ps 71:20-21** 20 You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again. From the depths of the earth you will bring me up again. 21 You will increase my greatness and comfort me again.
 - (b) **Ps 116:15** 15 Precious in the sight of Yahweh is the death of his saints.
- (5) Daniel asserted bodily resurrection.
 - (a) **Da 12:2** 2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
- (6) Jesus asserted bodily resurrection by alluding to Genesis.
 - (a) **Lk 20:35-38** 35 Those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, 36 for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. 37 But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.
- (7) Our resurrection will be a bodily one. Our bodies that dwell in the dust will rise to life. The earth will give birth to us. We will awake, sing for joy, and experience light forever (v. 19).

5. Hide until the Fury Passes (Is 26:20-21).

- a. **Is 26:20-21** 20 Come, my people, enter your chambers and shut your doors behind you.¹⁰ Hide yourselves for a little while until the fury has passed by. 21 For behold, Yahweh is coming out from his place to punish the inhabitants (יֹשְׁבֵי) of the earth (אֶרֶץ) for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no more cover its slain.
- b. When Yahweh's wrath comes, the remnant of Israel are to hide themselves (v. 20).

¹⁰ See Ex 12 and Mt 24.

- (1) In the tribulation, believers, both Jewish and Gentile, are to hide and wait. At the right time, Jesus will arrive and administer wrath upon the unbelieving earth-dwellers.
 - (2) Hiding from wrath is a biblical theme.
 - (a) **Ge 7:1** 1 Yahweh said to Noah, Go into the ark, you and all your household.
 - (b) **Ge 19:17** 17 As [the angels] brought [Lot and his family] out, one said, Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away.
 - (c) **Ex 12:22** 22 None of you [Israel] shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.
 - (d) **Lk 17:26-32** 26 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They were eating, drinking, and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, 29 but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all— 30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife.
- c. The blood of Yahweh's martyrs will be avenged (v. 21).**
- (1) The martyrs cry out for vengeance on the earth-dwellers.
 - (a) **Re 6:9-10** 9 When [the Lamb] opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony they had borne. 10 They cried out with a loud voice, O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?
 - (2) God will avenge the blood of his servants.
 - (a) **Re 19:1-2** 1 I [John] heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven crying out, Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, 2 for his judgments are true and just. For he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.

6. Application.

- a. Distinguish between the city of God and the city of man.
- b. Wait for God.
- c. Rescue people from the city of man and bring them into the city of God.