

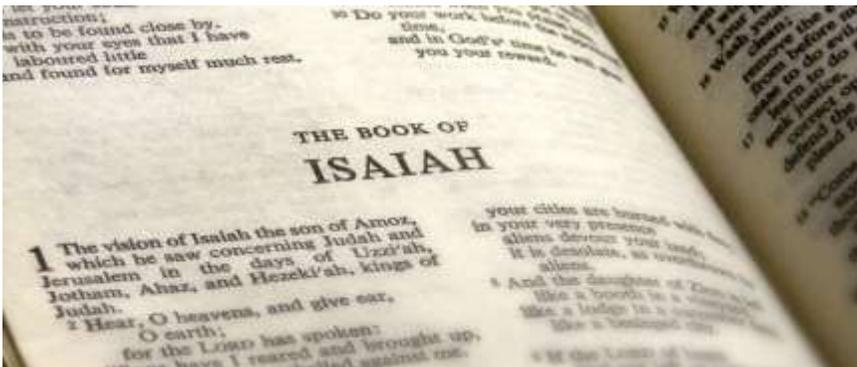
Meditation on Isaiah 24-27

By Trisha Gerstel

Isaiah had a rather daunting commission from God: In chapter six we read that the Lord forewarned Isaiah that he would be speaking to people who would “[b]e ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving” (verse 9, NIV). And throughout the book of Isaiah we see how this commission played out, as the prophet writes about the future destruction of nations that had failed to follow the Lord. In chapters 24 through 27, however, Isaiah shifts from speaking of his contemporary times and instead tells of the Lord’s final destruction of the earth and the deliverance of His chosen people, Israel.

While reading Isaiah 24 through 27 (often called the Apocalypse (or Revelation) of Isaiah), I was struck by one very important aspect of this particular prophesy: In the midst of foretelling great devastation and ruin, Isaiah writes two chapters of praise. In chapter 25 he writes, “O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name . . . You have been a refuge for the poor [and] a shelter from the storm” (verses 1a and 4a, NIV). In chapter 26 he goes on to write, “Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal” (verse 4, NIV) and, “Lord, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us” (verse 12, NIV).

In reading the chapters you’ll understand that, even while prophesying a time of desolation, Isaiah is praising God for His infinite wisdom, His unequivocal power, and, most importantly, His loving plan of redemption. And that is what sat with me while reading these passages – Isaiah’s ability to look past earthly ruin and into God’s holy and righteous will. I’m sure I’m not alone when I state that, this is an area in which I could use a little practice!



How often do we face a “bump in the road” and let ourselves fall into the un-Biblical thinking that all hope is lost, because we fail to trust in God’s will for our lives? How often are we called to do His work but quit when the going gets a little rough, when we should instead be asking Him for a patient heart while also praising Him for His plan? How often do we allow ourselves to get wrapped up in the minutia of this world, letting it drain us of physical and emotional strength, when we should instead be focusing on God’s plan for us and rejoicing in the fact that we have been justified and saved by the blood of Christ?

Isaiah lived in a time when God’s chosen people, the great nation of Israel, had been divided and was no longer a prominent figure in the world. He was charged with telling people of the unavoidable judgment that would befall them, and even had a vision of the time when “the Lord is going to lay waste the earth . . . [when] he will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants” (24:1, NIV) – and yet he praised the Lord and had faith in His will. We all could draw from Isaiah’s example as we face our day-to-day lives in a fallen world and take on our own commission to bring the Gospel to all nations.

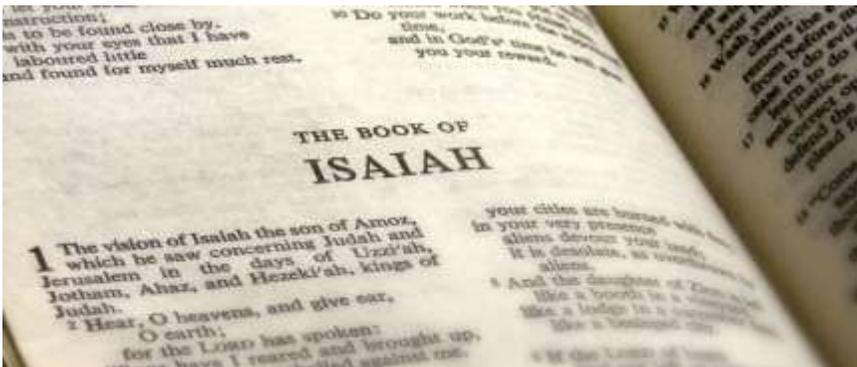
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