

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 49

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The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse By Albrecht Durer Cir 1498

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah

Message Forty-Nine

LITTLE APOCALYPSE OF ISAIAH PART I

January 5, 2020

Daniel E. Woodhead

Isaiah 24:1–13

¹Behold, Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. ²And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. ³The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste; for Jehovah hath spoken this word. ⁴The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the lofty people of the earth do languish. ⁵The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. ⁷The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. ⁸The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. ⁹They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. ¹⁰The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. ¹¹There is a crying in the streets because of the wine; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. ¹²In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. ¹³For thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done, ¹⁴These shall lift up their voice, they shall shout; for the majesty of Jehovah they cry aloud from the sea ASV, 1901).

INTRODUCTION

Previously, God gave special denunciations of woe or burdens (massa) upon specific nations. They were; Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Syria of Damascus, Egypt and the two Ethiopias, Arabia, Judah, and Tyre. Now the Lord through Isaiah broadens the judgment and looking to the future as He declares a judgment of the entire world. The previous burdens all flow into this last judgment. These chapters 24–27 form the ‘finale’ to chapters 13 to 23, Isaiah has presented the other nations that have in some manner persecuted the nation Israel. What he does here, more than anywhere else is to show the form or a ‘finale’—intended to surpass all that had gone before. The whole is like a grand Hallelujah. This is the little apocalypse of Isaiah or the description of the final judgment of God on the entire earth. Which, we know as the tribulation. Apart from the book of Revelation this is the most concise description of the coming Tribulation on the earth found in the Old Testament. The book of Revelation is mostly from chapter six through twenty-two a reordering into a chronology of all the judgments cited in the Old Testament.

THE LORD DECLARES JUDGMENT ON THE WHOLE EARTH

Isaiah 24:1–3

¹Behold, Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. ²And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. ³The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste; for Jehovah hath spoken this word. (ASV, 1901).

The future coming destruction will be a desolation of the entire earth. It is mentioned as such sixteen times alone in this chapter. All peoples of every walk, strata of society and occupation on the earth will be affected. He includes as examples, *so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him.* The entire world will be laid waste and totally plundered. From Genesis 1:2 we read:

²And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (ASV, 1901).

Waste and void in Hebrew are *Tohu* and *Bohu*, meaning nothing but confusion and emptiness and *without form and void*. It is the way the earth was at the beginning as it was coming together in the creative plan of God. *The land (earth) shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled.* God is saying that He will take it back to a state of existence as it was in the beginning.

The three principle reasons that the Lord is doing this are:

1. To make an end of sin and wicked people (Isaiah 13:9; 24:19–20)
2. To bring about the greatest evangelistic outreach that has ever happened (Revelation 7:1–4)
3. To bring the stubborn nation Israel into belief in the Messiah (Ezekiel 20:33–38; Daniel 12:5–7)

When Adam and Eve violated the Word of God and sinned, God cursed the ground as a part of the punishment (Genesis 3:17–19; Romans 8:20–22). God warned the ancient Israelites that their sins polluted the Promised Land (Numbers 35:33). Sin has consequences in nature as well as in human character and conscience. For centuries, mankind has polluted the world by disobeying God's laws and violating His statutes. Long before Moses was given the Law, people knew that it was wrong to lie, steal, commit sexual abominations, and kill, etc. (Romans 1:18–2:16); but they continued to do these evil practices regardless of that knowledge.

The Book of Revelation shows the Lord Jesus preparing to carry out the Tribulation from the Throne Room of God in chapter five. He is handed a scroll with which represents the title deed to the earth. He will begin to carry out the final judgment on the earth taking it back to God's complete control.

Starting in chapter six he opens the seals of the scroll one at a time This is the beginning of the Day of Wrath as He reclaims the earth for God.

Revelation 6:1–17

¹ And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. ² And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. ³ And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. ⁴ And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. ⁵ And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. ⁶ And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. ⁷ And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. ⁸ And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. ⁹ And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: ¹⁰ and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? ¹¹ And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. ¹² And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; ¹³ and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. ¹⁴ And the heaven departed as a scrole when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: ¹⁷ for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

THE EARTH MOANS AS IT UNDERGOES CHANGES

Isaiah 24:4–7

⁴The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the lofty people of the earth do languish. ⁵The earth also is polluted (defiled) under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left (ASV, 1901).

It mourns, because most of the people are being destroyed; and it fades away, because it is becoming stripped of its beloved wealth and riches that were worshipped as their god. The kings of the earth, and merchants of it, are shown (languishing) as weeping and mourning because of the judgments that are coming upon them. Their loss of trade and riches, (Revelation 18:9–17) which they loved instead of God is causing them to lose their loved object, and they mourn as one would mourn the death of spouse or child. *The world fadeth away*; because the inhabitants of it are like a very sick person, who is so faint and feeble that he cannot stand, but shakes and falls. *The lofty (haughty) people of the earth do languish*; the kings and merchants of the earth grow sick and faint through fear of what is happening to them.

The inhabitants of the earth are defiled because of the violence, cruelties, bloodshed, and murders, that their sins led them to commit (Revelation 11:13; 18:24 and 19:2). *The earth is deceitful*, or plays the hypocrite; promising and showing as if it would bring forth fruit, and brings forth none, but is barren and unfruitful, because of the sins of the inhabitants of it (Revelation 18:14). *Because they have transgressed the laws*; of God and man, as Satan and his followers have done. The future Antichrist who is that wicked one, that lawless one, that sets up himself above all laws, and tries to dispense with the laws of God and man (II Thessalonians 2:4, 8). By the *ordinance* means adherence to the Scriptures which are the rule, that is, the absolute rule of moral judgment. The Antichrist will pervert, change, and alter the plain common sense of them, taking upon himself to be the infallible interpreter of them, and judge of all disputes over them. He will forbid the reading of them to the people, and will set up his own decrees, definitions, and determinations, ranking them above the Scriptures. He is that little horn, that thought to change times and laws, from Daniel 7:25. He will lead those into *breaking the everlasting covenant*; which is the Noahic Covenant that Paul refers to as inscribed in the consciousness of all men (Romans 1:18–22). The antichrist will do all in his power through his lies to break existing laws, make new ones and void the old laws. Additionally he will do this by corrupting the moral order of the universe as well as changing the ordinances, and setting up his own institutions above them, and against them.

The earth has, is being, and will be cursed for the sin of man, of which all the false religious authorities have been notoriously guilty. They lead the people away from the Word of God to their personal gain. *And they that dwell therein are desolate*; because their houses, cities, phony places of worship, and towns are being destroyed by war, economic desolation and famine. The earth is being cursed for their sins: or in other words, *for they that dwell therein are guilty*; of idolatry, bloodshed, perjury, thefts, sorcery, and all other abominations (Revelation 9:20–21). *Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned*; their cities burnt by fire, and their persons, their bodies burnt with burning fevers, and pestilential diseases, and their minds with envy, fury, and madness, which is shown in the fourth vial poured upon the sun, when men will be scorched with fire and great heat, and blaspheme (Revelation 16:8–9). And through the wrath of God being poured out upon them *few men left*. Many will be consumed by fire or sword, by famine or pestilence, or by one or other of the seven vials; and those that remain shall be affrighted, and give glory to the God of Heaven (Revelation 11:13).

JOY AND MIRTH CEASES

Isaiah 24:7–9

⁷*The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh.* ⁸*The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.* ⁹*They*

shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it (ASV, 1901).

There is joy and celebration when there is a productive harvest of grapes to produce new wine. During the judgment there will be no new wine because the vines will be destroyed from the cataclysm the earth is undergoing. As a result, the normal *merry-hearted* people will no longer be celebrating, they will only be mourning. All the musical instruments they normally use in the celebration will be quiet. Further they will turn to stronger alcohol to assuage their pain, which will not satisfy them either. In fact, the Lord will cause it to be *bitter to them that drink it*. This will come about either through bodily diseases they acquire, or because of the calamities upon the nations and states in which they dwell. And this will be the case of The Woman That Rides the Beast who has the plagues and she proudly says, “*I sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow,*” (Revelation 18:7). This is the so-called church at Rome that led many away from genuine Godly salvation with their false gospel of works.

So, when Babylon the future capital city of the Antichrist is fallen, the voice of harpers, musicians, pipers and trumpeters, shall not be heard any more (Revelation 18:22). *The noise of them that rejoice endeth*; which means that the loud noise of happy celebrating persons at feasts, banquets, marriages, and other like festivals will stop. Just as it is said, that when Babylon will be destroyed, the voice of the bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all. Nor shall the joy be expressed on such occasions by their friends and companions, (Revelation 18:23). *The joy of the harp ceaseth*; which is the stringed instrument of music used on joyful occasions similar to the voice of harpers being particularly mentioned in Revelation 18:22.

BABYLON IS FALLEN

Isaiah 24:10–13

¹⁰*The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in.*
¹¹*There is a crying in the streets because of the wine; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.* ¹²*In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.* ¹³*For thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done (ASV, 1901).*

The final destruction of Babylon will make it fit only for wild animals and demons. We can see this in Isaiah 13. This is similar to what God did to Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord through Jeremiah gives us some graphic descriptions of the fall of Babylon. Merathaim (Str. 4850) and Pekod (Str. 6489) are both symbolic names for Babylon (Jeremiah 50:21-27).

Jeremiah discusses the gathering of many peoples against Babylon in Chapter 50:41-42 and concludes that chapter with God’s decree against Babylon and the anguish of the nations over losing the world capital (Jeremiah 50:45-46). The influence that the Babylonian corrupt systems has had on all mankind since the time of Nimrod is the reason that God’s judgment will fall on Babylon. He expresses this in Jeremiah chapter fifty-one (Jeremiah 51:7-9). Because the world driven by the Babylonian systems of corruption have been especially harsh in persecuting the Jews the judgment will be equally harsh toward Babylon (Jeremiah 51:24; 35-36). The destruction of Babylon will bring about great rejoicing among the faithful seeing God extract His vengeance upon the world system that enslaved so many for so long (Jeremiah 51:48-49). The prophecy of the destruction phase closes with a description of the results.

Jeremiah 51:54-58

⁵⁴The sound of a cry from Babylon, and of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans! ⁵⁵For Jehovah layeth Babylon waste, and destroyeth out of her the great voice; and their waves roar like many waters; the noise of their voice is uttered: ⁵⁶for the destroyer is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, their bows are broken in pieces; for Jehovah is a God of recompenses, he will surely requite. ⁵⁷And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her governors and her deputies, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is Jehovah of hosts. ⁵⁸Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the peoples shall labor for vanity, and the nations for the fire; and they shall be weary (ASV, 1901).

THE CELEBRATION

Isaiah 24:14

¹⁴These shall lift up their voice, they shall shout; for the majesty of Jehovah they cry aloud from the sea (ASV, 1901).

They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing, in other words, “*they that are left upon the earth*. The remnant shall lift up their voice, in singing the praises of God, for his judgments on Babylon, and avenging the blood of his saints; and for their deliverance and salvation, and the enormous blessings they now have. These will be people who made it through the tribulation and got victory over the beast and his image. They now sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, (Revelation 15:2–3; 19:1–2), for the majesty of the Lord. They shall rejoice in the destruction of the Antichrist, and in anticipation of the establishment of the Messianic kingdom and glorious future of the earth under the government of King Messiah, Jesus. They will *cry aloud from the sea*, meaning the west of Israel as the Lord Jesus comes in all His splendor and glory to deliver them as His Second Coming (Revelation 19:11–20:3).

NEXT MESSAGE: THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE PART II

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