

The Book of the Prophet ISAIAH

Chapter 26

Theme: A song of celebration from several angles for God's deliverance of the Jews from hated Babylon.

Outline:

- 1-3 God Would Save Those Trusting Him
- 4-6 Trust Jehovah Against Any Enemy
- 7-9 God Favors the Just and Their Cause
- 10-12 God Made the Righteous Different
- 13-15 God Exalted His Nation Over Others
- 16-19 God Would Answer Prayer with Power
- 20-21 Epilogue: Separate to Avoid Judgment

Preparatory Reading: Psalm 126; Psalm 137; Jeremiah 51; Zephaniah 3; Ezekiel 37:1-14.

Related Links:

- A. *Exposition of Isaiah 13* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/isaiah-13.pdf>.
- B. *Importance of Context (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/two-step-bible-study-rule-2.pdf>.
- C. *Importance of Context (outline)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/slaves-to-context.pdf>.
- D. *Interpreting Bible Prophecies (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/prophecy-interpretation.pdf>.
- E. *Babylon – History and Prophecies (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/babylon.pdf>.

Introduction:

- A. Chapters 13-23 foretold various national judgments by Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and others.
- B. We choose to understand the four chapters (24-27) as tied together in one overarching prophetic vision.
 - 1. Chapter 23 is entirely about Tyre, though it does end with Tyre's resources coming to Mount Zion.
 - 2. Chapter 28 begins with and names Ephraim (the ten tribes of Israel), which indicates a new vision.
 - 3. The four chapters move from judgment (24) to deliverance (25) to praise (26) to fruitfulness (27).
 - 4. Each chapter has references to praise in Zion for the God of Zion, which identifies Judah as object.
 - 5. It hardly matters if one long vision or not, for the real value of this chapter is the obvious lessons.
- C. We understand these chapters as God's judgment on Judah by Nebuchadnezzar and then deliverance.
 - 1. The inhabitants would be scattered abroad from the territory being considered, which fits (Is 24:1).
 - 2. The inhabitants of the territory had a priest recognized by Isaiah, which fits Judah, not all (Is 24:2).
 - 3. The inhabitants include special mention of usury, which was a prohibition of Moses' law (Is 24:2).
 - 4. The land being considered would be emptied of inhabitants and also spoiled, which fits (Is 24:3).
 - 5. The people of the land, ordinarily haughty, would mourn and languish, like Lamentations (Is 24:4).
 - 6. The inhabitants were guilty of breaking laws, the ordinance, and the everlasting covenant (Is 24:5).
 - 7. This cannot be justly said of any other nation or any other event, for they always sinned (Is 24:5).
 - 8. The earth desolate of inhabitants was due to a curse, which is Judah by Moses, not others (Is 24:6).
 - 9. The terrible curse God had told Israel was to rip them out of their land, as Babylon did (Is 24:6).
 - 10. The city broken down excludes Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, thus Nebuchadnezzar (Is 24:10).
 - 11. The judgment would cause a small, scattered remnant to praise God, only Jews fit (Is 24:6,13-16).
 - 12. If the isles of the sea were a place a refuge, then the judgment was limited in scope (Is 24:14-16).
 - 13. Pagans were always treacherous; Nebuchadnezzar was fair; this treachery is Jeremiah (Is 24:16).
 - 14. God chasing the criminals from one trouble to another is His promised chastening (Is 24:17-18).

15. The extreme, complete, and universal terms must be severely limited or never fulfilled (Is 24:19).
 16. The high ones that are on high have to be Jerusalem's priests; pagan priests do not fit (Is 24:21).
 17. The chapter starts to close with ecclesiastical and civil rulers shut up in prison – Babylon (Is 24:22).
 18. The chapter concludes with a restoration of former blessings by a visit from the LORD (Is 24:22).
 19. The restoration of the people by the visit of God would be His ancients in His Jerusalem (Is 24:23).
 20. The wonderful positive events that follow for praise are all fulfilled in Babylon's fall (Is 25:1-5).
 21. The wonderful promises of prosperity after recovery including Messiah are for Judah (Is 25:6-9).
 22. The following, related shout of praise to God is specifically declared to be by Judah (Is 26:1-4).
 23. The following description of deliverance from their chastening fits those of Judah (Is 26:12-16).
 24. The promise is that the vineyard of God and those of Jacob will take root and blossom (Is 27:2-6).
 25. The judgment of Jacob was only chastening, unlike God's judgment of their enemies (Is 27:7-9).
 26. The culmination of the prophecy is gathering dispersed, outcast Jews to Jerusalem (Is 27:12-13).
 27. Similitudes, of which there are many, are a language tool of the prophets (Hosea 12:10; Rev 1:1).
 28. With this contextual emphasis on Judah and Jerusalem, we must limit universal terms accordingly.
 29. A study of Jeremiah, especially chapters 30-45, will give actual history to fulfill these prophecies.
 30. Study of Kings and Chronicles related to the final days of Judah and then its recovery also fit well.
- D. We are not moved by those who choose an interpretation by the universal terms *earth*, *land*, or *world*.
1. The use of *earth*, *land*, and *world* are easy terms for the country, nation, people, and cities of Judah.
 2. A child should know that these words cannot mean the whole globe, so we look for another sense.
 3. If you force a literal or common meaning on these words for all the earth, it must include Alaska.
 4. If you force a literal or common meaning on these words for all the earth, it must be Christ's return.
 5. But since Isaiah 13 has already used these terms for merely localized Babylon, we also limit them.
 6. By reading in order and learning, the use of terms in this chapter have already been limited for us.
 7. Isaiah 13 is taking of Babylon by the Medes, yet *earth* and also *heavens* are used (Is 13:13,10,5).
 8. Isaiah 13 is taking of Babylon by Medes, yet God said He would destroy the *whole land* (Is 13:5,9).
 9. Isaiah 13 is taking of Babylon by the Medes, yet God said He would punish the *world* (Is 13:11).
 10. How extensive was all the world taxed (Luke 2:1)? Or Jesus believed and taught (Jn 12:19; 18:20)?
 11. We ourselves use such expressions – the *whole world* is nuts ... the *earth* has gone crazy ... the weight of the *world* is on his shoulders ... the *earth* is waiting with bated breath, etc.
 12. The thoroughness and severity of *earth* or *world* is fitting to emphasize the widespread desolation.
 13. The universal terms also fit our Lord's limited concern for only His nation in the world (Am 3:2).
 14. As context determines the limited sense of these words elsewhere in the Bible, the many examples of which are beyond the scope of these notes, so we let context set their limited sense here.
- E. Therefore, with this assumption and premise before us, we will interpret the next verses accordingly.
1. Once context is identified, verses and their words are forced to fit; meaning of words is by context.
 2. Words by sound or sense from a dictionary are distracting, especially by the prophets in the Bible.
 3. If we do not make this assumption, the verses become too general without a framework for sense.
 4. However, even if we are slightly wrong, Judah is definitely involved and the lessons are the same.
- F. This chapter is a song and epilogue; it should cause praise, build faith, explain reality, teach wisdom.
1. In light of the judgment (Is 24) and deliverance (Is 25), the righteous should sing forth His praise.
 2. The glory of Judah's salvation from Babylon is seen from many angles in few verses (Is 26:1-19).
 3. It ends with God's advice to withdraw from Babylon connections to avoid the wrath (Is 26:20-21).
 4. Because it is a song – a work of poetry, not didactic doctrine – allow some looseness of language.
 5. The prophets used similitudes in their general work, but identifying a song likely indicates more.
- G. The song would be sung in the land of Judah, setting the celebration as return to Jerusalem by Cyrus.
- H. Paragraph marks in this chapter are some of the worst in the Bible – they are uninspired and wrong.
- I. If you do not see the applicability to your life, then you are blind and have forgotten much (II Pet 1:9).
1. God has done a thousand times as much for you as He ever did for those under the old covenant.
 2. For those living in America in the 21st century, they have the most by all measures of any before.

1 In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

- A. This chapter is a song and epilogue, for great praise, faith, understanding, and wisdom.
 - 1. In light of judgment (Is 24) and salvation (Is 25), the righteous should sing (Is 24:14).
 - 2. The glory of Judah's salvation from Babylon is seen from many angles (Is 26:1-19).
 - 3. It ends with God's advice to withdraw from Babylon to avoid wrath (Is 26:20-21).
 - 4. The prophets generally used similitudes, but identifying a song likely indicates more.
 - 5. The song would be sung in Judah, setting the celebration as their return to Jerusalem.
- B. There are seven occurrences of *in that day* in these four chapters with a common theme.
 - 1. The context shows that the overall event is punishment in Babylon and then release.
 - 2. This section pertaining to the history of Judah is the many facets of their deliverance.
- C. The identity of Judah here and in other verses helped set the 70-year captivity context.
- D. The strong city is Jerusalem – though now desolate would be rebuilt and repopulated.
 - 1. The song would be sung in Judah, setting the celebration as their return to Jerusalem.
 - 2. The literal city was ruined, but Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah would rebuild it.
 - 3. The saved had been saved many times e.g. Sennacherib, but now also from Babylon.
 - 4. With such a decree from Cyrus, the regathered Jews could shout about their strength.
 - 5. Though their circumstances made them vulnerable, God saved them various ways.
 - 6. The N.T. city – the heavenly Jerusalem – rules the world and will rule it more soon.
- E. The real walls and bulwarks of their Jerusalem and ours are God's appointed salvation.
 - 1. **Bulwark.** Substantial defensive work of earth or material; a rampart, a fortification.
 - 2. It was God's work that Belshazzar was killed in a night for Darius and Cyrus to rule.
 - 3. God would further move the hearts of other Persian kings to protect His Jerusalem.
 - 4. God delivered Jerusalem from Alexander, Antiochus IV, and others by His power.
 - 5. We have a mighty city, the kingdom of God, which owns and shall rule the universe.
 - 6. God appointed our salvation from three deaths and eternal inheritance of all things.
 - 7. No one can touch us, and if you think the martyrs lost, your thinking is upside down.
 - 8. The bulwarks of our new Jerusalem must be taught to the next generation (Ps 48:13).
 - 9. The only time you are at any risk at all is when you stray outside Jerusalem's walls.

2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

- A. This is a song! Put down your lexicons and obsession to complicate simple concepts.
 - 1. This is a glad, welcome chorus for every believer to sing warmly to other believers.
 - 2. Instead of defining gates, make sure your joy, brotherly love, and zeal are the most.
- B. Only righteous lovers of truth are welcome – those that did not apostatize in Babylon.
 - 1. Most of the Jews had apostatized before Babylon, even under Hezekiah and Josiah.

2. But these great Christians had withstood pagan seduction of 70 years in the world.
 3. No church should want growth in numbers over growth in grace and church quality.
- C. The city of David with David as king (Jesus) is not for belly-worshippers, but for saints.
1. We open gates to enter together to help each other for Him (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).
 2. It is our duty together to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

- A. God will give those who trust Him perfect peace, which is superior to any natural peace.
1. Peace is the absence of all anxiety, danger, fear, hostilities, perplexities, and worry.
 2. The basis for trust and peace is the great salvation and protection of God (Is 26:1-2).
 3. This allows men to sleep during storms by sure peace and safety (Ps 4:8; 127:1-2).
 4. They had seen their city razed and had lived as captives in a foreign, pagan nation.
 5. The Bible admits peace that passes ordinary experience or understanding (Phil 4:7).
 6. The condition for it is a mental commitment of faith and trust in His saving power.
 7. God cares about your state of mind, promises the perfect remedy, and how to get it.
 8. Some more Bible doctrine about peace ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/peace.pdf>.
 9. Jesus as the Prince of Peace ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/prince-of-peace.pdf>.
- B. Peace is the term of tranquility that is used here, but those believing God get much more.
1. Joy and hope should not be excluded; God will fill those believing Him (Rom 15:13).
 2. If you lack in any of the fruit of the Spirit that is a state of mind, you should believe.
 3. By a choice to believe God's promises, you have divine power for joy (II Pet 1:1-4).
 4. When did you last tell God how much you believed and loved Him to an extreme?
 5. What do you mind? think about? It has consequences (Romans 8:5-6; Phil 3:18-19).
 6. *Your Thoughts Can Destroy You* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/your-thoughts-can-destroy-you.pdf>.
- C. Do not let anyone or anything steal your attention and affection away Almighty God.
1. It is easy to look to other means for protection, but you offend Him and cost you.
 2. You must guard your inputs and your thoughts to avoid losing sight of Him first.
 3. For more about guarding inputs to your soul ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/inputs.pdf>.

***** *Trust Jehovah Against Any Enemy – Verses 4-6* *****

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:

- A. If peace and related aspects of pleasantness require trust, then let us exhort others to it.
1. Trust is faith and confidence that rests in contented tranquility all is and will be well.
 2. It is our duty and privilege to do it ourselves; it is a duty and privilege to help others.
 3. How long should we do it? Forever! He will never leave nor forsake us (Heb 13:5).

4. No challenge or difficulty should move us to be rattled or to look elsewhere for help.
5. When things were hopeless for David, he encouraged himself in God (I Sam 30:6).
- B. While trust brings perfect peace (Is 26:3), it is also based on divine, omnipotent power.
 1. The song so far has been about strength and salvation needed for peace (Is 26:1-2).
 2. The song continues without a period and with a coordinating conjunction (Is 26:5).
 3. These Jews had seen the greatest empire in history defeated in one easy night battle.
 4. Here is everlasting strength – divine, omnipotent power – to justify perpetual trust.
 5. You will face many situations greater than your strength, but never greater than His.
 6. If God could and would destroy beautiful, strong Babylon, He can and will save you.
- C. The LORD JEHOVAH by name, character, choices, and conduct guarantees salvation.
 1. The name of our God is Jehovah, meaning I AM THAT I AM (Exodus 3:14 cp 6:3).
 2. God is not properly a name. It is a vague noun or title of deity. Jehovah is His name.
 3. Jehovah is used only 4.5 times in the KJV (Ex 6:3; Ps 68:4; 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4).
 4. Note that only the book of Isaiah has two uses of the full name Jehovah for God.
 5. But LORD is used 6,559 times in the O.T. for the tetragrammaton, GOD 308 times.
 6. The combination here, LORD JEHOVAH, is Jah Jehovah, a contraction and the full.
 7. This rare and emphatic combination of Jah Jehovah is in the KJ twice (Is 12:2; 26:4).
 8. There is no other God; man's best religious imaginations do not even come close.
 9. *A Name Above Every Name* (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/god/a-name-above-every-name.php>.

5 For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.

- A. The LORD JEHOVAH in context, the object of your trust, crushed mighty Babylon.
 1. Enjoy the poetic words of a song about arrogant Chaldeans beaten down to the dust.
 2. If He can and would do this for sinful Judah, He can and will save you from trouble.
 3. If this is what He did to the world's most potent force, you may safely trust Jehovah.
- C. For much more about Babylon's fall (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/babylon.pdf>.
- D. For more about Babylon's fall (Isaiah 13 outline) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/isaiah-13.pdf>.

6 The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.

- A. Consider figuratively – as a song – former captives walking confidently out of the city.
 1. Medes and Persians were not poor or needy, but the captive Jews there surely were.
 2. The Persians took the city, and the new king (Cyrus) gave the Jews their total liberty.
 3. Picture the confident Jews striding the streets of Babylon as they got ready to depart.
- B. Consider it literally – the Jews were restored to prosperity and later influenced the city.
 1. Persia moved its capital to Persepolis and Shushan; Babylon began a long decline.
 2. Many became Jews under Ahasuerus (Esth 8:17); Peter wrote I Peter from Babylon.
- C. You do not have to be popular or rich for God to give you the victory ... just righteous.

D. For much more about Babylon's fall (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/babylon.pdf>.

E. For more about Babylon's fall (Isaiah 13 outline) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/isaiah-13.pdf>.

***** *God Favors the Just and Their Cause – Verses 7-9* *****

7 The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

- A. The song now moved to another aspect of the character of the Jews saved from Babylon.
 - 1. Just men are upright or righteous – they do right as defined by God and the Bible.
 - 2. Recall Isaiah's prophecy the remnant would sing of *glory to the righteous* (Is 24:16).
- B. God Himself is upright – the most upright – and He appreciates and rewards just men.
 - 1. God measures and tries men to prove their integrity and righteousness (Job 31:6).
 - 2. But beyond merely measuring, He favors those He finds faithful (Psalm 1:6; 11:4,7).
 - 3. No good thing will He withhold from the man that walks uprightly (Psalm 84:11).
 - 4. Godly men know they are righteous and are bold to remind the Lord (Isaiah 38:1-8).
- C. Compare news to Belshazzar – *thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting*.

8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

- A. Here is further elaboration of the just and righteous character of the Jews trusting God.
 - 1. The song included their confession and righteous boast of their living by His rules.
 - 2. *Judgments* here are the statutes and laws of God (Num 36:13; Ps 119:106; Is 64:5).
 - 3. They did not wait for the LORD in vain, for they waited for salvation by obedience.
 - 4. If you want Jehovah to save you (Ps 18:4-19), then live righteously (Ps 18:20-28).
- B. Past obedient waiting, these Jews had also personally desired His name and memory.
 - 1. Their souls had a desire to know and honor God's name and to think upon Him.
 - 2. Those who delight in the LORD will obtain the desires of their heart (Psalm 37:4).
 - 3. Think! Examine! What is the desire of your soul? What do you long after yourself?
 - 4. Do you crave to know and honor God Himself? To remember all He is and has done?
 - 5. What is the desire of your soul? He is a jealous God. He wants 100% of your love.

9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

- A. Isaiah by God continued his description of the exceptional character of Judah's remnant.
- B. Can you match this claim in the song – that the Jews had soul and spirit desire for God?
 - 1. What do you do at night in bed? Do you pray? Worship? Adore? Declare your love?

2. Both David and Elihu met with God at night (Psalm 17:3; 42:8; 63:6; Job 33:14-30).
 3. What do you do to get the day started? Seek God before anything else to honor Him?
 4. This is the greatest use and goal of life – God’s glory (Ps 27:4; 63:1-6; Song 3:1-4).
 5. If you do not understand or do this, you will never realize God’s best for your life.
 6. If you are satisfied with a spouse, job, house, and children, your soul/spirit is small.
- C. This was no mere emotional contemplation of God – it produced obedience (Ps 119:55).
1. The *earth* and *inhabitants of the world* here are as before – the Jews of God’s Judah.
 2. Consult the introduction above to review Isaiah’s use of these terms for the Jews.
- D. We interpret *judgments* here as God’s chastening for His people to learn to obey Him.
1. This is rightly dividing the word – judgments (laws) versus judgments (affliction).
 2. The judgments here – afflictions – were by design to teach God’s children obedience.
- E. Tied together (Is 26:7-9), the Jews appealed to righteous conduct learned by chastening.
- F. Reader! Do not leave this verse until thou hast compared thy soul/spirit to these here.

***** *God Made the Righteous Different – Verses 10-12* *****

10 Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

- A. What a difference! God’s kind treatment of men does not produce uprightness in most.
1. The previous section had explained that their righteousness was by His chastening.
 2. This section is first a description of their difference and then an explanation for it.
 3. God judgments of all kinds taught the Jews righteousness (Is 26:9), but not others.
 4. This important and powerful verse condemns soul-winning methods without grace.
- B. We interpret this of wicked Babylonians and others like them by *the people* (Is 26:11).
1. The wicked here are set in opposition to *the people* (Jews) they had sinfully envied.
 2. It is not only or simply the Babylonians alone, but rather all wicked men in general.
 3. It is an appeal to the Jews’ godly reaction to chastening, proving His work (Is 26:12).
 4. It is still a song – praising God for saving them – and their righteous character for it.
- C. If God were to deal kindly with the Babylonians or others, it would not produce fruit.
1. They are bent on sinning, so they will not learn righteousness by a favorable life.
 2. They are bent on avarice and greed, so even good laws and people will not work.
 3. They will not see the majesty of a Creator God favoring them with their prosperity.
 4. Men of Lystra worshipped Jupiter and Mercurius against providence (Acts 14:8-18).
- D. We use this passage and rightly so for evidence of the total depravity of all mankind.
1. Some have bought the psychological lie that human conduct is due to environment.
 2. Like a dog or pig, a change in circumstances or situation will not alter their nature.
 3. Though men understand creation, they reject a Creator to rule them (Rom 1:18-28).
 4. For much more about human depravity ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/total-depravity.pdf>.

11 LORD, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

- A. Rightly divide again between *not seeing* in the first clause and *yet seeing* in the second.
 - 1. God's hand lifted up here is favor to sinners and displaying His majesty (Is 26:10).
 - 2. Whether creation, providence, or the conscience, men do not see God or obey Him.
 - 3. It does not matter to them that every living creature benefits by His hand (Ps 145:16).
 - 4. Soulwinning methods cannot work without His miracle to give sight (Luke 16:31).
- B. But they shall see when it is too late as God's fiery judgment consumes His enemies.
 - 1. Their great crime was envy and punishment of the Jews – the people they had used.
 - 2. The *fire of thine enemies* is not enemy fire but God's fire for enemies. Context rules.
 - 3. Compare Sarah's, *my wrong*, which was a wrong done to her, not by her (Gen 16:5).
 - 4. Deciphering many genitive phrases (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/genitive-case.pdf>.
- C. The Egyptians finally, but too late, knew the LORD was with the Israelites (Ex 14:25).

12 LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

- A. Opposite the fire to burn up enemies, the Jews trusted God to give them peace instead.
- B. They were confident of this future peace and prosperity by His clear grace in their lives.
 - 1. The works *here* are not works for them – adverb *also*, pronoun *our*, preposition *in*.
 - 2. It does not say, For thou hast wrought all *thy* works *for* us, appealing directly to God.
 - 3. The Jews had appealed to works of living righteously and seeking Him (Is 26:7-9).
 - 4. They knew He must have good plans by their difference from the wicked (Is 26:10).
 - 5. They knew they were *the people* and that He would burn up their enemies (Is 26:11).
 - 6 This sense is consistent with both the context and scripture (Phil 1:6; 2:12-16; etc.).
- C. Evidence and proof God is with you is obedience by grace (I Thes 1:2-7; II Pet 1:5-11).

***** *God Exalted His Nation Over Others – Verses 13-15* *****

13 O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

- A. The Jews confessed to God that in Babylon they had to submit to kings other than Him.
 - 1. The Chaldeans first forced their authority and position by defeating them in Judah.
 - 2. Then for the seventy years of captivity they had to honor civil rulers and obey them.
 - 3. They had to pay taxes (as we do), some of which would have gone to support idols.
- B. Now that they were free to return to their land, to His city, they would honor only Him.
 - 1. These corrected Jews had a very exalted view of God after their captivity (Is 33:22).
 - 2. *But by thee only* describes God's singular deliverance of them from the rule of others.

3. They could not have delivered themselves back to Jerusalem to worship the one God.
4. They intended, by His mercy to rescue them from Babylon, to worship only Him.

14 They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

- A. Those lords (or kings) that had dominion over us, like Belshazzar, are now dead forever.
 1. There would not be a revival of them or the kingdom, for the Persians replaced both.
 2. Keep in mind God would and did revive and resurrection the Jewish state (Is 26:19).
- B. Our God, the mighty King of kings, came down and destroyed them and their memory.
- C. Therefore, these saved Jews were excited to give all the praise to the one and only God.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

- A. Contrary to and opposite what God had done to Babylon, He had now favored Judah.
 1. Keep in mind Babylon's death above (Is 26:14) and Judah's resurrection (Is 26:19).
 2. While Babylon was diminished and transferred to Persia, the Jews were increased.
- B. They glorified God for mercy recovering and increasing them after His scattering them.
- C. Do you know how to recognize what you deserve and what you have to glorify Him?
- D. Reader! Do you love to glorify God for everything? For anything? Large or small?

***** *God Would Answer Prayer with Power – Verses 16-19* *****

16 LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.

- A. Do not be moved by changes in person of pronouns – third here, but second in verse 13.
- B. The nation in trouble by God's chastening visited Him and poured out prayer to Him.
- C. All the good things we have read so far had a beginning ... prayer of repentance to God.
- D. Never forget the 'R' factor of repentance ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/repentance-factor.pdf>.

17 Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.

- A. Women in labor, at least most of them without medication, make some serious noise.
- B. The Jews in the siege, in the long trek to Babylon, and then there, howled desperately.
- C. The LORD saw and heard them but did not do anything to help them initially. Learn it!
- D. Remember ... God allowed the Jews to sigh in Egypt under hard bondage before escape.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

- A. Continuing the simile from the previous verse, the song describes Judah as in childbirth.
- B. All their efforts (of self-protection) and all their fear and grief did not help in any way.
 - 1. They had in effect only given birth to wind – nothing of substance – for deliverance.
 - 2. We do not know all their defensive measures, but we know they were not successful.
 - 3. We have read of Hezekiah’s efforts to defend against Sennacherib (Isaiah 22:9-11).
 - 4. Rightly dividing terms – the *earth* and *the inhabitants of the world* here are Babylon.
 - 5. The Jews of Judah had most certainly fallen – but their captors were strong and safe.
 - 6. The deliverance needed was rescue from the trouble caused by captors (Is 26:16).
- C. It is a song, and you might think the verses out of order, but desperation produces prayer.
 - 1. This section began with prayer (Is 26:16), and this section ends in victory (Is 26:19).
 - 2. Think: *Necessity is the mother of invention*, and, *Desperation is the mother of prayer*.
 - 3. The best time for praying is when nothing else has worked and you are at wits end.
 - 4. Together, this section speaks of their prayers leading from hopelessness to victory.

19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

- A. The prophet Isaiah, altering person again, has the choir promising civil resurrection.
 - 1. The death here is not some fantastic leap to the resurrection of Christ in the end.
 - 2. If this is bodily resurrection, both of the just and unjust, what is verse 14’s limitation?
 - 3. The death is civil, national, economic, political, and religious death of the captivity.
 - 4. This conclusion to the song appeals against the chorus of enemies dying (Is 26:14).
 - 5. There are other ways to die than bodily death and to lie in the dust in a coffin (Rom 11:15; Eph 5:14; I Tim 5:6; James 5:19-20; Rev 3:1; Psalm 71:20; Ezek 17:24; etc.).
 - 6. These are not truly dead, for the song calls on those in the dust to sing about living.
 - 7. We know the context – Judah’s salvation from Babylon – so fit the similitude to it.
- B. The chorus is singing to the nation – remember it is a song – of living singer and hearers.
 - 1. The words, *my dead body*, is not Isaiah’s dead body but rather that of a living singer.
 - 2. All those dead in the sense the captivity had killed Judah were to take up the song.
 - 3. The dew here is God’s favor on the regathered Jews from their dead state in Babylon.
 - 4. The earth casting out the dead is a continuation of the figure of Judah coming to life.
 - 5. If you need help seeing this, read about Ezekiel’s valley of dry bones (Eze 37:1-14).
- C. Putting it together, this section speaks of prayers leading from hopelessness to victory.
 - 1. If you are troubled in any way and need His help, cry out like this (James 4:8-10).
 - 2. If we want our prayers to be fervent to be heard, James taught us such (James 5:16).
- D. This is the end of the song, and the next two verses are an epilogue to fix its setting.

20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

- A. The song was a prophecy! Therefore, the pain preceding the prosperity still had to come!
 - 1. The indignation here is not the chastening of the Jews but the overthrow of Babylon.
 - 2. We know this by preceding and following verses about inhabitants (Isaiah 26:18,21).
 - 3. This was an indignation that the Jews could hide from, impossible if His chastening.
 - 4. The indignation was God coming out of His place in fury to slay Leviathan (Is 27:1).
- B. Prophecies of future deliverance are to give us comfort while we endure the chastening.
 - 1. We appeal to events like this from scripture, from our brethren, and from experience.
 - 2. The martyrs could die cheerfully at Rome's hand, knowing they fulfilled Revelation.
- C. For Jews prior to Babylon or the Jews in Babylon reading this, they had to wait a little.
- D. They were to withdraw from activity in Babylon, for coming ruin (Jer 51:6,9,45-46,50).

21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

- A. As the song to this point and the two chapters prior have taught, this is ruin of Babylon.
 - 1. The overall context is Nebuchadnezzar against Judah and Persia against Belshazzar.
 - 2. The inhabitants of the earth to be killed are Chaldeans in context (Is 26:13-15,18).
 - 3. The following chapter will open with God powerfully slaying the serpent Leviathan.
 - 4. This was an indignation that the Jews could hide from, impossible if His chastening.
- B. The Jews were to withdraw from unnecessary connections in Babylon to watch it fall.
- C. Christians were told to rest with the apostles for the coming of Jesus (II Thess 1:7-10).