

# OpenTheo

## Fall of Jerusalem (Part 1)



### Isaiah: A Topical Look At Isaiah - Steve Gregg

In this segment, Steve Gregg discusses the fall of Jerusalem as predicted in Isaiah, where the old covenant order would be abolished and replaced by the new covenant order. He emphasizes that the end of the old order did not happen all at once, but rather in stages, and that the destruction of the physical city of Jerusalem was a preview of the ultimate destruction of the natural world. Gregg interprets the shaking of the earth as a metaphor for the fall of Jerusalem and the arrival of the new covenant. He also highlights the importance of waiting upon the Lord for strength and salvation.

### Transcript

One of the themes that we come across a lot in Isaiah, although to tell you the truth, I think a lot of people don't recognize it when they see it, is that Isaiah predicts that the old covenant order is going to be abolished and replaced with a new covenant order. I think, to tell you the truth, I'm not sure why so many people don't seem to see that. I almost said why so few people do see it, but there may be thousands of people who do see it.

I don't know. I just know there's an awful lot of people who don't because the commentators I've read often don't seem to get it. And far be it from me to think that I know more than the commentators.

I mean, I'm not even educated, and they are. But to me, when you compare scripture to scripture, it seems like obvious what it's talking about. But I must confess, it didn't always seem obvious to me.

There was, I guess, probably 12 years in my ministry where I was teaching the Bible, I would say most of the prophetic books were still a mystery to me. And that was partly because I avoided them to a certain extent. I would only cite from the prophets when I was trying to show how either Jesus' life fulfilled something the prophets said, or when some event in history, either ancient history had been a fulfillment of prophecy, or, of course, there were many times when I thought some modern event was a fulfillment of some prophecy.

And so only in the cases where fulfillments of specific things were sought did I ever really get into the prophets. That doesn't mean I didn't read them. I did.

But I didn't understand them much, and I knew I didn't, and so I didn't read them a lot, like you'd read the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul and maybe the Pentateuch and Psalms. In some places you read more because you get more of a blessing out of it. The prophets were kind of a mystery to me.

And the thing that opened me up to a whole area of understanding, I think, of the prophets, was recognizing the significance of the shift from the Old Covenant to the New. We think of the shift taking place at the cross, and it did. But when Jesus died, though he officially brought an end to the Old Covenant system, he didn't materially bring an end to it because the temple continued to function for 40 years in Jerusalem, and even the Christians in Jerusalem, according to the Book of Acts, still went there.

We find Paul, even when he goes there in his final journey to Jerusalem, being advised by James, the leader of the church there, you know, go to the temple with these guys and pay their vows, fees, and so forth. I mean, it was quite clear. Even the Jewish Christians kept attending the temple, even after Jesus had died and brought an end to the Old Order.

And that is, I suppose, because there was a lot of confusion on their part as to what their status was. Because now that they were Christians and Jews, were they not obligated to observe the law of Christ and also the law of Moses? And that, of course, was addressed in the early church in various ways, especially the Jerusalem Council dealt with the issue of circumcision and some of those things. But even after that, we find the Jewish Christians still attending the temple.

Now, when the temple was destroyed in the year 70 A.D. by the Romans, the Christians never had to wonder about that anymore. They knew that they were not required to practice Christianity and Judaism because there was no possibility of practicing Judaism. And ever since the destruction of the temple, there has been no Judaism, such as the Bible describes it.

Of course, we know there have been synagogues. There still are. I don't know.

There probably is a synagogue in this town. I'm not aware of one, but there may not be. And there may be.

But there are different branches of Jewish religion out there today. There are the Orthodox Jews, there are the Reform Jews, and so forth. But none of them are practicing Judaism.

If we define Judaism as the religion that God gave to Israel. Because anyone can tell by reading Leviticus or any of the other books of the law that the religion that God gave to

Israel was focused around a Levitical priesthood, offering animal sacrifices at a temple. This was the daily routine.

It was the central thing in their religion. Ever since the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D., there has been no altar, there have been no Levites, there have been no sacrifices. Therefore, whatever is practiced in the name of Judaism today is some man-made accommodation to the new situation.

But of course, the destruction of the temple was God's way of saying, Judaism is over forever. Now, it's not entirely clear why God waited 40 years after the crucifixion of Christ to do that. I mean, on the day that Jesus was crucified, God did give a visible sign in the tearing of the veil in the temple, that the way into the holiest of all was now accessible.

Which in itself called into question the continuing validity of any of the temple rites. Because the writer of Hebrews said, while the first tabernacle was standing, and as long as only one man once a year was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies, this whole ritual was showing that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. While the first tabernacle or temple was standing.

And God did make the way into the holiest of all manifest, and symbolized that by tearing the veil of the temple the very day Jesus died. But the temple stood. Apparently the Jews remade the veil, sewed it back together and kept going.

And they did that until they could do it no longer, and that point was when not one stone was left standing on another of the temple, which Jesus said would happen. And that brought a formal end to everything associated with the Old Covenant. The 40 years in between the death of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem, I've never heard anyone comment on it or give any teaching about its significance.

I've thought about it a lot, because it does seem to me strange, that God had put an official end to the Old Covenant at the cross, but a material end to it not until almost a whole generation later, 40 years. And the strangeness of that has made me contemplate it, and I don't know that I have any real answers about it. I will say this.

When God accomplished the first exodus, the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage of Egypt. But they didn't come fully into their own land, having their own identity as a nation in the southern world, until 40 years later. There was a transitional generation, a generation that had known the bondage of Egypt, and was just getting used to freedom.

And perhaps it's because of God's policy, which Isaiah stated in chapter, I think, 28. He said, it's here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept. God doesn't dump everything on you at once.

We can even see in the book of Acts how that it dawned gradually, even on the apostles, that circumcision wasn't necessary. I mean, it was probably a decade into the church's life before they realized the Gentiles didn't have to be circumcised to be Christians. There's a progressive revelation, and God doesn't just kind of open the windows of heaven and pour out all truth at once.

You know, because as Jesus said to his disciples in the upper room, in John 16, I think it's verse 12, he said, I have many things to say unto you yet, but you are not yet able to bear them. Therefore, when the Holy Spirit comes, he will lead you into all truth. That is apparently gradually.

And that is how the Holy Spirit leads us, is gradually. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little. It's possible that God knew that human nature being what it was, the generation that came out of Egypt and had lived their whole lives with their grandparents and great-grandparents and so forth as slaves, would take them a long time to get used to the idea of freedom.

But their children who would be born in freedom, in the wilderness, would be able to adjust more to being self-governing, you know, free men running a nation. And so God just gave them a generation of transition there. There may be more spiritual significance to it than that, I don't know.

I would just say in practical terms, it took that generation that came out of Egypt, you know, they didn't easily adjust. They wanted to go back to Egypt after a while. When things got rough in the wilderness, they wanted to appoint a leader to take them back to Egypt.

They weren't sure that it wasn't better there. Better food, more security. And that just is human nature, you know.

When God takes you out from the known to the unknown, you're out on the no-man's land where no man has ever gone before. It's insecure. And there's, you know, temptation to kind of hang on to the old and so forth.

And maybe it just took a whole generation of Jews to get used to not being slaves, not being attracted back to Egypt, getting used to the idea, hey, we're free people now, we're our own independent nation. And God just gave them time to adjust to that. And a generation to arise that would understand that.

And that seems to parallel what happened with the New Covenant. When God effected the second exodus, where the Jewish Christians were liberated through the death of Christ, the church didn't really come into its own as an identity until the destruction of the temple. Before that, the pagans saw Christianity as a sect of Judaism and nothing more.

And it's good for the church that it did, because Judaism was legal, but new sects were not. New religions were forbidden in the Roman world, but old religions were allowed to continue. And so if Christianity had been recognized in those early days as a new religion and not part of Judaism, it would have been persecuted much earlier than it was by the Romans.

However, because it was thought to be a sect of Judaism, it was considered to be legal. When the temple was destroyed, however, Titus, the Roman general who destroyed it, believed, according to Josephus, he believed that he was getting rid of Judaism and Christianity. What he found out was he got rid of Judaism, but he couldn't get rid of Christianity because Christianity was not dependent upon the temple.

Christianity was in fact an entirely different kind of religion than Judaism. And it was at that point that Christianity came to have its own identity, and nobody connected it with Judaism anymore. And it, of course, came under persecution officially by the Romans after that.

And we see that there was sort of an identity crisis for the church in those first 40 years. Were they part of the old covenant and the New Testament had just been tacked on, or did the New Testament replace the old? The writer of Hebrews, of course, is writing to Jewish Christians in the very midst of that whole identity crisis. And you will, since you haven't studied Hebrews, you may not know yet, maybe some of you have studied it, that it is written to Jewish believers who, because of the persecution they have received, probably from family and community members, fellow Jews, for their stand they've taken for Christ, they've kind of wanted to back off of their Christian zeal.

They're thinking of going back and worshipping God according to the way of their fathers. This is clear throughout Hebrews. The book of Hebrews is a polemic to prevent them from doing that, to say, no, Christianity is everything, Judaism is nothing, Judaism was just for a time, but Christianity is much better, everything about Jesus is better than that, and you're going backward, this is not good.

But among the things the writer of Hebrews warned them of is, this Judaism you're thinking of going back to is not long for this world. It's soon to be gone. For example, in Hebrews chapter 8, in verses 8 through 12, there's a lengthy quote from Jeremiah.

It's that quote where Jeremiah talked about there being a new covenant in Jeremiah 31. And so the writer of Hebrews quotes it and indicates that even Jeremiah said there'd be a new covenant, and that indicates it has come. But in verse 13, after he has finished quoting the passage from Jeremiah, he gives his own application, his own statement, commentary on it.

He says, in that, this is Hebrews 8 verse 13, in that he says a new covenant, that is, in Jeremiah there's reference to a new covenant, in that he says a new covenant, he has

made the first one obsolete. Now notice this. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

He's referring to the fact that all the trappings of the Old Testament would soon be gone with the destruction of Jerusalem. Now what's interesting there is he indicates that with the coming of the first, the new covenant which Jesus established, the old became obsolete. He acknowledges that the old covenant is now obsolete, but it's not vanished away yet.

He said it's becoming obsolete. That which is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. He knew he was living in a transition time.

A new covenant had come, the old one was obsolete, it would soon be gone. But it was not yet gone. But the point he wanted to make, of course, to his readers, was that if you are a Christian Jew in the new covenant, you're a nut if you go back to the old covenant again because it's not going to be there much longer.

You go back to the sacrificial system and you're going back to that which is going to be gone shortly. Look at chapter 12. In chapter 12 there's a quote from Haggai where God talks about shaking up the heavens and the earth.

Shaking up the things that can be shaken. Most interpreters understand this to be the end of the world that's predicted. And the end of this world and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

From my study of Haggai, the passage from which this is taken, as well as my study of Hebrews, I'm of the opinion that he's talking about the shake-up of the old order. Yes, he uses language like heavens and earth shaking, but that's not too uncommon in apocalyptic language to speak of the fall of some great empire, some great entity, in terms of cosmic disturbance. In Hebrews chapter 12, he says, verse 25 actually, See that you do not refuse him who speaks, for if they did not escape who refused him who spoke on earth, meaning at Mount Sinai, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from him who speaks from heaven, Jesus.

In other words, we're even more obligated to listen to Jesus than to Moses. And then he says, Whose voice, that is God's, then shook the earth, that is at Mount Sinai the earth shook. But now he has promised, saying, yet once more I shake not only the earth but also heaven.

Now some take that literally. But I take it to mean that as he shook the earth at Mount Sinai, there will be an even greater shake-up when he makes the new covenant. But you don't have to agree with me on that.

There's many things in my background, in my own studies, that make me think that. I can't give them to you now, and if you're not convinced, that's fine. But he says, now this

yet once more, he's quoting from Haggai chapter 2. Excuse me, is it Habakkuk? No, it's Haggai 2.6, yeah.

He says, now this yet once more indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Now he's talking about a shake-up that is going to remove things that can be shaken out. And that which is permanent and unshakeable will remain.

Reading on, therefore since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken. Now notice that. That which cannot be shaken will remain.

What is that? The kingdom we are receiving. The new covenant experience we have is not going, it's going to survive the shake-down. Whatever can be shaken down will be.

But the kingdom we've received is permanent. It's going to survive the shake-up. Let us have grace by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear for God.

Our God is a consuming fire. Later on, in chapter 13 of Hebrews, the writer says, in verse 11, speaking of the sacrificial system of the old covenant, For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burnt outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate.

Therefore let us go forth to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Therefore by him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

And do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Now, remember the context. He's writing to Jewish people, attracted back to Judaism from Christianity.

He says, listen, we don't have any continuing city here. Jerusalem, our capital city of our religion, it's not going to continue. We are renouncing this Jerusalem, and it's just as well, because it's not going to continue.

There is no continuing city here for us. The sacrificial system is on the way out, therefore we replace that with offering the sacrifice of praise to God, and with well-doing and sharing our goods. These are the sacrifices with which God is well pleased.

The whole temple system, the whole Jerusalem is coming down, but we seek something more permanent. In fact, when God shakes down everything that can be shaken, the kingdom that we have received will remain. It cannot be shaken.

This is a theme throughout the book of Hebrews. But notice, this is a divinely inspired

interpretation of the interim period between the death of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem. The old covenant has come.

God has declared his disapproval with the old, and therefore we can expect him to dump it. And the writer says he soon is going to. It's soon going to vanish away.

But what's happening here is a shakedown. A shakedown of everything that can be shaken. A shakedown of everything that is carnal, of everything that isn't permanent, and what will remain will be the spiritual, the enduring.

Now that shaking up, that removal of the old and the institution of the new is frequently spoken of in Isaiah. I believe the final several chapters at the end of Isaiah are part of that discussion, but there's others earlier, and I want to look at those. I mentioned earlier that chapters 24 through 27 are a key section in Isaiah about this theme.

Another is chapters 34 and 35, and another is the final chapters. Now some of the themes that we'll find here have to do with the Gentiles coming in and the rejection of Jews. But let's just take a look at this.

It may take us more than one session to take these passages. It usually does. But let's look at chapter 24.

I hate to burden you with so much repetition, but I'll point out again, just in case this chapter is not familiar to you as it is to me, that this is the chapter that makes frequent reference to the earth, about which I've a number of times already said, if you translate *eretz*, the Hebrew word here is land, which, by the way, the translators themselves translate it land in the same chapter a few times, but usually earth, for instance, verse 3, the land should be entirely emptied, same word, and also in verse 13, in the midst of the land, that's *eretz*. And so it is in all the occasions where it's translated earth. So we've got a translator here being frivolous, really.

I mean, just saying, yeah, let's make it earth, let's make it land. This is necessary sometimes. The word *eretz* sometimes means earth and sometimes means land.

It's translator's preference. My suggestion I made in an earlier lecture to you is that if you translate it earth virtually all the way through, maybe a few exceptions where it would, I should say land all the way through, and a few exceptions allow it to be earth, it makes more sense than translating it earth all the way through with a few exceptions where it's land. Mostly because it talks about a destruction, a downfall, but it speaks in terms of people fleeing from it, being scattered from it.

A city in particular is spoken of as being destroyed. And in my opinion, it's a reference to the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth. The city of destruction, the city of confusion it's also called, is Jerusalem.



But there's another city that replaces it. You'll note, if you look there, in verse 10 of chapter 24 it says, the city of confusion is broken down. Every house is shut up that no one may go in.

This was literally true. Josephus records a time during the siege of Jerusalem where all the houses in the city were boarded up and shut up because there was a shortage of grain and people had to protect it from marauding bands of vandals that would come and steal things. And Josephus specifically mentions all the houses being shut up, the windows boarded up and everything.

Verse 12 says the city of desolation, excuse me, in the city desolation is left. And the gate is stricken with destruction. Now we've got this city, it's a city of confusion.

It's a city that's made desolate. Desolate being an important word because Jesus said to the Jews as he left the temple, your house is left to you desolate. He referred to the destruction of Jerusalem by Romans as the abomination that causes desolation.

The desolation of the city is a frequent theme in this section. For example, you've got it also in chapter 27 in verse 10. And it says, yet the fortified city will be desolate.

The habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness. Okay, it's a fortified city. So called there and also in chapter 25 verse 2. It says you have made a city a ruin, a fortified city a ruin, a palace of foreigners to be city no more.

It will never be rebuilt. Now through this section we see these frequent references to this city. It is made desolate, never again to be restored.

However, there's another city that replaces it. In chapter 26 in verse 1. It says in that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah. We have a strong city.

God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. Now here the city that replaces the city of confusion, the city of desolation, the fortified city that God brings down and makes it a palace for foreigners and so forth. That city is replaced with a strong city that has God and his salvation as walls.

It's a spiritual city. It's the church, the spiritual Jerusalem. So throughout this section we'll see this thing repeated.

There's a city that comes under judgment and a city that replaces it. The city that comes under judgment is confused. It is fortified.

It is a wicked city, a physical city. But the city that replaces it is a spiritual city because its walls are salvation. Spiritual walls.

And so here, this is something that kind of clues us in as to what's going on in this section. And I'd like to go through and read at least chapter 24. Substituting the word

earth with land where that is, I think, appropriate.

Behold the Lord makes the land empty and makes it waste. Distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants, meaning the land of Israel. And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest.

As with the servant, so with the master. As with the maid, so with her mistress. As with the buyer, so with the seller.

As with the lender, so with the borrower. In other words, everybody, rich or poor, it doesn't matter, male or female, slave or free, they're all going to be judged. As with the creditor, so with the debtor.

The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered for the Lord has spoken this word. Now, there seems no good reason to say in verse 1 the earth is empty and in verse 3 the land shall be entirely empty. When the word in the Hebrew is the same one.

Either the earth or the land is intended in both places. Something is being emptied. And this emptying is accomplished, according to verse 1, by the scattering of the inhabitants.

Now, you just decide which makes sense. The inhabitants of the world, the planet, are going to be, the world is going to be emptied because the inhabitants are scattered. To where? Or the inhabitants of the land of Israel are scattered and the land is empty.

That makes sense. Furthermore, the Bible nowhere teaches that the earth will ever be emptied. The righteous shall remain in it.

The wicked shall be cut off from it, the Bible says. We will inherit the earth. But the land of Israel, yes, it's been emptied.

Of course, it's repopulated now, but for many, many years, Jews were not allowed there at all. Eventually, nomadic Arabs took it over and for 1300 years they controlled it and lived in it. But it was emptied of its inhabitants, of its Jewish inhabitants.

Now, it goes on, verse 4. The earth, or land, mourns and fades away. The world languishes and fades away. Now, here the word world cannot be translated land.

This is a different word, it's not Eretz. However, to my mind, this doesn't change anything. The word world in the scriptures is used frequently of a geographical area.

It's sort of like, we might talk about the Roman world. We might talk about the world of entertainment, the world of art, or whatever. The Muslim world.

There's different realms, both geographical and figuratively speaking, that we call a world. We read in Luke chapter 2 that Caesar Augustus made a decree that all the world should be taxed. But Caesar could hardly plan to tax the American Indians.

It was the Roman world that would be taxed. A prophecy about the Roman Empire, describing it as a fierce beast, in Daniel chapter 7 describes how that beast will trample down the whole world. But that is reference to the Roman Empire, it didn't trample down the whole planet Earth.

So even though the word world here appears and cannot be translated land, it's not like the word Earth, yet it doesn't necessarily have to mean what we call the whole world. It can mean a region. The world of the Jews.

The realm of their activity in their life. The haughty people of the Earth, or land, languish. The land is also defiled under its inhabitants because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant.

Therefore the curse has devoured the land, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the land are burned, and few men are left. Now, I've translated Eret's land all the way through here, and let me tell you why.

The features that are spoken of this entity, either the Earth or the land, apply naturally to Israel, but not to the world as a whole. For one thing, as I pointed out, it says they have broken the everlasting covenant. One cannot break a covenant who is not in a covenant.

Israel was in covenant with God and broke that covenant. The world in general never had such a covenant with God, and therefore never broke covenant with God. Ezekiel says, I'm sorry, not Ezekiel, I don't know why I turned there.

In Isaiah chapter 33, verse 8, this is clearly talking about the same thing. It says, the highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceases. He has broken the covenant.

He has despised the cities, he regards no man. This means God. God does not regard any Jew.

In this case, this is Israel coming under judgment. God has broken the covenant. Why? Because in chapter 24, they broke the covenant.

Therefore God was free to disallow the covenant also. Anyway, the breaking of the covenant, I think, is something distinctly Jewish. I don't think anyone other than they can do it.

Now, verse 5 says, the earth also is defiled under its inhabitants, or the land, because they have transgressed the laws and changed the ordinances. The defiling of the land is spoken of in the Old Testament with reference to the Jews, usually by idolatry or by shedding innocent blood. They were warned that this would defile the land that they were in, and they were warned not to do it.

In Numbers chapter 35 and verse 33, it says, So you shall not pollute the land, or defile the land, where you are. For blood, meaning the shedding of innocent blood, defiles the land. And no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.

Now, here's the thing. God said your land will be defiled if you shed innocent blood, and the only way that can be atoned for is for your blood to be shed. The land is defiled by the bloodshed and the wickedness of the Jews.

They killed Jesus. That blood was on their heads, remember? When Pilate said, Shall I kill your king? And they said, His blood be on our heads and on our children. And sure enough, Jesus said as he walked to Golgotha to the women, Weep for yourselves and for your children, because they're going to do this to you too.

The Romans. And he predicted this. Anyway, they asked for his innocent blood to be upon him.

Pilate said, I am free. He washed his hands and said, I'm clean of the innocent blood of this man. They said, His blood be on us.

So they became deliberately guilty of innocent blood and defiled the land. And there was no atonement for that in Old Testament times, apart from their own death. Now, there is an atonement that was available to the Jews after they killed Jesus.

And that was Jesus' death. He could die for them. But if they didn't accept his, then there was nothing left for them to be destroyed.

Now, the persons in question, the region destroyed in Isaiah 24 is one where the land or the earth has been defiled under its inhabitants. In Psalm 106, in verse 38, it says, speaking of the Jews, well, in verse 37 and 38 it says, They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan. And the land was polluted with blood.

They defiled their land. And so, for Isaiah to say, the land is defiled under them, is to echo a previously used biblical expression of what the Jews were told not to do, but what they were told they did do. They defiled the land.

So, I think there is very good reason to interpret this as land, not as earth. It says, oh, also in verse 6, Therefore the curse has devoured the earth. The curse? Like some specific curse that we should already know something about? Where in the Bible does it talk about a particular curse to be avoided? In Deuteronomy 28.

In Deuteronomy 28, Moses warned that if the Jews would violate their covenant with God, that God would curse them in every conceivable way. Whereas if they would keep

his covenant, he would bless them in every conceivable way. That's what all of chapter 28 is.

Verse 1 through 14 of Deuteronomy 28, talks about how God will bless them if they keep his covenant. But beginning at verse 15, it says, But if you break my laws, my covenants, then I'll curse you in every conceivable way. And Moses said, I put before you life and death, blessing and cursing.

Choose life and blessing. But there was also the alternative. If they didn't obey, they'd have death and the curse from God.

And here it says, Therefore, because they violated his laws, the curse has devoured their land. Isaiah 24.6 It says earth there in the New King James, but I think land is better. They have come under the curse.

By the way, Zephaniah 1.18 I would like you to cross-reference over there if you can find Zephaniah. It's just before Haggai. Zephaniah 1.18 It says, Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath.

But the whole land shall be devoured by fire of his jealousy. Now this is a reference to Jerusalem. Zephaniah is a prophecy against Jerusalem in the Babylonian captivity.

But notice it says, the whole land shall be devoured. That language. Isaiah 24.6 says, Therefore, the curse has devoured the land.

The expression is used of Jerusalem in Zephaniah 1.18. In all likelihood, it refers to Jerusalem and Judea and that other place also in Isaiah. Look at Malachi 4.5 and 6. Malachi 4.5 and 6. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers.

Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. Now, the word earth there can be translated land. And as a matter of fact, interestingly, the New American Standard translates it land there.

Which surprised me to find out. In the New American Standard version, verse 6 says, Lest I come and strike the land with a curse. And I believe that makes more sense because the fulfillment of this Elijah the prophet passage was John the Baptist.

And he came at the crucial moment before God was about to strike the land with its curse. The curse threatened in Deuteronomy 28. Was hovering overhead and John the Baptist said so.

He said, God's axe is already poised at the root of the trees ready to cut down every fruitless tree. His fan is already in his hand. He's going to thoroughly purge his threshing

floor and get rid of the chaff.

And gather the wheat into his barn. John the Baptist said that his appearance was at a crucial moment in Israel's history. Their destiny was in the balance.

God was poised to strike them. And to eliminate every fruitless tree and all the chaff. And he was there to call them back to God.

Lest this curse fall upon them. They didn't listen to John and they didn't listen to Jesus. Therefore, the curse did fall upon them.

But you see Malachi, the Old Testament closes with this very warning. That before God sends this terrible day of judgment on Jerusalem. This terrible day of the Lord.

He will send Elijah the prophet who is John the Baptist. To prepare, to warn, to turn people if they will turn. So that if possible they could avoid this terrible curse.

This terrible day of the Lord upon them. But they did not avoid it because they didn't turn. Now, what I would point out to you.

Is it talks about striking the land with a curse. The very last line in the Old Testament is. Lest I strike the land with a curse.

In Isaiah 24 verse 6 it says. The curse has devoured the land. It's a reference to I think the same curse.

The curse that came on Judea in response to the threats of God. And you see, remember I told you. That one of the things that really made the light go on in my head.

Was when I read in Luke 21. And verses 20 through 23. Where Jesus said when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies.

Know that it's desolation is near. Then you who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And you who are in the city, outside the city.

Don't go into the city. Don't go to get your clothes or anything. He said for these are the days of vengeance.

That all things that are written might be fulfilled. I showed you that verse earlier. Is that Luke 21, 23? So, here he's telling his disciples.

The Romans are going to come. They're going to wipe the place out. And this is it.

These are the days of vengeance. The very term Isaiah used a few times. The days of vengeance.

He said these are them. So that all things that are written might be fulfilled. And while I

will acknowledge that all things might be a hyperbole.

And maybe some things weren't fulfilled then. It certainly gives the impression. That Jesus saw the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

As a key theme of Old Testament prophecy. One so key and so frequent. That he could maybe by slight hyperbole say all things.

That the prophets wrote. Will be fulfilled in this event. And that is a very important key to understanding Old Testament prophecy.

Because an awful lot of prophecies are naively interpreted. By Christians. To in the Old Testament as being about the end of the world.

This being one of them. Isaiah 24 is usually thought about to be at the end of the world. It doesn't make sense to make it the end of the world.

But it sounds like the end of the world. It uses apocalyptic language. It makes it sound like a cosmic upheaval.

All these things that are typical of the apocalyptic imagery. But to have Jesus say no. When Jerusalem falls to the Romans.

That is that all things may be fulfilled that are written. We should be very cautious. About trying to identify any fulfillment of prophecy after 70 AD.

Now I'm not saying there aren't any or can't be any. But I'm not convinced there are any. To me.

The reason that I get this reputation for talking about 70 AD. Is because Jesus indicated the prophets talked about it a lot. Jesus and John the Baptist talked about it a lot.

The writer of Hebrews talked about it a lot. Revelation seems to have talked about it a lot. All kinds of places throughout the Bible talk about it a lot.

How can a Bible teacher not talk about it a lot? If all things that were written were fulfilled in that event. That must have been fairly significant. And worth talking about once in a while.

At least when the passages justify it. When that's what the passages are about. How can we withhold ourselves from saying so? I don't know of any Old Testament passage that seeks a later fulfillment than 70 AD.

Which means of course that I don't see any of those passages in Daniel. Or Isaiah or Jeremiah as having a future fulfillment. In the millennium or something like that.

Or tribulation. My reasons for that I can give another time when we get to those books.

Anyway.

NIV does too. Lest I smite the land with a curse. NIV and the Revised.

That's an interesting thing. Because those translations. I think if you turn to Isaiah 24 in them.

I think they use the word earth throughout. There's not much consistency there. Same word though in both places.

I have never found a commentator. I don't think. There may be some there.

Maybe I'm mistaken. But I don't remember ever reading a commentator that indicated that Matthew 24 was about 70 AD. Or that it was even about Jerusalem at all.

But they take it as the end of the world for the most part. And I think all the translators do also. Is that so? Earth, earth, earth, earth.

All the way through there. No matter what translation you pick. Seems strange to me.

Anyway. Verse 7. Isaiah 24, 7. The new wine fails. That means there's crop failures.

The vine languishes. All the merry hearted sigh. The mirth of the tambourine ceases.

The noise of the jubilant ends. The joy of the harp ceases. They shall not drink wine with the song.

Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. The city of confusion is broken down. Every house is shut up.

Now by the way, if you ever read Josephus about the siege of Jerusalem, you'd know why it's called the city of confusion. That place was more confused than any place in history. I think you know.

I think I must have mentioned before, but I'll just mention it again. Josephus mentions how the whole inhabitants of the city went under siege. Instead of providing a united front against the Romans outside the wall, they divided into three warring camps.

And what the Romans weren't doing to them, they did to each other. There were three leaders who claimed to be the leader. And they had followers.

And there was actual civil war going on. Three pronged civil war going on in the city. And such malice and such insanity going on, that Josephus tells us that even though the city would have had enough grain in its storehouses to hold out against the siege for a very long time, they would burn grain that belonged to their enemies in the city.

They would actually destroy stores of grain out of spite for each other. And there's much



in the Bible that predicts this, including Jesus' own statement, that he said, when an evil spirit goes out of a man, it goes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none, it comes back and brings seven worse than itself. He says, so shall it be with this generation.

That generation was like a generation that had seen some deliverance in the person of Jesus. But because of their rejection of him, the demons were going to come back in force, in mass. And when you read the account in Josephus, who had never, of course, read any New Testament books at all, about what happened in Jerusalem, you say, it couldn't be described any more accurately.

The place was demon-possessed. And they were wild. It was a city of confusion.

And that's what's described here. The city of confusion is broken down. Every house is shut up so that none may go in.

There is a crying for wine in the streets. All joy is darkened. The mirth of the land is gone.

There's his land. In the city, desolation is left. And the gate is stricken with destruction.

The Romans came, and they broke down the gate and came in. And it shall be thus in the midst of the land among the people. It shall be like the shaking of an olive tree, like the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done.

Now, what's that mean? When you harvest the olives, you'd shake the tree, and the ripe ones would fall, and those are your olives. But there'd be some stubborn ones that are still stuck on the branches. And likewise with the grape harvest.

You'd go through and harvest the clusters of grapes, but there'd be gleanings that the poor could come after, just the odd bunch that was missed or whatever. In general, the destruction of the Jews in Jerusalem is considered to be like the harvest. Basically, the remnants that survive are like the few olives that don't get shaken down out of the tree, or like the gleanings left after the grape vintage has taken place.

That's what he's saying. Comparing Israel with an olive tree and with a vine. Now, that is appropriate if it's Israel we're talking about here, because earlier, Isaiah spoke of the nation as a vineyard.

And Jeremiah speaks of it in chapter 11 and verse 6, I think, or 16, I think it's Jeremiah 11 and 16, speaks of Israel as an olive tree. Jeremiah, is it 11 and 16? He speaks of it as an olive tree. Now here, whatever entity we're talking about, either the land or the earth, it is like a vineyard that's been stripped of everything but the gleanings.

It's like an olive tree that's been shaken of all its fruit except for the few that don't fall.

Those images apply to Israel elsewhere, and most likely here too, not the earth. Okay? By the way, in chapter 17, cross-referencing this, chapter 17 and verse 6, this is a prophecy against Israel, against Syria and Israel in this chapter.

Notice what it says in verse 4. Look at verse 4. In that day it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob will wane, this is Israel, and the fatness of his flesh will grow lean. Now verse 6. Yet gleaning grapes will be left in it, like the shaking of an olive tree, two or three olives at the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the most fruitful branches, says the Lord of Israel. The very same thing, very clearly associated with Israel here.

So why would it not be Israel in chapter 24 when the exact same image is used? I don't say it needs to be. That alone wouldn't prove the point, but it certainly bolsters the proposition that we're reading here about Jerusalem. Verse 14, 24-14.

They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord. This is the remnant. These are the gleaning grapes, the ones that God rescues.

Now, you know probably, Eusebius said that before the siege, a prophetic word came forth in the church in Jerusalem, the Christians in Jerusalem, and the prophetic word warned them to get out of town. So they did. And by the time the Romans arrived, there were no Christians left in Jerusalem.

Up until that time, there was a thriving church in Jerusalem, but they all left town before the Romans got there because a prophetic oracle was uttered, according to the church historian Eusebius, that told them to leave, and they did. They escaped. They were the gleaning grapes.

They were the few fruitful olives on the branch that survived this shakedown. And they, meaning the remnant, and these are the believers, the Christians, the Christian Jews, the church, they shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea, because they also include Gentiles, therefore glorify the Lord in the dawning light, that's the east, the name of the Lord God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea, from the ends of the earth we have heard songs, glory to the righteous. Now, this is interjecting a bit of amplification on those gleaning grapes, that remnant that gets saved from this holocaust.

They continue to praise God despite this holocaust because they're saved. And even the Gentiles join them in the song. Of course, that's because they evangelize the Gentiles.

But, concerning natural Jerusalem, Isaiah says in verse 16, the middle of it, but I said, I am ruined, ruined, woe is me, the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously, indeed the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. By the way, the verse division is not very fortunate there, because, obviously, glory to the righteous should end in verse 16, and the next verse is a new thought, dealing with the natural Jerusalem and so forth.

Verse 17, fear and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the land, and it shall be that he who flees from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare, for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth, or land, are shaken.

Now, hang on here, this business about he who falls in the pit, or he who runs from the fear shall fall in the pit, he who comes up from the pit shall be caught in the snare, this is just a way of saying there will be no escape, you may escape one danger, but only to run into the lap of another, if God wants to judge you, you're not going to get away. The same kind of imagery is used in Amos, where it's clearly talking about the destruction of Israel, though it's not talking about 70 A.D., it's talking about the Assyrians coming and destroying Israel, but in Amos chapter 5, and verse 19, it says, it will be as though a man fled from a lion and a bear met him, or as though he went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall and a serpent bit him. Is not the day of the Lord darkness and not light? This day of judgment, which was a reference to the Assyrians destroying Samaria, it was like you'd flee from one danger only to run into the mouth of another one.

Same thing is said here of those fleeing from this disaster in chapter 24 of Isaiah. Now, further, Isaiah 24, verse 18, the windows from on high are open. What's that? What's that remind you of? The flood.

It says, when Noah went into the ark, that the windows of heaven were opened, and the floods poured out, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up. It's a judgment like the judgment of the flood. Now, later on, in a verse we read in a previous lecture, there is a place where the new covenant is likened to God's covenant with Noah.

This is in Isaiah 54, verse 9. This chapter follows immediately chapter 53 about the death of Jesus, and is a chapter about the new covenant experience of the Christians. And he says in Isaiah 54, verse 9, For this is like the waters of Noah to me. For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you, etc., etc.

Now, he says in verse 10, my covenant of peace shall not be removed. He said the covenant he makes with the new people of God, who are in covenant through Jesus' death, through Jesus' blood, the blood of the covenant, those who are in the new covenant, that covenant is permanent, unlike the Sinaitic covenant that came to an end. And this one is permanent.

It's like the promise I made to Noah, that I said I'd never flood again. It's like that. Now, the interesting thing is, we read this the other day, and I simply made the point that comparing this with the waters of Noah, it stresses the permanence of the new covenant, but it also stresses something else.

God's promise to Noah is made after he had wiped out the wicked. What he says, I'm not

going to do the same thing to you as I did to the wicked. And here in Isaiah 24, 18, the wicked are wiped out like in the flood.

What follows is a new covenant is made, a permanent covenant, with those who are the survivors, the remnant, like Noah and his family were the remnant through the flood. So the remnant of Israel, the Christians in Jerusalem who escaped, are the remnant with whom God makes a permanent covenant that he'll never break. But it is precipitated by judgment that is analogous to the flood.

The windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the land or earth are shaken. Now, this is not literal. This is apocalyptic imagery.

To talk about a nation falling in terms of the earth and the heavens being radically changed is typical. When we were in Hebrews a few moments ago, in Hebrews chapter 12, reading a quote from Haggai chapter 2 in verse 6, where it says, Lo, I will once again shake the earth, and not only the earth, but also the heaven. I told you, I think that refers to the fall of Jerusalem.

And I said I couldn't defend it at that moment for you, although I could if we had an hour. Well, this is one of my reasons. This very imagery is used of the fall of Jerusalem.

And if you're not convinced that it is that, look back at Isaiah 13. Now, Isaiah 13 is about Babylon and the fall of Babylon. That happened a long time ago, you know.

Babylon fell long before the time of Christ, fell to the Persians. But speaking of the fall of Babylon, Isaiah 13 describes it this way, in verse 10. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light.

The sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. Now, how do we know that's about Babylon? Well, it says so in verse 1, the burden against Babylon. Also later in verse 17, behold, I will stir up the Medes against them.

That's who conquered them, the Medes and the Persians. This is the fall of Babylon described. It talks about the sun, moon, and stars being darkened.

I will shake the heavens. Right, which one does? In 13. Oh, of Isaiah.

Okay, Isaiah 13. It also talks about shaking the heavens and so forth. Now, that is with reference to the fall of Babylon.

But, if you weren't familiar with the language of the prophets and the apocalyptic imagery, you'd think you were reading about the end of the world. So, when Haggai says that God is going to shake the heavens and the earth, and the writer of Hebrews says, well, what that's talking about is the removal of those things that can be shaken, so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain, and we're it. The kingdom we have

received cannot be shaken.

He indicates that the fall of Jerusalem is the shaking up of the heavens and the earth, comparable to the actual shaking of Mount Sinai at the giving of the new covenant. God shook the earth when He gave the old covenant. I said new, but when He gave the old covenant, and He shook things up again when He destroyed the old covenant.

Now, here, Isaiah speaks, I believe, of it this way too. The heavens are opened. The foundations of the earth or the land are shaken.

This needn't be literal. Now, it goes on with the same kind of language, though, in verse 19. The land is violently broken.

The land is split open. The land is shaken exceedingly. The land shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut.

Its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall and not rise again. Now, when I was a dispensationalist, I believe this was all about the earth. I remember hearing a bit of information back in the 70s that some professor at the University of California, Irvine, had done some measurements and tests and so forth, and he said that the earth, every 5,000 years, makes a major shift on its axis, and that the last shift happened about 5,000 years ago, so we're about due for another.

He said when this happens, it would just totally reshape continents, it would remove mountains and islands and so forth, and some of these things are talked about as happening in the book of Revelation, so we thought, oh, wow, that's going to happen in the second coming of Christ, and it's been 5,000 years since the last time, it's overdue, and he said, this scientist said, and if you could actually stand far off from the earth and watch it, you'd see that in its movement, it has developed a wobble like a top that is slowing down about ready to flip over, and this was very exciting to us, because we thought, oh, the end of the world is near, Jesus is coming, and I remember the pastor who pointed this out to me said, isn't it interesting, Isaiah said, the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and we hear the earth is tottering, is wobbling like a top, well, that sounded like a great fulfillment of prophecy, but I personally think it was wrong. Reeling to and fro like a drunkard is what the land of Israel was doing, and Isaiah chapter 29, which is a chapter about woe to Jerusalem, it says in verses 9 and 10, see, chapter 29.1 is woe to Ariel, the city where David dwelt, that's the symbolic name for Jerusalem, in verse 9 and 10 it says, pause and wonder, blind yourselves and be blind, they are drunk but not with wine, they stagger but not with intoxicating drink, that means they stagger under the judgment of God, they're staggering like drunkards but they've really been knocked across the head and they're about ready to fall, as it were, for the Lord has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep, he has closed your eyes, namely the prophets, and he has covered your heads, namely the seers, now, he's talking about judgment on Jerusalem, and he talks about them staggering like a drunkard, that's the

same language that is used here of the land of Israel in general, in Isaiah 24.20, the earth or the land shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut, its transgressions shall be heavy upon it, it will fall and not rise again, now, listen to this, consider that the translation is earth, the earth shall fall and not rise again, well, as I understand it, once this earth is destroyed, it's going to be renewed, there's a new heaven, new earth, so how could this be a prophecy that the earth will come to an end and not be replaced, will fall and never rise again, it doesn't make sense that way, but Jerusalem, it makes sense, it will never rise again, now, I know there is a city of Jerusalem today, the city has been rebuilt, actually, there's been a city there for centuries, the crusades were fought over Jerusalem, the city exists, but it has never risen again, it was the city of God, the city where David dwelt, it was the city of God's habitation, there is no temple there, there is no habitation of God there, it is not the city it was, and it never will be again, not the earthly Jerusalem, ok, verse 21, it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of the exalted ones, and on the earth or land, the kings of the earth or land, they will be gathered together as prisoners, are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in prison, after many days they will be punished, interesting, it doesn't say after many days they will be released, it says they will be shut up in prison, if this was a reference to the Jews going into captivity, the average dispensation would say, but after a long time they will come back to Jerusalem in the last days, this does not refer to any return, but only to their punishment, then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed, for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, this will be the spiritual Zion now, which has replaced the old, and before his elders gloriously, this Mount Zion is that mentioned in chapter 26 verse 1, we have a strong city, God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks, open the gates that the righteous nation which keeps truth may enter in, that is, and then one of my favorite verses, Isaiah 26 verse 3, you will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in you, the city that trusts in God, the spiritual Jerusalem, is God's permanent glorious community, which has replaced the physical city of confusion and destruction, and now verse 21 and 22 here are intriguing to me, in that day the Lord will punish on high the host of the exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth or land, and they will be gathered as prisoners in a pit for a while, this could refer of course to the Jews themselves and their rulers, because they went into captivity, figuratively speaking in a pit, and they certainly were punished later in things like the Holocaust in Germany and so forth, and the pogroms in Russia, they certainly experienced an awful lot of punishment, but I'm inclined to see this as a spiritual thing, the spiritual rulers of the earth, the principalities and powers, and one reason I do is because of the immediate, well, not immediate, but later on in the context, chapter 27 and 1, which I take to be talking about the same thing, it says, in that day the Lord with his severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan, the fleeing serpent, Leviathan, that twisted serpent, and he shall slay the reptile that is in the sea, this I think speaks of Christ's victory over Satan at the cross, all in figurative language of course, but he punishes and slays the dragon, and the language is somewhat similar here in 24 and 21,

the Lord will punish on high the host of the exalted ones, and the kings or the rulers of the earth, now this could refer to the demonic principalities and powers conceivably, if so, then it says he will gather them into a pit and shut them up, it sounds an awful lot like Revelation 20, where Satan the dragon is bound with a chain and thrown into a pit, and shut up in the pit, and after many days, a thousand years it says there, he has his punishment, Revelation 20, also Peter and Jude both tell us, in their short epistles, in 2 Peter chapter 2, and Jude, both tell us that the angels who sin, have been reserved in chains under darkness, awaiting the judgment of the great day, I like to give verse numbers, I didn't really want to take the time to look at it, but I'll give it to you anyway, it's Jude verse 6, the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own habitation, he is reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, for the judgment of the great day, that's Jude verse 6, no chapters in Jude, just verses, also in 2 Peter, chapter 2, same thing, verse 4, for if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell, there the word hell is Tartarus, the only place in the New Testament where the Greek word Tartarus is found, some special hell for them, it's not the ordinary word for hell, it's not Hades, and it's not Gehenna, it's a different word here than anywhere else in the New Testament, he cast them down to Tartarus, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment, now, when did he do that? when did he bind Satan? when did he conquer the hosts of hell? well, look at Colossians 2.15, we've seen it recently, but we'll see it again, to remind us of the answer to that question, it says in Colossians 2, in verse 15, that Jesus disarmed principalities and powers, and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross, at the cross Jesus triumphed over, and made a public spectacle of, and disarmed the principalities and powers, and in the figurative language of scripture, he bound them in chains, he threw them into a pit, and I take that to be what Jesus accomplished at his first coming, so that in Isaiah 24, 21, and 22, where the rulers of the earth are gathered into a pit, for a long time, and after many days they're punished, could refer to the spiritual rulers, the principalities and powers, the God of this world, and the prince of this world, as Jesus calls him, Jesus called him the ruler of this world, the prince of the world, so it seems to me, that here we have a description of what Christ accomplished, and it's upshot the fall of Jerusalem, and the ultimate upshot is the church exists, now when it says in verse 23, the moon will be disgraced, the sun shall be ashamed, this is just poetic language that reminds us of what he said about Babylon, the sun will not give its light, the moon will be darkened, about the fall of Babylon, same kind of thing, apocalyptic imagery, speaking of a great kingdom falling, as if it were a great cosmic disturbance, yes, won't need the sun and the moon in the new heaven and the new earth, the new Jerusalem doesn't have the sun and the moon anymore, now, let me say by this, when it comes to understanding the new Jerusalem, and the new heaven and the new earth, we will come to some passages in Isaiah, that actually use the language new heaven and new earth, and I intend at that time to talk in detail about it, but just by way of preview, what my understanding is, the new heaven and the new earth, is a literal reality after Jesus returns, but it is a reality that we have already begun to experience, since conversion, Paul said, if any man is in

Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away, and all things become new, 2 Corinthians 5.17, so that the new creation has already happened to us, and in Hebrews 6, it describes the Christian as the person who has already tasted of the powers of the world to come, the world to come hasn't come, but we have already tasted of its powers, spiritually speaking, there has been a spiritual new heaven and new earth, a spiritual new creation, that we experience, now in Isaiah, I believe that we will find reason to see this double meaning, of the new heaven and the new earth, and when we compare the things Isaiah and the New Testament says about it, and in Revelation 21, it talks about the new heaven and the new earth, the new Jerusalem, no sun or moon, the glory of the Lord enlightens it, I have no problem taking that quite literally, but I also believe that in the symbolism of it, what it is saying is that the new Jerusalem is like the Holy of Holies, no natural light was necessary because the glory of the Lord was in it, there was no natural light could get into the Holy of Holies, that thick veil prevented any light coming in, at least the holy place had the candlesticks, or the lamp stands, but the Holy of Holies had no light source, it was pitch black unless God was there, but that's just it, that's where the glory of the Lord appeared, over the mercy seat and the holy place, and the new Jerusalem is said to be a cube shape, just like the Holy of Holies is, 1500 by 1500 by 1500 miles, the tabernacles of the Holy of Holies was 15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet cube, there are many things in the description of the new Jerusalem, that are reminiscent of the Holy of Holies, and I think that the symbolism there, is that the church, the new Jerusalem, is the dwelling place of the glory of God, the dwelling place of God, the new tabernacle, the new Holy of Holies, is now his people, the tabernacle of God is with men, it says there in chapter 21 verse 5 of Revelation, so the reference to no sun or moon there in the new Jerusalem, I have no problem believing that's literal, in the new creation when Jesus returns, but I also think it's symbolic of the fact that, we are not dependent upon nature, for our illumination, we have God himself, illuminating us, we are like the glory of the Lord is the light of it, and so you may be right in connecting that, but I would say that when Jesus described, the fall of Jerusalem in Matthew 24, in verse 29 he said, the sun will be dark and the moon shall not give its light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, using this typical apocalyptic imagery, and that's similar to what we have here, going on in chapter 25, O Lord you are my God, I will exalt you, I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, your counsels of old are faithful in truth, for you have made a city a ruin, that is the natural Jerusalem, a fortified city a ruin, a palace of foreigners, the Palestinians basically took over the land, after Israel was deported eventually, to be a city no more, it will never be rebuilt, therefore the strong people will glorify you, now the strong people are the Christians, because they are the ones in 26, that have a strong city, they are the church, the church are strong in the strength of the Lord, because Isaiah later says, in Isaiah 40, they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint, that's Isaiah 40 verse 31, those who wait on the Lord, it says they renew their strength, actually the Hebrew word renew means exchange, they will exchange their human strength, for his divine strength, therefore



they will run and not be weary, look at that verse for a moment if you would, Isaiah 40, because in the context, we need to see also, not only that one verse, but the verses before it, look at verses 28 through 30, the last four verses of Isaiah 40, have you not known, have you not heard, the everlasting God, the Lord, Jehovah, the creator of the ends of the earth, he neither faints, nor is weary, there is no searching of his understanding, he gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might, he increases strength, even the youths in the natural, will faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord, shall renew or replace or exchange, the Hebrew word exchange their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint, now this not weary, not faint, is characteristic of God's strength, in verse 28, he neither faints nor is weary, so when they exchange there, now by the way, youths will faint and be weary, the best of human strength, eventually is expired, verse 30, even the youths shall faint and be weary, but verse 28 says, God doesn't faint or is weary, therefore those who wait on the Lord, will exchange their human strength, for his strength, so that they will not be weary, they will not faint, the idea here is, the Christian has exchanged his life, it's no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me, Paul said, in Galatians 2.20, it's the exchange of life, and so they are the strong, the believers in Christ, are the strong, they have a strong city, a permanent Jerusalem, a spiritual Jerusalem, likewise, they are the ones here described, in Isaiah 25, verse 3, therefore the strong people will glorify you, the city of the terrible nations, will fear you, it's hard to know what the city of the terrible nations is, it's possibly Rome, because Rome eventually was evangelized, but I'm not sure, I really don't know, it's possible that the city of the terrible nations, is the new Jerusalem, the church, meaning a city, that is populated by persons, who were once Gentiles, the nations the Jews saw as a terrible threat, now they have a city of their own, that will glorify God, for you have been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat, for the blast of the terrible ones, is as a storm against the wall, now, this shield from the storm, we saw in a chapter, we looked at earlier, which is actually a later chapter, chapter 32, speaking of Jesus, in chapter 32, it says, a man will be as a hiding place from the wind, and as a cover from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, Jesus is compared to a place of refuge in the tempest, no doubt, he is in view here in Isaiah 25, also, you have been a strength to the poor, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat, that is Jesus there, so we are talking about the new covenant here, we are talking about the church, it says, you will reduce the noise of the aliens, verse 5, as heat in a dry place, as heat in the shadow of his cloud, the song of the terrible ones will be diminished, now, the terrible ones are mentioned several times, I must confess, I am not sure how to identify the terrible ones, but, even with that missing piece of the puzzle, it is not hard to understand the general meaning of the prophecy, and then it says in verse 6, and in this mountain, now, back in chapter 2, it said, it shall come to pass in the last days, chapter 2, verse 2, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above all the hills, this mountain of the Lord's house is the spiritual Zion, the

church, okay, and that is what is mentioned here, in this mountain, that is spiritual Mount Zion, the church, the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the leaves, a feast of fat things full of marrow, of well refined wines on the leaves, this is actually a spiritual feast, Jesus himself, in the parable of the wedding feast, Matthew 22, verses 1 through 10, we read it the other day, Matthew 22, verses 1 through 10, the parable of the wedding feast, the king makes a marriage for his son, he invites people to the feast, the original people invited, the Jews did not come, so he destroyed their city, and invited everybody else to come, and they came and the feast was furnished with guests, this is of course a spiritual feast, this is talking about the church, and that is no doubt what is meant here too, verse 7, and he will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations, he will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, the rebuke of his people, he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken, now this seems to be spiritual, because he says he is going to destroy the veil, the covering that is cast over all people, that covering that is cast over all people apparently is the veil of death, perhaps so it is called a veil, because you would cover the face of a dead body, out of respect for the dead, you cover their face, it is a veil that is eventually cast over all people, he will just swallow up death forever, it says in verse 8, the destruction of death we could cross reference a great number of places, but one will suffice, 2 Timothy 1.10, says that Jesus destroyed death, 2 Timothy 1.10, a shroud, that supports that notion also, 2 Timothy 1.10, says of Jesus, he has now, but has now been revealed by the appearance of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to life through the gospel, on this mountain, spiritual Mount Zion, to which we have come according to the writer of Hebrews, God has destroyed death, he has swallowed up death in victory, this will eventually be manifested in the resurrection, but it has already happened, we have already passed from death into life, Jesus said, but it will be manifested physically at the resurrection, verse 10, and following for on this mountain, I missed verse 9, didn't I, and it will be said of that day, Behold, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us, this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation, this is us talking, for on this mountain, the spiritual Mount Zion, the hand of the Lord will rest, and Moab will be trampled down under him, this is representative of spiritual enemies in general I think, as straw is trampled down for the refuse heap, this can't be some future thing, because Moab is extinct, and he will spread out his hands in their midst, as he who swims spreads out his hands to swim, and he will bring down their pride, together with the trickery of their hands, the fortress of the high fort of your walls, that's natural Jerusalem, he will bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground down to the dust, now this matter of spreading the hands as if to swim and so forth, we don't have time to explore all that, that means, it may just mean that he'll just kind of wipe everything away by a sweep of his hands, compared to a man doing a breast stroke when swimming, but I'm not sure, but he talks, see through this section there's the intermixed, prophecy of destruction of one city, and of the exaltation and blessing of another city, the destruction of Jerusalem,

the exaltation of the church, the spiritual Jerusalem, look, let's look real quickly at chapter 26, I realize we don't have time to do much with it, but, in that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah, we have a strong city, this is the spiritual Judah, the spiritual Jews, Paul said he is not a Jew who has went outwardly, he is a Jew who has went inwardly, who circumcised his heart, Romans 2, 28 and 29, and they'll say, God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks, open the gates that the righteous nation, which keeps the truth may enter in, this is the spiritual nation of the church, you will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in you, trust in Jehovah forever, for in Yahweh, or Jehovah, the Lord is everlasting strength, for he brings down those who dwell on high, the lofty city he lays it low, he lays it low to the ground, he brings it down to the dust, the foot shall tread it down, the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy, the foot shall tread it down, Jesus said in Luke 21, Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, I don't know the verse number, I think it's around verse 24, Luke 21, I think it's around verse 24 or 25, it's in that general area there, verse 7, the way of the just is uprightness, O most upright, you weigh the path of the just, yes, in the way of your judgments, O Lord, we have waited for you, this is the remnant speaking, who are saved, the desire of our souls is for your name, and for the remembrance of you, with my soul I have desired you in the night, not like the Jews, who were only outwardly seeking God, but inwardly were far from him, but these with their soul have desired God, this is a true heartfelt love for God, these people have, it's not external religion, yes, by my spirit within me, I will seek you early, this is spiritual worship, worship in spirit and in truth, not in ritual and hypocrisy, for when your judgments are in the earth or the land, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness, now, when God's judgment came on Jerusalem, that scattered the believers to all the world, to make disciples of all nations, and he says, when your judgments are in the land, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness, the destruction of Jerusalem is not the end of the world, in fact it's progress for the gospel, let grace be shown to the wicked, yet he will not learn righteousness, in the land of uprightness he will deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord, a lot of people think that people are bad, because society is bad, that people are basically good, but they are corrupted by society, this is no, you go ahead and show mercy to wicked people, they will still do bad things, you put them in a land of uprightness, there is a land free from bad influences, he will still not behold the majesty of the Lord, he will still deal unjustly, man is rotten in his nature, it's not something society makes him, Lord when your hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they will see and be ashamed, for the envy of people, yes the fire of your enemies shall devour them, Lord you will establish peace for us, the remnant, for you have also done all our works in us, Paul said in Philippians, it is God who works in you, to will and to do of his good pleasure, I forget I think it is verse 13, Philippians 1, you have done all our works in us, O Lord our God, other masters besides you have had dominion over us, we served sin before, but by you only will we make mention of your name, they are dead, they will not live, they are deceased, they will not rise, therefore you have punished and destroyed them, and made all their

memory to perish, you have increased the nation, O Lord, you have increased the nation, you are glorified, you have expanded all the borders of the land, we saw earlier the need to extend the tent to include the Gentiles, extend the borders of your tent, it says in Isaiah 54 verse 2, because the Gentiles are going to come in, talking about the church, you have expanded Israel to include more than Jews, the new Israel is increased to include non-Jewish people, verse 16, Lord in trouble they have visited you, they poured out a prayer, when your chasing was upon them, now we have read this before, as a woman with child is in pain and cries out in her pangs, when she draws near the time of her delivery, so have we been, that is Israel, in your sight O Lord, we have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind, we have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth, nor have the inhabitants of the world fallen, now this last section, we have dealt with that verse before by the way, but verse 19 and following, can be taken either spiritually or physically, if spiritually, it talks about the spiritual resurrection of regeneration, if physically, some have felt it talks about the resurrection of the end time, but it could physically speak of, well let me read it and I will tell you what I could think of, verse 19, your dead shall live, together with my dead body they shall arise, awake and sing you who dwell in the dust, for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead, come my people, enter your chambers and shut the doors behind you, hide yourself as it were, for a little moment until the indignation is passed, for behold the Lord comes out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the land for their iniquity, the land will also disclose her blood, just like Cain could not hide the blood of Abel, it was disclosed, his guilt was seen before God, so also with the land, it will no more cover her slain, I am aware of the clock, but I am also aware that we started a little late, and the tape says we have a few minutes, I am going to exploit every opportunity I can here, verse 19 says, your dead shall live, together with my dead body they shall arise, some people understand this as the resurrection of the last day, because it does talk about the earth will not disclose her slain, the earth shall cast out the dead, but there are two ways you can understand that with reference to the resurrection of Christ, first of all it says, together with my dead body they will arise, when Jesus rose from the dead, there are two senses in which this could be fulfilled, physically many of the graves were open in Jerusalem, it says in Matthew chapter 27, when Jesus rose and came out of his grave, many dead persons came to life also, and were seen walking in the streets of Jerusalem, along with his dead body, certain saints arose, apparently as a sign to the locals, that something was afoot here, and as possibly a fulfillment of this prophecy, the reference that I am making is to, it is in Matthew chapter 27, verse 51 through 53, behold the veil of the temple was torn, there was earthquake, the rock split, verse 52, the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the graves after his resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many, so together with his dead body others did arise, as a sign that the new covenant had come, another way to understand it is spiritually, because we also are risen with Christ, spiritually speaking, we have passed from death unto life, Paul says that if you are risen with Christ, then seek

those things which are above, in Colossians 4.1 if I am not mistaken, but the point is spiritually speaking, the whole body of Christ, us, raised with him, spiritually speaking, so together with my body your dead shall arise, can refer either to the spiritual resurrection of all Christians in Christ, who rose with him, and died with him previous to that, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, Paul said, or it can refer to the actual dead bodies that came out of the grave, when Jesus came out of the grave, both are possible, but in verse 20, where it says, come my people, enter your chambers, and shut the doors behind you, hide yourself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation is passed, because the Lord is coming out to judge the land, this is in a sense telling his remnant to hide, his remnant to seek a place of safety, while his wrath burns against Jerusalem, and as we pointed out, the Christian remnant did escape, now let me real quickly take chapter 27, because it would be incomplete not to, and it is short, only 13 verses, in that day the Lord with his severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan, the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent, and he will slay the reptile in the sea, a reference apparently to Satan, his victory over Satan, in that day, sing to her, this is the survivors, the remnant, the spiritual Jerusalem that has survived the holocaust, a vineyard of red wine, I the Lord keep it, I water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I keep it night and day, fury is not in me, who would set briars and thorns against me in battle, I would go through them, I would burn them together, or let them take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me, those who come he shall cause to take root in Jacob, Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit, we have talked about these verses, when we were talking about fruitful and spiritual fruit, he has struck Israel as he struck those who struck him, that is, has God destroyed Israel completely, like he destroyed Babylon, like he destroyed Assyria, like he destroyed Egypt, no, or has he been slain according to the slaughter of those who were slain by him, in measure, by sending it away he contended with it, that is with Jerusalem and the people, he removes it by his rough wind, in the day of the east wind, therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob will be covered, and this is all the fruit of taking away his sin, when he makes all the stones of the altar like chalk stones, that are beaten to dust, when wooden images and incense altars do not stand up, now, the altars are destroyed, the nation is scattered, but they are not destroyed totally, because there is a remnant that are redeemed, the iniquity of Jacob gets covered, by what the Messiah accomplishes, and it says in verse 10, and yet the fortified city, meaning Jerusalem, will be desolate, the habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness, where the calf will feed, and there will lie down and consume its branches, when its boughs are withered they will be broken off, and women come and set them on fire, we already cross referenced that to the New Testament in a previous lecture, for it is a people of no understanding, therefore he who made them will not have mercy on them, he who formed them will not show them any favor, they are not God's chosen people, when they are not in Christ, and it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will thresh from the channel of the river, to the brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel, now threshing means separating wheat from chaff, this

is what John the Baptist said God was about to do, his fan was already in his hand, his threshing floor was about to be cleaned of chaff, God will separate the wheat and the chaff, from where to where? From the channel of the river, hard to know what river here, some would say the Euphrates, it might be the Jordan, or no the Euphrates will do, and to the brook of Egypt, these are the north and south boundaries of Israel, God is going to separate the wheat from the chaff, and the wheat, the remnant, he is going to select and preserve, but through the whole land, he is going to separate the wheat from the chaff, and it says, and so it will be in that day, that the great trumpet will be blown, and they will come who are about to perish, in the land of Assyria, and they who are the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord, in the holy mountain at Jerusalem, this Assyrian Egypt I think represents Gentiles in general, a trumpet of the gospel message will go out to them, and those who are weary, those who are seeking God of the Gentiles, will come and worship God in the new Jerusalem, in the church, this is how I understand that, now if this was the only lecture you heard, you would have no reason to believe I was right in interpreting it this way, but our previous lectures have dealt with much of this imagery, and I think justified this interpretation, we will stop there, because that is a natural stopping point, we will take some more passages on this same theme, that is the passage of the old covenant, and the introduction of the new, which is a major theme in Isaiah, we will take some more of the passages next time.