

unsparing'), *great* (enough for any task) and *powerful* (enough for any foe) matches the triple description of his foes (*serpent ... serpent ... monster*), i.e. an image of power matching the task. *Leviathan* is used in various ways in the Old Testament. In Job 41:1 <40:25> and Psalm 104:26 it denotes a water beast, real or imaginary; in Psalm 74:14 it is used figuratively of Egypt; and in Job 3:8 it is a picture of the truly horrific (to awaken Leviathan is to 'annihilate the existing order and to plunge into catastrophe')" (Motyer 1993: 221).

"M. G. Kline ... takes Leviathan to be a reference to the final judgment of Satan himself (Rev 12:9; 20:2), but this approach was only understood at a later time through further progressive revelation" (Smith 2007: 456n136). I believe that Isaiah understood it when he wrote it.

### Application

"No matter how perplexing or painful the present might be, Isaiah was confident that the whole of human history was converging on a single point which had been determined by God in advance" (Webb 1996: 110).

"In the midst of divine discipline nations and individuals can (a) confidently look to God in hope, waiting for him to smooth out one's path (26:7-8a); (b) maintain a strong desire to see the name of God glorified (26:8b-9a); (c) request for God to discipline the wicked and zealously intervene on behalf of his own people (26:9b-11); (d) recognize God's sovereignty, admit past failures, and realize that God acts to bring himself glory (26:12-15); and (e) confess past sins and lament the agony of divine discipline (26:16-18)" (Smith 2007: 457).

### SOURCES CITED

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Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1-39*, New American Commentary, 2007.  
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## ISAIAH 26:1-27:1: THE JUDGMENT OF ALL PEOPLES

### OUTLINE OF "THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE" (ISA 24-27)

Ch. 24: The Judgment of the Earth

Ch. 25: The Establishment of the Kingdom

Ch. 26: The Judgment of All Peoples

Ch. 27: The Restoration of Israel

### OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 26

I. The Rejoicing in God's Salvation (26:1-6)

II. The Differing Responses of the Peoples (26:7-11)

A. The Response of the Righteous (26:7-9a)

B. The Response of the Wicked (26:9b-11)

III. The Incomparability of God (26:12-27:1)

A. The Recognition of God's Greatness (26:12-15)

B. The Weakness of All Others (26:16-18)

C. The Resurrection of the Righteous and Wicked (26:19-21)

D. The Destruction of Satan (27:1)

### NOTES

#### Introduction

The greatest difficulty in interpreting this passage is determining its time. Is it immediate future (siege of Assyrians) or distant future (the eschatological day of the Lord)? Is all of it future or only part of it? I believe the interpretation that best accounts for all of the evidence is that this, in its entirety, is a prophecy of the eschatological day of the Lord. This is supported by the broader context of chapters 24-27 as well as the references to "in that day" (26:1; 27:1). In addition, some of the prophecies certainly were not fulfilled in ancient times. An important point: whatever one decides does not change significantly how we apply this today.

“We have seen Isaiah depressed by the painful realities of the present (24:16b) and exultant at the glorious prospect of the future (25:1-5). But between these extremes lies the settled disposition of patient, trustful waiting to which the people of God must return again and again. It is to be their hallmark as they live out their lives in the world as it is. This note, which was struck in 25:9, is now developed at some length in a song which captures beautifully the tension between the promise of the ‘then’ and the pain of the ‘now’. It begins with anticipatory celebration (1-6), turns back to reflect on the pain of waiting (7-19), and concludes with an oracle which confirms the final victory (26:20-27:1)” (Webb 1996: 110).

### **I. The Rejoicing in God’s Salvation (26:1-6)**

v3 “Humble dependence engenders a peaceful trust in God’s abundant strength” (Smith 2007: 442).

v4 “If the audience wants to find peace that will truly last forever, Yahweh, the God of Israel, is a stable and reliable source to depend on” (Smith 2007: 442).

### **II. The Differing Responses of the Peoples (26:7-11)**

vv7-18 “This lament serves as a good example to all believers, for it contains a healthy acceptance of present pain, a firm faith that God is teaching people the ways of righteousness through it, a recognition that God is the only source of real peace, and a strong yearning to have deliverance from this severe trial” (Smith 2007: 444).

#### **A. The Response of the Righteous (26:7-9a)**

#### **B. The Response of the Wicked (26:9b-11)**

### **III. The Incomparability of God (26:12–27:1)**

#### **A. The Recognition of God’s Greatness (26:12-15)**

#### **B. The Weakness of All Others (26:16-18)**

vv16-19 “Like the last stanza (12–15), this one begins with the vocative, *LORD*. This link enhances the contrast between the two: what the Lord achieved (12–15) and what his people achieved (16–18). It also brings out the similarity: the Lord has done all that is needed (12), and the Lord will do all that is needed (19). In addition, there is a link with verses 5–6. There, the Lord brought down the lofty into the dust; here (19) he will yet bring his people out of the dust” (Motyer 1993: 217).

#### **C. The Resurrection of the Righteous and Wicked (26:19-21)**

v19 “What about those who die in the time of waiting, who have put their trust in the Lord but experienced no fulfilment? Will they suffer the same fate as the wicked, described in verse 14, and miss out on the triumph to come? Verse 19 issues a resounding ‘No!’ Their waiting will not be in vain. They will be raised from death to share in the final victory. Here again is that victory over death already glimpsed in 25:8” (Webb 1996: 111).

#### **D. The Destruction of Satan (27:1)**

“The whole monstrous sum of the world’s evil, represented by *Leviathan . . . the monster (dragon) of the sea*” (Webb 1996: 111).

“The entities called ‘the powers in the heavens’/‘the host of the height in the height’ in 24:21 are here described mythologically as two Leviathans and *the serpent* (or ‘dragon’).... Note how the triple description of the Lord’s sword as *fierce* (*qāšâ*, ‘harsh, severe,