

## **Dr. John Oswalt, Isaiah, Session 12, Isa. 24-25**

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This is Dr. John Oswalt in his teaching on the book of Isaiah. This is session number 12, Isaiah chapters 24 and 25. Good evening.

Good to see every one of you. I debated about asking Sarah McQueen to send out an email reminder today, but evidently, you all reminded yourself, so that's wonderful. Thank you.

Let's begin with prayer. We remind ourselves, oh Lord, of our intense need for your spirit to inspire your truth to our hearts. Thank you that we don't have to beg you to do that.

Thank you that you want to do that and if we will bring you clean hands and pure hearts, you will indeed reveal yourself to us, the depths of your reality. And that's what we need, oh Lord, in this world of unreality, of falsehood, of image, of presumption, how desperately we need your reality. And so we pray that you will come this evening again and open your word to us. Thank you. Thank you for your kindness. Thank you for your goodness.

Thank you for your presence among us. In your name, we pray, amen.

I want to express my thanks to you for your kind Christmas presents. Thank you for the collection that you took up. Several of you anonymously and otherwise gave gifts. Thank you. Thank you very, very much. I really appreciate it and I'm so grateful for your attendance, and for letting me go on here week after week. So, thank you. It would be much more difficult if I had to do this in an empty room. So, thank you. Thank you.

If you happen to be with us for the first time, there are study guides on the sheet, on the table out there. There might be one or two for tonight, I don't know, and then they're there for next week. And I'm very impressed with those who do their homework.

So, thank you. We're looking at the book of Isaiah. We have seen in chapters 1 through 6 the problem and the solution.

The question is, how can this Israel, is that legible? Okay, how can this Israel, sinful, corrupt, enamored with human greatness, how can this Israel ever become that Israel? The Israel that is pure, that is clean, that is God's messenger to the nations. And the answer is if the same experience that the man of unclean lips had can be the experience of the people of unclean lips. So, we have the call to servanthood.

In chapters 7 to 39 then, we are looking at trust, the basis of servanthood. We will never lay down our self-protective attempt to control our world and satisfy our needs unless we can come to the place of genuinely trusting God. Easy to talk about, difficult to do, to truly take the risk of putting our destiny, but more than that, our self in the hands of God.

And so, these chapters are dealing with that issue. In many ways, as I said when we were looking at chapter 6, the rest of the book is sort of built on the shape of chapter 6. And so, in many ways, this is a vision of God, a vision of His greatness, a vision of His holiness, a vision of His trustworthiness. Just as Isaiah had that vision, so also the people in a real sense in these chapters are experiencing that vision.

We saw then, or we have seen, how in chapters 7 through 12 King Ahaz was given the opportunity to trust God and refused. He would rather trust his worst enemy, Assyria, before he would trust God. And before we throw very many rocks at him, we need to take a long look at ourselves.

How easy it is to trust money instead of God. How easy to trust position instead of God. And on and on and on, and none of those are our friends.

I think of the hymn that says, is this vile world a friend to lead us on to God? No, the answer is no. But at any rate, he refuses. And so, in those chapters, we see the full picture.

What's going to happen if you refuse to trust? Assyria is going to come. But is God going to leave you there? No. In His grace, God is going to send His Messiah.

And if you will indeed come to grips with God's character in chapters 9 and 10, and order your life on that basis, then God will judge your discipliner. Assyria will be judged and the Messiah will be revealed. So that we see that full picture of what are the implications of not trusting, all the way played out until in chapter 12 we have those beautiful words, You'll say in that day, I'll give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away that you might comfort me.

Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid. But since A has failed the examination, we go back to the classroom.

And so, in chapters 11 through 13, we have lessons in trust. Why shouldn't you trust humanity as seen in the nations? And we just concluded our study of that section. Don't trust the nations.

Now let me ask you, it's a little dangerous, but let me ask you, why shouldn't we trust the nations? They will fail. What else? They will eventually learn to worship God

themselves. Alright, they are all under judgment by Judah's God and several of them will one day worship Judah's God.

So why in the world would you trust them? It would be possible though, looking at those chapters, 13 through 23, to get the impression that the nations are the real actors on the stage of history. And that God, Yahweh, the I Am, is sort of a reactor. They sort of make up their minds about what to do and God says, hmm, now let's see, I wonder what I should do about that.

The section that we are beginning to look at tonight, chapters 24 to 27, says, oh no, no, no. God is the great actor on the stage of history. God is the one who is the ruler of history.

God is the one who is calling the shots. He is not just reacting to what humans decide to do. And here of course we have this unanswerable conundrum of divine sovereignty and human freedom.

A conundrum that is unanswerable to human intelligence. Every attempt to answer it falls into one ditch or the other. If you say, well, sovereignty, that's it, you end up in the ditch of determinism like the Mohammedans.

Yahweh causes everything to happen, including you finding a pencil at the right place and being willing you to pick it up and willing every motion of your arm when you write your name. That's divine sovereignty, you better believe it. Or, no, no, no, no, that's wrong, it's human freedom, yes.

And God sits around saying, oh dear, I wonder what they are going to do next. Oh my, oh look at that, oh goodness gracious. But somewhere in between those two is the reality that nothing happens apart from the hand and the touch of God but everything that happens is an expression of God giving us freedom to choose.

So, in these chapters, that picture is developed. Tonight then, we're looking at 24 and 25. Next week we'll look at 26 to 27 and again, that's our pattern.

We're roughly doing two chapters a night. And thank you for your patience during the fall with my in and outness. As far as I know at this moment, we'll be every Monday night with two exceptions between now and the middle of June.

So, you can sort of depend on that. Alright, chapter 24. Now we've talked about individual nations.

Babylon, Moab, Egypt, Damascus, and Israel. Babylon, again. Arabia, Judah herself, and entire individual nations.

Now when we look at chapter 24, it's kind of a general summary of all of that. And sometimes students will argue with me that, well no, we shouldn't say 13 to 23. We ought to say 13 to 24 with 24 as the conclusion to all of that.

And you can make a good argument for that. But this is another of those cases that I've talked about with you before where it's difficult. Well, maybe put it another way.

Isaiah is very gifted at creating transitional sections that both look back but also look ahead. And we'll see, there are a number of connections between 24 and 25, 26 and 27 that make most people, liberal or not so liberal, believe that the division point is between 23 and 24. Okay, in verses 1 and 3, who is the actor? Yahweh, the Lord, yes.

The Lord will empty the earth and make it desolate. The Lord has spoken this word. So, there's no question right from the outset who is the Lord of history here.

Now look at verse 2. And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest, as with the slaves, so with his master, as with the maids, so with their mistress, etc., etc. What's the point of that? No socio-political class is going to escape. Everybody is covered from high to low, from in to out, everybody.

And that point gets made again and again. Now look at verses 4 through 6. The earth mourns and withers, the world languishes and withers, the highest people of the earth languish, the earth lies defiled under its inhabitants, for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant, therefore a curse devours the earth and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt, therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched and few men are left. What's the dominant relationship that's working here? Somebody says cause and effect.

That's right, cause and effect, yes. Cause and effect. When you see a for or a because or a since or a therefore, you're looking for a cause and the effect.

If the cause comes first and the effect second, then you call it causation. If the cause comes second and the effect first, it's called substantiation. Let me try to illustrate.

You will go into captivity because you have sinned. Which is the effect and which is the cause? Sin is the cause; exile is the effect. You state the effect first and the cause second, that's substantiation.

Because you have sinned, you will go into exile. Cause and effect. Again, in your Bible study, look for that kind of thing.

Because it's all over the Bible. The Bible is deeply involved with cause and effect. Because God is involved with that.

You do this, here's the result. They're predictable results from predictable behavior. And when we forget that, we're in big trouble.

So, okay, what is the effect here? Destruction, judgment, the earth mourns and withers. The world languishes and withers. The highest people of the earth languish.

The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants. Now, what's the next word? Because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. So, verse 4 and 5a is the effect.

And I particularly want you to notice 5a. Why is the world a mess? The world lies defiled, what? By its people, under its people. Nature, the Bible tells us, is under a curse because of us.

Question? All right, you're ahead of me. We'll get there. So, that's the effect.

Earth is withered, earth languishes, earth mourns. Now, what's the cause? They have transgressed the laws. What does transgress mean? To break? Disobeyed? Anybody know Latin? Transgress.

To go over, to go across. God says, here's the fence. And I say, thank you very much.

Now I know what to jump. Transgression is to go over. There's the limit.

So, number one, we have transgressed. Now, remember, what's the Hebrew word for law? Torah. Torah.

And what does Torah mean? Instruction. Good, instructions. We hear the word law and we think, yeah, right.

Some mean magistrate says, hmm, these people are having too much fun. I need to put up some restrictions here to keep them hedged in. No.

God didn't design restrictions. God designed the world to operate in a certain way. And here's the instruction manual.

And we've said no. No. I'm not going to use this machine, this world, the way it was designed to be used.

I know better. My friend, the snake. Tells me that you don't really care about me.

That you did all these things to protect yourself. Transgressed the laws. Violated the statutes.

Tore them apart. Did with them what's not supposed to be done. And broken the everlasting covenant.

Now, commentators argue about this. This is the world. The covenant was with the Hebrew people, wasn't it? I think it's clear from starting with Torah, with instructions, that Isaiah is saying, there is an unspoken covenant between creator and creatures.

There is an unspoken agreement. This is the way you were made to live. You weren't made to commit adultery.

You weren't made to steal. You weren't made to lie. You weren't made to take one another's lives.

There's a covenantal agreement there, that in a sense, by being born, we enter into. And we say, no. No.

Therefore, a curse devours the earth. Now, you see, we've come back. We started out with effect.

4 and 5a. Then we went to cause in 5b and c. And now, in verse 6, we've come back to the effect. Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt.

Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left. So, this relationship is what I call substantiation. Substantiation.

Too many t's and so forth in here. And this one is causation. Effect first, cause second.

Substantiation. Cause first, effect second. Causation.

All right. So, I'll ask the question, does this apply to us? Mel says, of course not. Oh, that's a good relief.

How does it apply to us? It's a picture of us, yes? Of human beings. What else? How does this apply to us? To you, to me? We better go back and look at the instructions. That's exactly right.

That's exactly right. It's very easy to wave my finger at those atheists out there who are messing up the world. As the man said, every time you point one finger there, you've got three fingers pointing back this direction.

How about me? How about you? Am I living according to the instructions? Not, not, oh man, I've got to do it right or he's going to get me. But Lord, how did you make life? What are the parameters of life within which God says, enjoy, enjoy? When you look at it, there are really remarkably few restrictions on life.

It's interesting that the Ten Commandments are stated negatively. Don't steal. That says your possessions are inviolate.

I don't have a right to take your possessions. But it doesn't say, well, you can't possess this and you can't possess that and you can't do... No. Within his parameters, there are immense freedoms in life.

But where are the parameters? Okay. I see that Brother Hendershot has set the clock five minutes fast. He's a little worried about me.

So, I will blame him for that. That's not his fault. Okay, in verses 7 through 13, there is a contrast.

What's the contrast? The people in the land, the joy and sorrow. And where does the joy come from? Wine, yes. Yes.

Drunkenness. Forgetfulness. It's easy to understand why people living north of the Arctic Circle are drunks.

You want to forget that there are 23 hours a day of darkness. Yeah, but you can't grow it up there. You have to import it from someplace else, yeah.

So, yes. Verse 9, no more do they drink wine with singing. Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

Yes. So, a false kind of joy. A joy that is produced in forgetfulness.

But instead of that joy, there is sorrow. Because, in verse 10, the wasted city is broken down. Every house is shut up so none can enter.

There is an outcry in the streets for lack of wine. All joy has grown dark. Desolation is left in the city.

Now, we're being introduced here to two themes that are going to run right through these four chapters. One is city. And the other is song or singing.

And here comes another major relationship in the Bible. And that's contrast. One relationship is the cause-and-effect relationship.

Another one is contrast. Because we're going to see two kinds of cities and two kinds of singing. So, there's the song of the drunkards.

And it's going to be silenced by sorrow. And we see this city. This wasted city.

This desolate city. Its gates battered into ruin. So, he says in an image that Isaiah likes, verse 13.

So, it will be in the midst of the earth among the nations as when an olive tree is beaten as at the gleaning when the grape harvest is done. What he's talking about, and here it's very, the term that's used is elliptical, where you leave stuff out. Other places he fills it in more fully.

It's the idea that when you've picked all the olives, up there on that highest branch, out on the end, that you can't get to, there will be a few olives left. And when you've gone through the vineyard and gotten all the good grapes, there'll be a few little green withered ones that you left behind. And Isaiah says that's how judgment will be.

The orchard will be picked clean with only a few bits and pieces left over here and there. Now, 14, 15, and 16. What about this one? Why are these people singing? Verse 14.

They lift up their voices, they sing, what? For joy. Joy. Other people were singing because of alcohol.

Now the vineyards are empty and gone, so there's no alcohol, so there's no joy. All of a sudden, it's as though the curtains are pulled back. We see this picture of a desolate earth, and then here come the curtains back.

They lift up their voices, they sing for joy, over what? The Lord's majesty. Why is that a cause for joy? I'd rather sing about my majesty, wouldn't you? Why is the Lord's majesty a cause for joyful singing? He has destroyed the enemy. All right, he's destroyed the enemy in his majesty.

He's exalted, the enemy is put down. Yes, that's one. That joy comes from something outside yourself.

All right. We've been talking about the drinking and the harvest and all that. That's something that is there, that's temporary, but then comes the joy that is outside yourself.

The joy that is outside of ourselves. But why is God's majesty a cause for joy? Shouldn't we say his redemption or his kindness or his goodness? Why is his majesty a cause for joy? All right, his righteousness, he's exalted. His presence.

His power. One we can trust. Salvation.

I don't think we're talking about majesty, though. Majesty is kind of a beautiful thing, like it's visually pleasing versus the contrast between the desolation of the city. Okay, okay.

All these things we've been sharing are implications of God's majesty. It's the idea of being uplifted, isn't it? There's great joy in knowing that this God is lifted up. Notice, in the east, give glory to the Lord.

We've talked about that word before, the Hebrew word kavod. Weight, significance, reality. The idea of this God, this good God, this loving God, this righteous God, this kind God being exalted is good news.

If he was a cruel God, his majesty would not be a cause for joy. If he were a corrupt God, his majesty would not be a cause for joy. If he were a duplicitous God, a lying God, his majesty would not be a cause for joy.

But because of who this God is, then for him to be exalted is good news. For his glory, for his reality, for his weightiness to be displayed in the world, that's good news. And so, to the atheist, we respond, it's no accident that this God is not like the gods of the world.

This God is different. And that is an evidence of revelation. Humans didn't create this God.

As Isaiah loves to say over and over again, this God created humans. But, look at the last half of 16. What's going on there? The allies are also... He knows the pain of what it means when we fail.

He knows the pain of what it means when we fail. Yes, I think that's exactly right. I think it's as though Isaiah is saying, Yes, yes, I know there's joy out there ahead.

I know that God's presence is a cause for joy. But I also know the price that's going to have to be paid before we are really experiencing that joy out there ahead. I've said to you several times before, that Isaiah is never willing to let us forget the reality of the present in view of the hopeful promises of the future.

It's as though Isaiah is saying, I can't really join in that song. Because I know what's going to happen before the day when that song is fully realized. I know the pain, I know the sorrow, I know the betrayal that's going to occur along the way.

And so we come back then in verses 17 and following. How would you describe the language in 17 through 23? What kind of language is it? It's apocalyptic. All right, good.

What else would you say? Prophetic. It's kind of over the top, isn't it? It's excessive, if you will. Terror in the pit and the snare.

He who falls at the sound of terror, or flees at the sound of terror, will fall into the pit. He who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare. The windows of heaven are opened, and the foundations of the earth tremble.

What level of judgment is being portrayed here? Destruction of the entire world, indeed of the cosmos. Verse 21, on that day the Lord will punish the host of heaven in heaven, the kings of the earth on the earth. My, the earth staggers, the earth is shaken.

Verse 20, why will the earth be shaken? Rebellion. Yep, what's the word? Transgression. It's transgression lies heavy upon it.

Yeah, yeah. Show me the fence so I can go over it. Show me what I'm not supposed to do so I can do it.

And again, any of you who have had children understand this very, very well. I didn't want to do it until somebody said you can't. Didn't want to do it until somebody said don't.

And all of a sudden it was the most delightful thing in the world. That's called original sin. And there it is.

Yes. Is this the analogy that in comparison to, I live among a people of unclean lips. Yeah, yeah.

My version doesn't say transgression, it says guilt. It's the result of the transgression. The guilt of the transgression.

Yeah, yeah. So, there's the picture. Verse 23, the moon will be confounded, the sun ashamed.

Why? Because the Lord of heaven's armies reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. And his glory will be before his elders. For the past two weeks I've been taking some

graduate students at Concordia Seminary through the first 39 chapters of Isaiah, looking at the vision of God.

One of the things I had them doing was looking at all the occurrences of Lord of Hosts. Lord of heaven's armies. And it is speaking of God's universal power.

His power to destroy and his power to redeem. All the hosts of heaven. And I comment here in the background, I think, yes.

The host of heaven for the pagan is the stars and all those are gods. And Isaiah says, uh-uh. They are part of Yahweh's army.

And Yahweh calls them out by name. Owns every one of them. And you pagans have created a host.

And God will destroy that host. The one you've created. In his own power.

Okay, now where do we close? The last verse here. 23. The Lord of hosts what? What's the verb? Reigns.

Where? On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. And who will see his glory? The elders. Remember the book of Revelation? The 24 elders.

Double 12. Who will see God's glory. He is the king.

No other. And he will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. Now remember, here is Zion.

Zion is found all over the world today. This is where he means to be king. This is where he means to reign in righteousness.

Someone says, don't you believe that on the last day, God will be physically crowned in Jerusalem? Well, if that happens, I'm not going to turn in my ticket. No. But this is not finally about, as the New Testament makes very clear to us.

This is not finally about something that's going to happen physically out there somewhere. It is something that God, through Jesus Christ, has made possible now. And that's good news.

That's good news. All right. Chapter 25.

Oh Lord, you are my God. I'll exalt you. I'll praise your name.

For you have done wonderful things. Plans formed of old, faithful and sure. Anybody remember where we've encountered this idea of God's plans before now? In Isaiah.

Chapter 14. Verse 24. The Lord of hosts, the Lord of heaven's armies, has sworn, As I have planned, so shall it be.

As I have purposed, so shall it stand. That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and on my mountains trample him underfoot. It's exactly what happened.

As we will read in chapter 37. Verse 26. This is the purpose that is purposed concerning the whole world.

This is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? Yes. God has plans.

He is the sovereign actor on the stage of history. His plans are going to be realized. You and I have the freedom to alter the way those plans will be realized.

But we do not have the freedom to cancel out the end result of those plans. God is infinitely creative. And he is going to accomplish his purposes.

Although, as I say, we have the freedom to alter the ways in which those purposes may be indeed worked out. So what has he done? Verse 2. He has made... What? The city a heap. The fortified city a ruin.

The foreigner's palace a city no more. It will never be rebuilt. Therefore... Therefore introduces an effect.

What's the cause here? You have made the city a heap. Therefore, strong people will glorify you. Cities of ruthless nations will fear you.

God's hand of judgment will cause other nations to recognize him and fear him. Because... So here we go back and forth again. Cause, effect.

Effect, cause. For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress. Two causes.

One, you destroyed those enemy powers, that strong fortified city. And you did that for the sake of the poor. And therefore, strong nations are going to praise you.

Well, it has happened. It has happened. Who would have predicted in 0 A.D. That the nations would come to Jerusalem to worship the God of Judah.

But we have. We have. Now verse 6. On this mountain, the mountain where the Lord is reigning as king.

He will make for whom? All people. Wait a minute. I thought God only chose the Jews.

Well, wait a minute. I thought he just got done destroying the whole world. That's called hyperbole.

You look at the way it's spelled and you're tempted to say it's the hyperbole. But it's not the hyperbole. Hyperbole.

Overstating your point to try to get it across. Jesus was guilty of this all the time. Unless you hate your father and mother, you can't serve me.

Whoa. This is the guy who just accused the Pharisees. Of finding excuses so they don't have to take care of their parents.

Now he goes way beyond that. He says, no, it's not just don't take care of them. It's hate them.

But he's trying to make a point. Let your commitment to beat me be so radical that by comparison, your necessary commitment to your parents will look like hatred. So, it's the same way here.

No part of the world is going to escape God's judgment. Every part of it is subject to it. But what does this say? Six, seven, and eight.

How widespread is his salvation? All nations, all peoples, all faces, all the earth. Yeah, yeah. If judgment touches the whole world, so does salvation.

And what is the nature of the salvation that he's offering? What's he going to do precisely here on this mountain? What's he going to remove? Death. Death. Death.

He will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples. The veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever.

And the Lord Yahweh God will wipe away tears from all faces. Wow. Wow.

That's what he promises. If judgment touches the whole world, salvation touches the whole world. And it all comes from the God of this little country that is no bigger than Jesuit County.

That's called faith, folks. Look at verse nine. It will be said on that day, behold, this is our God.

We have what? I hear trust. Does somebody else have a different word? Weighted. Yes.

I forgot in making out next week's study that we were covering it here. So you'll find it in the background there. There is a word, a Hebrew word, baza, that is translated trust.

There are two other words, kava and haka. That's the rough H. Haka. These are both translated weight.

But they are also, very often, as I heard here, translated as trust. Because this is not like English weight. You know, well, just sit there and wait until he comes.

It's the idea of confident anticipation. We catch it a little bit when we say, oh, I can't wait. This word knows that the waiting will have a satisfactory conclusion.

This word is a word of anticipation, of confident expectation, coupled with a refusal to run ahead of God and solve my problems my way. Isaiah captures it in chapter 40, verse 33. They that wait for the Lord.

Now, that's not just, well, I suppose he's going to come sooner or later. All right, well, nothing else to do. But it's especially this latter point.

I am not going to run ahead of God and do it my way. I'm going to wait for him to do it his way. Question? If you've seen it modeled, it's really awesome.

My father had a nasty illness one time. The family gathered, assuming he was going to die. And right in the middle of the waiting room at the hospital, my mother sat with a smile on her face.

She said, are you all right? And she said I'm waiting on the Lord. And she meant it. It worked out fine.

Yeah. In the opposite sense, what would it be like when Saul didn't wait and went ahead and made the sacrifice? Yeah, that's exactly right. That's a classic example of I've got this problem.

The Philistines are up there. We've been waiting a week for Samuel to come. The soldiers are drifting away.

They don't want to attack up that hill. I can't wait any longer. Yes? That applied to Paul when he talks about future glory in Rome.

Wait with eager expectation. Yes, yes. That's exactly right.

Wait with eager expectation. Its hope in the New Testament comes close to this. Again, it's not, well, I hope he comes.

No, it's we live in hope, assurance, certainty. Yeah. That's right.

That's right. I know, as Brother John was saying, I know he's going to deal with this. I know that he, in his time and in his way, is going to give me the right solution.

And living in that sort of anticipation, living in that sort of hope. Yes, yes. So there's a measure of patience.

Exactly. Exactly. And it is.

It is this refusal. Not in my time, not in my resources, not according to my wisdom. But in his time, his resources, his wisdom.

Now, he may very well use your resources and your wisdom and all those kinds of things. But it's him doing it and you know it because you waited. And if you run ahead of him, you'll never know.

That wait with the certainty. Yes, yes, absolutely. That definite certainty.

And that's why it can be, they can be translated trust. But sometimes trust misses this time element that's involved here. Like Sarah and Elizabeth.

Yep. Waiting. Waiting, yes, yes.

Yes, keeping it safe even though they're barren. Fiery furnace, yes. Yeah.

I don't think that would be easy to do. Laughter. No.

Nobody said it would be. It just seems like it would be, it says waiting here, but it has to be faith. It has to be trust.

Like even back over in the New Testament when Jesus left the disciples, he said he was coming back. But for a while they just sat there, I guess, waiting. Yeah, right.

So it's not the same thing here, but in a way it really is. Yes, it is. Waiting and yet you want to do what God wants you to do in that time.

Yeah, and you see it goes right back to Ahaz. Isaiah says, hey, yeah, I know. Israel and Syria are coming and they plan to take you off the throne and put somebody else on.

But hey, the Lord has it in hand and you just wait. And Ahaz says I can't wait. I got to do this.

And it's the same thing now. We're coming up to the time when Ahaz's son, Hezekiah, is going to be faced with a couple hundred thousand Assyrians out there. Well, are you going to wait? Yeah, I guess so.

I hope I'm not repeating, but this waiting can prepare me for whatever it is that God is going to pass. Yes, the waiting can prepare me, us, for whatever it is God's going to bring to pass. Yes, yes.

Again, if we rush ahead, we won't be ready for what's going to happen. There may be something that needs to take place within us for God to be able to act. Absolutely, absolutely.

So, they're going to see it. This is our God. We have waited for him that he might save us.

This is Yahweh. We have waited for him. Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain, and Moab will be trampled down in his place. A lot of commentators are very troubled with verses 10, 11, and 12. Because verses 1 to 9 have been so nice.

Verses 10, 11, and 12 are anything but nice. Awful. It's a picture of a barnyard.

If you've ever been in a barnyard in February, you know this is not a nice place. And Moab is face down in the stuff. Spreading out his hands as though to swim.

And he can't. For the Lord, verse 11, will do what? Bring down their pride. We saw that in chapters 15 and 16.

Moab is noted for its pride. Again, you need to get ready for the final exam come June. Theme of the book.

God alone is exalted. And any creature who tries to exalt himself or herself against him is doomed to failure. Not because an arrogant God says, I'm not going to let you do that.

I'm the only big one around here. Get down. No.

It's simply part of the nature of reality. You and I are creatures, not the Creator. And any time we act as though we are equal to the creator, it's like unfolding a paper clip and sticking it in an outlet.

You weren't made to do that. And it's going to be an electrifying experience. Not because the electricity hates you.

The law of physics. It's the same way. The law of the creator and the creature.

Exalt myself to try to make myself equal to him. And the result will always be a disaster. I can think of no better example of this than Hitler.

Or Stalin. Or Hirohito. The Lord will bring down his pompous pride together with the skill of his hands.

And the high fortifications of his walls he will bring down, lay low and cast to the ground to the dust. Now let me make a final point here and I'll let you go. What chapter 25 is saying is God offers his life to all.

But receiving that life is conditional. Now let me ask you, what is the condition according to this chapter? Trust and self-denial. Moab says I don't need God.

I can take care of myself. And there is the sticking point for all too many humans. No, no.

I'd like presence from God. But to deny my right to myself to get it? That's too high a price. That's too high a price.

So, in this chapter, these two parts are not contradictory. Moab's fate does not contradict God's grace. His grace is real, but so is his justice.

Okay, we'll stop there. Let's look at chapters 24 and 25.