

Notes

The Song of the Redeemed (26:1–21)

- Isaiah 26 is a prophetic song that will be sung "*in that day*" (v1), when the LORD reigns as King in His Millennial Kingdom. Whereas Isaiah 25 is a song of praise celebrating God's victory over His enemies and the blessings of His coming Kingdom, Isaiah 26 is a song of trust expressing the confidence, peace, and hope of God's redeemed people.

1. The Security of the Righteous (26:1–6)

(i) A City Secured by Salvation, 26:1–2

- Jerusalem is called a "*strong city*" (v1) not because of its walls or military strength, but because "*salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.*" The city's security rests entirely upon the LORD. He Himself is its Protector and Defender.
- Only those who have been made righteous by God's grace through faith will enter His holy city (v2; Rev 21:27). Their obedience does not earn salvation but demonstrates the reality of genuine faith (Heb 11:6).

(ii) Perfect Peace for the Trusting, 26:3–4

- God's promise of "*perfect peace*" (v3) literally reads "shalom shalom" in Hebrew. The repetition emphasizes complete, abiding, and perfect peace. Peace is God's covenant blessing flowing from His presence (Num 6:24–26), and it will characterize Christ's future Kingdom (9:6–7).
- God's peace is the inward calm, confidence, and stability that come from resting in His sovereign care. Who experiences this perfect peace?
 - Those whose minds are stayed on the LORD. A mind that is "stayed" on God is firmly fixed upon His character and promises. We become anxious when we take our eyes off God and focus on our circumstances (1 Kgs 19:1–3; Matt 14:29–30; Jas 1:5–8). In contrast, believers cultivate a steadfast mind through prayer, meditation upon God's Word, and continual dependence upon Him (Phil 4:6–7).
 - Those who trust in the LORD. Trust enables us to keep our minds fixed upon God rather than leaning on our own understanding (Prov 3:5). When we walk by faith, God becomes greater than our problems. The greater our view of God, the smaller our problems become.
- Isaiah therefore exhorts believers to trust in the LORD forever (v4). This command is grounded in the unchanging character of the LORD JEHOVAH
 - the eternal, self-existent, covenant-keeping God. He is the everlasting

Rock whose strength never fails and whose promises never change (Deut 32:4; 1 Cor 10:4; John 14:27). Our peace depends not upon favourable circumstances but upon our unchanging God.

(iii) *The Humbling of the Proud, 26:5–6*

- Isaiah contrasts God's strong city with the "*lofty city*," representing human pride and self-confidence. Though earthly kingdoms may appear secure, God will humble every nation that exalts itself against Him. Isaiah declares that God "*layeth it low... even to the dust*," emphasizing the certainty and completeness of His judgment.
- In contrast, those who were once oppressed and powerless now walk in victory over the fallen city (v6). God vindicates the humble and fulfils His promise that they shall inherit the earth (Matt 5:5). Rather than trusting in wealth, power, or human achievement, believers are called to trust in the everlasting Rock.

2. Waiting for God's Righteous Rule (26:7–11)

- Isaiah describes God as the "*most upright*" (v7), perfectly righteous and faithful in all His ways. Because He is upright, He guides His redeemed people in the path of righteousness. The phrase "*dost weigh the path of the just*" reminds us that God carefully watches over His people and directs their steps (Job 23:10; Ps 5:8; 27:11; 143:8; Prov 3:6).
- The righteous therefore learn to wait patiently upon the LORD (v8). God never fails those who trust in Him (Ps 27:14; Isa 40:31). This waiting is accompanied by a deep longing for God Himself (vv8b-9; Ps 63:6). The mark of a growing believer is an increasing desire to know the LORD (Phil 3:10-14).
- God's judgments are never arbitrary or vindictive; they always reveal His righteousness (v9b). Even His discipline is designed to accomplish His holy purposes and teach His people to acknowledge His sovereign rule.
- In contrast, the wicked refuse to respond to God's gracious dealings (v10). Although God continually displays His goodness and kindness—even toward the undeserving (Matt 5:45) - sinful hearts remain hardened in unbelief (e.g. Pharaoh; Rev 9:20–21; 16:9, 11). The day is coming when His righteous judgment will be revealed and every person will acknowledge His justice (v11). God's patience is an invitation to repentance, not permission to continue in sin (55:6–7).

3. The LORD's Victory Brings Restoration and Resurrection (26:12–19)

- Peace is God's gracious gift through Christ (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14). Every blessing enjoyed by God's people comes by His grace alone (Phil 2:13). Isaiah unfolds how God's victory will be displayed among His people:
 - Victory over Israel's former oppressors (vv13–14). Though powerful nations ruled over God's people for a time, none would endure forever. God alone is Israel's true LORD.
 - Restoration of God's people (vv15–18). God enlarges His people and fulfils His covenant promises, yet He often accomplishes His work through seasons of suffering and loving discipline (v16). Like a woman in labour, Israel longed for deliverance but discovered that human effort could only "*bring forth wind*" (vv17–18). True deliverance comes only through God's gracious intervention.
 - The promise of resurrection (v19). Those who belong to the LORD will be raised to share in His everlasting Kingdom (Job 19:25–27; Dan 12:2). This promise finds its ultimate fulfilment in Christ's resurrection, which guarantees the resurrection of all who belong to Him (1 Cor 15:20–23). Because Christ has conquered death, believers can live with joyful confidence and hope.

4. Sheltered During the LORD's Coming Judgment (26:20–21)

- The LORD lovingly calls His people to take refuge in Him while His righteous judgment is poured out upon the earth (vv20–21). Their safety is found not in earthly security but in God's faithful protection (Gen 7:16; 19:15–22; Josh 6:25; Exo 12:13). The LORD knows how to preserve those who belong to Him.
- The Judge of all the earth will personally intervene to deal with sin (v21). No sin will remain hidden, and every injustice will one day be exposed before His righteous judgment (Gen 4:10). The righteous Judge of all the earth will act in His perfect time. Therefore, our security rests in His unchanging character and unfailing promises (Rom 8:38–39).
- Isaiah closes this song by reminding us that the LORD is our strong city, our perfect peace, our righteous Judge, our everlasting Rock, and our sure refuge. As we wait for Christ's return, we can trust Him in every circumstance, rest in His perfect peace, patiently submit to His righteous purposes, and confidently look forward to the day when we shall be raised to reign with Him forever.