

Tuesday, September 17

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Isaiah 25:1 - 28:13

25 **1** O LORD, I will honor and praise your name, for you are my God. You do such wonderful things! You planned them long ago, and now you have accomplished them. **2** You turn mighty cities into heaps of ruins. Cities with strong walls are turned to rubble. Beautiful palaces in distant lands disappear and will never be rebuilt. **3** Therefore, strong nations will declare your glory; ruthless nations will fear you. **4** But you are a tower of refuge to the poor, O LORD, a tower of refuge to the needy in distress. You are a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the heat. For the oppressive acts of ruthless people are like a storm beating against a wall, **5** or like the relentless heat of the desert. But you silence the roar of foreign nations. As the shade of a cloud cools relentless heat, so the boastful songs of ruthless people are stilled. **6** In Jerusalem, the LORD of Heaven's Armies will spread a wonderful feast for all the people of the world. It will be a delicious banquet with clear, well-aged wine and choice meat. **7** There he will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth. **8** He will swallow up death forever! The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears. He will remove forever all insults and mockery against his land and people. The LORD has spoken! **9** In that day the people will proclaim, "This is our God! We trusted in him, and he saved us! This is the LORD, in whom we trusted. Let us rejoice in the salvation he brings!" **10** For the LORD's hand of blessing will rest on Jerusalem. But Moab will be crushed. It will be like straw trampled down and left to rot. **11** God will push down Moab's people as a swimmer pushes down water with his hands. He will end their pride and all their evil works. **12** The high walls of Moab will be demolished. They will be brought down to the ground, down into the dust.

26 **1** In that day, everyone in the land of Judah will sing this song: Our city is strong! We are surrounded by the walls of God's salvation. **2** Open the gates to all who are righteous; allow the faithful to enter. **3** You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! **4** Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock. **5** He humbles the proud and brings down the arrogant city. He brings it down to the dust. **6** The poor and oppressed trample it underfoot, and the needy walk all over it. **7** But for those who are righteous, the way is not steep and rough. You are a God who does what is right, and you smooth out the path ahead of them. **8** LORD, we show our trust in you by obeying your laws; our heart's desire is to glorify your name. **9** In the night I search for you; in the morning I

earnestly seek you. For only when you come to judge the earth will people learn what is right. **10** Your kindness to the wicked does not make them do good. Although others do right, the wicked keep doing wrong and take no notice of the LORD 's majesty. **11** O LORD, they pay no attention to your upraised fist. Show them your eagerness to defend your people. Then they will be ashamed. Let your fire consume your enemies. **12** LORD, you will grant us peace; all we have accomplished is really from you. **13** O LORD our God, others have ruled us, but you alone are the one we worship. **14** Those we served before are dead and gone. Their departed spirits will never return! You attacked them and destroyed them, and they are long forgotten. **15** O LORD, you have made our nation great; yes, you have made us great. You have extended our borders, and we give you the glory! **16** LORD, in distress we searched for you. We prayed beneath the burden of your discipline. **17** Just as a pregnant woman writhes and cries out in pain as she gives birth, so were we in your presence, LORD . **18** We, too, writhe in agony, but nothing comes of our suffering. We have not given salvation to the earth, nor brought life into the world. **19** But those who die in the LORD will live; their bodies will rise again! Those who sleep in the earth will rise up and sing for joy! For your life-giving light will fall like dew on your people in the place of the dead! **20** Go home, my people, and lock your doors! Hide yourselves for a little while until the LORD 's anger has passed. **21** Look! The LORD is coming from heaven to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will no longer hide those who have been killed. They will be brought out for all to see.

27 1 In that day the LORD will take his terrible, swift sword and punish Leviathan, the swiftly moving serpent, the coiling, writhing serpent. He will kill the dragon of the sea. **2** "In that day, sing about the fruitful vineyard. **3** I, the LORD, will watch over it, watering it carefully. Day and night I will watch so no one can harm it. **4** My anger will be gone. If I find briars and thorns growing, I will attack them; I will burn them up— **5** unless they turn to me for help. Let them make peace with me; yes, let them make peace with me." **6** The time is coming when Jacob's descendants will take root. Israel will bud and blossom and fill the whole earth with fruit! **7** Has the LORD struck Israel as he struck her enemies? Has he punished her as he punished them? **8** No, but he exiled Israel to call her to account. She was exiled from her land as though blown away in a storm from the east. **9** The LORD did this to purge Israel's wickedness, to take away all her sin. As a result, all the pagan altars will be crushed to dust. No Asherah pole or pagan shrine will be left standing. **10** The fortified towns will be silent and empty, the houses abandoned, the streets overgrown with weeds. Calves will graze there, chewing on twigs and branches. **11** The people are like the dead branches of a tree, broken off and used for kindling beneath the cooking pots. Israel is a foolish and stupid nation, for its people have turned away from God. Therefore, the one who made them will show them no pity or mercy. **12** Yet the time

will come when the LORD will gather them together like handpicked grain. One by one he will gather them—from the Euphrates River in the east to the Brook of Egypt in the west. **13** In that day the great trumpet will sound. Many who were dying in exile in Assyria and Egypt will return to Jerusalem to worship the LORD on his holy mountain.

28 **1** What sorrow awaits the proud city of Samaria— the glorious crown of the drunks of Israel. It sits at the head of a fertile valley, but its glorious beauty will fade like a flower. It is the pride of a people brought down by wine. **2** For the Lord will send a mighty army against it. Like a mighty hailstorm and a torrential rain, they will burst upon it like a surging flood and smash it to the ground. **3** The proud city of Samaria— the glorious crown of the drunks of Israel — will be trampled beneath its enemies' feet. **4** It sits at the head of a fertile valley, but its glorious beauty will fade like a flower. Whoever sees it will snatch it up, as an early fig is quickly picked and eaten. **5** Then at last the LORD of Heaven's Armies will himself be Israel's glorious crown. He will be the pride and joy of the remnant of his people. **6** He will give a longing for justice to their judges. He will give great courage to their warriors who stand at the gates. **7** Now, however, Israel is led by drunks who reel with wine and stagger with alcohol. The priests and prophets stagger with alcohol and lose themselves in wine. They reel when they see visions and stagger as they render decisions. **8** Their tables are covered with vomit; filth is everywhere. **9** "Who does the LORD think we are?" they ask. "Why does he speak to us like this? Are we little children, just recently weaned? **10** He tells us everything over and over— one line at a time, one line at a time, a little here, and a little there!" **11** So now God will have to speak to his people through foreign oppressors who speak a strange language! **12** God has told his people, "Here is a place of rest; let the weary rest here. This is a place of quiet rest." But they would not listen. **13** So the LORD will spell out his message for them again, one line at a time, one line at a time, a little here, and a little there, so that they will stumble and fall. They will be injured, trapped, and captured.

Galatians 3:10 - 22

3 **10** But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written in God's Book of the Law." **11** So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life." **12** This way of faith is very different from the way of law, which says, "It is through obeying the law that a person has life." **13** But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the

law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” **14** Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith. **15** Dear brothers and sisters, here’s an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or amend an irrevocable agreement, so it is in this case. **16** God gave the promises to Abraham and his child. And notice that the Scripture doesn’t say “to his children, ” as if it meant many descendants. Rather, it says “to his child”—and that, of course, means Christ. **17** This is what I am trying to say: The agreement God made with Abraham could not be canceled 430 years later when God gave the law to Moses. God would be breaking his promise. **18** For if the inheritance could be received by keeping the law, then it would not be the result of accepting God’s promise. But God graciously gave it to Abraham as a promise. **19** Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people. **20** Now a mediator is helpful if more than one party must reach an agreement. But God, who is one, did not use a mediator when he gave his promise to Abraham. **21** Is there a conflict, then, between God’s law and God’s promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. **22** But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God’s promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ.

Psalm 61:1 - 8

61 1 O God, listen to my cry! Hear my prayer! **2** From the ends of the earth, I cry to you for help when my heart is overwhelmed. Lead me to the towering rock of safety, **3** for you are my safe refuge, a fortress where my enemies cannot reach me. **4** Let me live forever in your sanctuary, safe beneath the shelter of your wings! Interlude **5** For you have heard my vows, O God. You have given me an inheritance reserved for those who fear your name. **6** Add many years to the life of the king! May his years span the generations! **7** May he reign under God’s protection forever. May your unfailing love and faithfulness watch over him. **8** Then I will sing praises to your name forever as I fulfill my vows each day.

Proverbs 23:17 - 18

23 17 Don't envy sinners, but always continue to fear the LORD . **18** You will be rewarded for this; your hope will not be disappointed.