It’s not easy is it, My Friend? To live in opposition to the world; to be going on a narrow path when they’re taking a wide path and they are partying down that road all the time. It is not easy is it? To always be gracious and kind and loving when the rest of the world is just letting you have it. It’s not easy to be righteous. But, O Beloved, it is rewarding. We’ll talk about it today.

PART ONE

Are you at peace, Precious One? That’s my question because this week, we’re looking at the peace that belongs to the righteous; the peace that comes from trusting; the trust that comes because you know that you have an everlasting rock in God that cannot be moved; (See Isaiah 26:3-4) the peace that comes because you’re living according to the precepts of God. This is what we want to look at and as we move into Isaiah chapter 26 and 27, we’re finishing up now a segment in Isaiah that is absolutely astounding. Because
God takes us in this passage in 24, 25, 26 and 27, He takes us to the ultimate judgment of the earth. And yet as He tells how He’s going to devastate the earth, how He is going to lay it waste. (See Isaiah 24:3) As He describes what’s going to happen to the inhabitants of the earth, (See Isaiah 24: 4) there is a word there for the righteous. There is a promise there for the righteous. (See Isaiah 25:9) So what we’re going to do is, we’re going to move through Isaiah chapter 26, segment by segment. And as we do we’re going to look at what God wants us to see about righteousness. And we’re going to see about God’s being righteous, and the way that He deals with sin. So in Isaiah 26, in verses 1 to 6, what He does is, He lets the righteous know that we have a strong, everlasting city. Now as you go through Isaiah 24, 25, and 26 and 27, one of the things you noticed was God’s comments about the city. About “...the unassailable city...,” the city that’s full of pride, the city that says, “Nothing can bring me down.” (Isaiah 26:5) I always think about New York City, and I mean, I love to go to New York City. I love to walk the streets of Manhattan, especially in the Christmas season. And I love the feel and the coldness of the air and everything. And yet, what happened? New York City was brought down in an absolute instant when on 9/11 those planes flew into the twin towers. And what happened, we thought would never happen. People thought it was the end of the world. And what God wants you and me to understand is, that all of the cities of this world are assailable. All of the cities of this world are able to be brought down except one, and that one city that will never be brought down is the city of Jerusalem. How I love to walk the streets of Jerusalem. How I love to go downtown and sit there and watch the world go by. How I love to walk down through the little valley and go in through the Joppa gate, and how I love to sit in the Jewish quarter and watch the children playing in the streets. It’s been a city of great turmoil. One of the books that I would suggest that you read is called “O Jerusalem.” It’s a secular book but it tells what Jerusalem went through when there was the fight for Israel’s
independence. It’s absolutely incredible and it is an eye-opener. But when I sit there, I know that trauma and judgment is coming to Jerusalem as well as to Israel, and yet I know the end of the story is, that we have a strong city. “...He sets up walls and rampart for security.” (Isaiah 26:1) God does that. It says, “Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the one [who] remains faithful.” (Isaiah 26:2) One of the things that breaks my heart is to watch the disintegration and the degeneration of the United States of America. We once were a faithful nation. We once were a people who believed in God, who wrote and carved His name on the monuments in Washington D.C., the center of our government; the epicenter of the way that this nation is run. There was a time when righteousness dwelt in those halls, and there was a time when there was a Supreme Court that feared God and was there for the upholding of the commandments. But we have become unfaithful. And He’s saying: “Who’s going to enter into Jerusalem?” “...The righteous nation may enter, the one that remains faithful. The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever....” (Isaiah 26:2-4) Now put a time frame. Put a green clock, over “forever.” And note what he says: “[We are to] trust in the LORD forever....” (Isaiah 26:4) We are never to stop trusting in God. It says, “...For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.” (Isaiah 26:4) Now in the light of that, I want you to go to Deuteronomy chapter 32 and I want you to look at another song, a song that Moses gave to the people to sing. As a matter of fact, in Deuteronomy 31, verse 30, it says, “Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete.” (Deuteronomy 31:30) There are songs in the Word of God that we need to remember. There are songs in the Word of God that we need to sing because they remind us of truth and in the midst of turmoil that song can come to our heart and keep us steadfast in mind and give us perfect peace. Well he says in chapter 32, verse 1: “Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear the words of my
mouth.” (Deuteronomy 32:1) Now that sounds like familiar things. This is what God says in the opening of Isaiah chapter 1, when He calls the heavens and the earth to listen. (See Isaiah 1:2) It says, “Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, as the droplets of the fresh grass...as the showers on the herb. For I proclaim the name of [our] LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! (Deuteronomy 32:2-3) Now listen to what he says: “The Rock! His work is perfect....” All the way throughout the Scriptures, God is known as a “Rock.” “[A] Rock! [Whose] work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He.” (Deuteronomy 32:4) And this is what God is telling us in Isaiah chapter 26. The righteous person, [the righteous nation can enter into this city]. (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 26:2) Because he is trusting in the Lord, because he knows that “...in...the LORD, [he has] an everlasting Rock.” (Isaiah 26:4) Well when I think of this, I think of Hebrews chapter 11, verse 13. In Hebrews chapter 11, we have a listing, we call it the Hall of—not of fame—but the Hall of Faith, as God lists one after another of the people in the Old Testament who believed God, who stood fast, who knew that “...without faith it was impossible to please [God]....” (Hebrews 11:6) And it shows what God did as a result of their faith. Now what’s interesting to understand is, that in the days that Hebrews was written, there was a great persecution going on. We’ll see it in just a few minutes. But there was a great persecution of the Jews. The Jews who had believed that Jesus was “Yeshua,” that He was Messiah, that He was the Savior. And they were getting persecution from their fellow countrymen—from other Jews. They were getting persecution from Rome at that time because the Christians were being accused and because Caesar was declared as God. So here were these people being caught in the middle. And as you look at it, what is God’s word to them at that time? Well in Hebrews chapter 11, this is what it says. It says, “All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a
"distance...." (Hebrews 11:13) That’s what we’re doing today. We’re seeing promises. We’re seeing that we have an everlasting city. We’re seeing that we have a strong city, and we see that that city is yet to come, but we by faith are embracing it in righteousness. It says, “...and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.” (Hebrews 11:13) In other words, they knew they were marching to a different beat. They knew that they were not part of the current culture; not part of this godless age that has reared its puny fist in the face of God and walked in pride and rebellion. It says, “For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.” (Hebrews 11:14) A country of our own—a city of our own, “But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them....” (Hebrews 11:16) Well what city is he talking about? He’s talking about this strong city that the righteous can enter into. (See Isaiah 26:1-2) And when you look at it, He contrasts it with the cities of this world. And it’s that contrast I want you to see, because I want you to see—which city are you looking for? Which city do you want to live in? We’ll talk about it in just a minute.

PART TWO

When God gets ready, Beloved, to shake this earth, and to shake the cities of this earth, and to bring them low, because of their unrighteousness, because of their ungodliness, because of their rebellion, Isaiah tells us that we who are righteous have a strong city. It’s so interesting to go through and mark every reference to “the city,” and what God says about the cities in Isaiah chapter 24, 25, 26 and 27, you see a contrast. You see a city that thinks it’s unassailable. You see a city that says it is fortified and that nothing can bring it down, and yet, that is a symbol of all the work of man. That is a symbol of the frailty of the work of man, because God is going to level them all. But
there is one that will stand. And He wants us to understand that. He wants us
to know it as Christians. He wants us to understand that this belongs to the
righteous. So watch what He does in Isaiah chapter 26, in verse 1 to 6. He’s
talking about “Trust[ing] in the LORD...,” verse 4, “...forever, for in [the
Lord] GOD...we have an everlasting Rock.” (Isaiah 26:4) In other words,
it will not be moved, it will not be shaken, it will not be altered. But then it
says, “For He...,” this Rock that we have “...has brought low those who
dwell on high...,” it says: “...the unassailable city....” (Isaiah 26:5) He
says, “I have brought it low.” Now remember, all the way through Isaiah,
God keeps pointing to the pride of man, and He keeps telling how God has
to abase the pride of man, because it is fleshly pride, because it is damnable
pride, because it is destructive pride, because it is the pride of the king of
Babylon that brought him low. It is the pride of Uzziah that brought him to
death as a leper. God will not tolerate pride, why? Because the root of pride
is independence from God. You go back to Genesis; just think with me. The
serpent comes into the garden. The serpent says to Eve: “...Yea, hath God
said, Ye shall not eat of...,” the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good
and evil? (Genesis 3:1, KJV) “For God knows...,” Now watch the appeal
to pride, “For God knows that...the day [that] you eat...,” of the fruit of
that tree, “...you will be [as] God...,” (Genesis 3:5) Then you can make
your decisions. You don’t need God telling you what to do. You don’t need
to depend on Him. You can make your own decisions. You’re gonna know
difference between good and evil. You can call the shots. Listen. That is
pride, and God brings pride low. (See Isaiah 2:17) So when it says “set on
high.” I mark it the same way I mark “pride,” with an arrow going up. And
then I see the contrast. The arrow goes up: they’re dwelling on high. “...The
unassailable city...[but God] lays it low...” What low? “...The
unassailable city...” (Isaiah 26:5) The one that thinks that there’s no way
they’re gonna be brought down. “...He lays it low to the ground, He casts
it [in] to the dust.” (Isaiah 26:5) “[And] the foot...” Now watch what it
ISAIAH, PART 1 (JUDGMENT – BUT HOPE)
PROGRAM 47 (#911092)
WEEK 10 (#911319)
©2011 PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

says: “...The foot will trample it, the feet of the afflicted, the steps of the helpless...” (Isaiah 26:6) are going to walk on this city. This is how low it is going to come, so this is the first thing I want you to see about the righteous; number one: that they have a strong city. Now we move into verse 7 of Isaiah 26 and we go from 7 through 10. And what do I want you to see here? Well I want you to see that the way of the righteous is divinely smooth. It doesn’t mean that there are not mountains and obstacles and difficulties, but because we are righteous, because we are doing what is right, because we are not walking in pride, but we are walking in obedience to God, in dependence to God, then the way of the righteous becomes smooth. Watch what He says. He says: “The way of the righteous is smooth; O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.” (Isaiah 26:7) I am going to walk in righteousness and because of that; it doesn’t mean I’m not going to have difficulties but it means I’m going to be able to go through those smoothly. It means I’m not going to become “all shook up.” It means that I’m not going to just absolutely lose it. It means that I’m going to keep my mind under control because: “The steadfast of mind [He] will keep in perfect peace, ’cause he trusts in [Him]....” (Isaiah 26:3) Means I’m not going to fall apart, and that’s what so many people are doing today. They are falling apart, because they’re not righteous, and because they’re not depending on the Lord and because the Lord is not smoothing out their way. It says: “...O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level. (Isaiah 26:7) Now one of the things that you notice when you study Isaiah or the prophets, and you read about the coming of the Lord, you see that He has prepared a highway, (See Isaiah 11:16) how He has removed the mountains and there is a level place to walk, why? Because that’s the easiest place to walk. And so He goes on to say, “Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O Lord, we have waited for You eagerly....” (Isaiah 26:8) “God, I’ve been watching Your judgment. I’ve been watching Your judgment on Israel. I’ve been watching Your judgment on Iraq. I’ve been
watching Your judgment on the nations. I’ve been watching Your judgment on those that have mistreated Israel. Lord, I saw Your judgment on Germany because of what Germany did to Your people. He says: “...We have waited for You eagerly...;” he says, “...Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls.” (Isaiah 26:8) “God I want to hear about You. God I want to talk about You. God I want to think about You. This is the desire; this is the craving of my soul. God I crave You.” Precious One, what do you crave? What do you crave? Tell me what you crave and I’ll tell you how your soul is. And then he goes on and he says this: “...Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls. At night my soul longs for You, indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently; for when the earth experiences Your judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.” (Isaiah 26:8-9) What is he saying here? He’s saying, “Look! The way that you get the attention of many people and turn them from being unrighteous to righteous is You bring Your judgments upon this earth.” When 9/11 happened the churches were packed. Soon they were back to what they were except for a few who learned from the judgment of God, who saw that God is Sovereign and He is in control, and that nothing happens, good or evil, without God’s permission. Then they turned to God. And when you turn to God, you turn in righteousness. O Beloved. O Beloved, live righteously.