

Isaiah 26

1. Chapter 26 begins with a song of praise (Is 26:1-19).
 - a. Where does Isaiah picture it being sung by the people of Judah? (Is 26:1)
 - b. What suggests that this “strong” city is not made of wood and stone, but is a spiritual place? (Is 26:1)
 - c. What is the requirement for any nation to enter this heavenly city? (Is 26:2)
2. What qualities help keep everyone in the heavenly city at peace? (Is 26:3-4; Rom 12:2; Phil 2:5; 1 Cor 2:16)
3. Isaiah tells us that for the people in the heavenly city, the Lord’s “name and renown are the desire of our hearts.” (Is 26:8) What behavior would occur among us today if the Lord’s name and his renown were truly the deepest desire of our hearts?
4. Do you think it is true that, as Isaiah says, even though “grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness”? (Is 26:10)
5. What does Isaiah hope would happen to the wicked who witness God’s zeal? (Is 26:11)
6. *Challenge:* Isaiah 26:16-18 refers back to the period of Judah’s captivity in Babylon and describes the mood of the captives of that time in images of “prayer” and “pregnancy.” Explain the power of these two simple images to describe different aspects of their captivity.
7. *Reflection:* Do you think Isaiah 26:19 says that he believes in life after death? Or is this verse simply a metaphoric way to describe the Israelites’ freedom from Babylonian captivity?

Note: The following two verses begin a short oracle that ends at Isaiah 27:1.

8. “The Lord is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins.” What is Isaiah’s advice for “my people”? (Is 26:21)
9. How will the earth itself reveal the evil work of sinful people? (Is 26:21)

Isaiah 27

10. *Reflection:* For Isaiah, the Lord himself wields the sword. Is this a literal “sword”? If not, what does this verse mean to you? (Is 27:1)