

ISAIAH

ISAIAH 26:1-9, ISRAEL'S KINGDOM TRUST IN GOD, PART 1

Chapter 26 is largely a song of praise for God's protection of Israel after the judgments of the Tribulation have concluded and the Kingdom has begun. The Israelites will never again trust in themselves—that never worked out very well anyway—and they will trust in Yahweh to protect the nation. The irony is they could have had that all along if they had simply been obedient and trusted in God's covenant promises for them from the beginning.

The chapter begins with the eschatological marker, "in that day," and, in this context, it is an end times indication of the inaugurated Kingdom during which the promised unconditional covenant blessings will be realized. Some theologians argue that this is some temporal deliverance and provision of security that took place in the prophet's day, possibly the attack by Sennacherib that was thwarted by the angel of the Lord. However, the kind of security revealed here has yet to happen. Not many years after Isaiah's ministry, the city was destroyed and the people were taken to Babylon in captivity. They have never been restored as a nation the way this chapter reveals it. Even today, Israel exists as a nation in unbelief and does not have the kind of security this chapter reveals. They still have to face God's wrath and judgment only after which will they experience the peace and safety they have been long promised. We know that the nations will have access to the holy city during the Kingdom, but this context is a reference to Israel.

Isaiah 26:1 ¹In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong [עִיר] city; He sets up walls [חֹמָה] and ramparts [תֵּיִל] for security [אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁרָעָה]."

For the Israelites, the Kingdom will be a time of incredible rejoicing, peace, prosperity, and safety. The Israelites who survived the Tribulation saw destruction, persecution, and, at the end, Yahweh's salvation. Their salvation was not only physical, but spiritual as well because, as a nation, the believers among them will finally receive their Messiah King. Not every individual Jew will believe during the Tribulation, of course, but the unbelieving will be weeded out, judged, and prevented from entering the Kingdom. Only believing Jews will inherit the covenant promises. The believing Israelites who were in Christ and raptured prior to the Tribulation, will return with the King at the Second Coming when the Lord rescues Israel from destruction at the hands of the antichrist. The Old Testament believers and the Jewish Tribulation believers who were martyred will be resurrected to enjoy their covenant Kingdom blessings.

There will be walls and ramparts set up around the city, Jerusalem, but the true security of the city will reside in the King.

Wall, חֹמָה, means a wall, in this case, a wall around the city used to enclose it and fortify it for defensive purposes.

Ramparts, רָמְּסוֹת, are smaller defensive walls serving the purpose of an outer fortification of the main defensive wall. In other words, the rampart is the first wall the enemy encounters, and it serves as a preemptive, protective barrier before the enemy can get to the primary wall. It may also refer to the intervening space between the primary defensive wall of the city and the rampart. This creates a no man's land between the primary defensive wall and the rampart which gives the soldiers behind the primary defensive wall an opportunity to inflict casualties on an invader while they are out in the open and their movement is restricted between the two walls rendering them somewhat defenseless and vulnerable to the defender's weaponry. These walls are often referred to as the inner wall and the outer wall.

The point being made here is that the walls represent the protection offered them by Yahweh. Physical walls are always vulnerable to destruction and being breached, but God's defenses can never be defeated. These walls may appear to be the heart of the city's defenses, but they are not. Strong, עָזָה, means strength or might; it refers to a fortification or a stronghold which is [theoretically] a place or a structure which is a safe place to reside against attacks. The problem is that no physical fortifications are totally safe. It is Yahweh who makes the city a strong city, not the Israelites as an armed force and not the fortifications erected around the city. None of that is to say that there will not be physical walls around the city, the text confirms there will be walls around Jerusalem, but it is to say that it is God, not the walls, that will ensure the ultimate safety of the city.

Security, יְשׁוּעָה, [yēšû·ā(h)] [root: יָשַׁע], means salvation, deliverance, help, or victory referring, in this context, to the help or security offered by fortified walls, delivering in the sense of preventing what would have happened if the walls were not there. In the Old Testament, this word is "almost exclusively a theological term with Yahweh as its subject and his people as its object" [Willem A. VanGemeren, gen. ed., s.v. "יָשַׁע," *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2, 2:556]. But there is more to the use of this word in this Isaiah context. The context is the Kingdom; the Kingdom does not exist until the Messiah King returns and assumes the Davidic Throne in the city, which is Jerusalem. The word "Jesus," "Savior," is derived from the root (יָשַׁע) of this word; He is often called Yeshua. He is the One who is guaranteeing the safety of the city; therefore, "only the Lord can be the author of salvation ... His saving power surrounds the city like walls and ramparts [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 174]. This is true whether we are referring to the physical safety of the city or to the salvation of the people who inhabit the city and the world during the Kingdom.

The gates will be open to all who are righteous among the Israelites. That must be a reference to all the Israelites, because all of them will be righteous in Christ during the Kingdom. The New Covenant promises provide for that situation.

Jeremiah 31:33–34 ³³"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴"They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

According to the New Covenant promises made with the Israelites, all of them will be believers; no Jew will rebel against Yahweh as they did throughout their history up to the time of the Kingdom. "It is also clear from the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 that there will be no Jewish unbelievers in the Kingdom; all Jews born during the Kingdom will accept the Messiah ..." [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Footsteps of the Messiah: A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events*, rev. ed., 383]. This is because God said, "... they will all know Me ..."

The gates of the city will be opened to the believing Israelites. At the beginning of the Kingdom, the Israelites will all be believers, and they will remain faithful for the duration of the Kingdom. Israel's rebellion will finally be completely over and in the past. At that point in time, the nation will truly be a righteous nation.

Isaiah 26:2 ²⁴"Open the gates, that the righteous [צַדִּיק] nation may enter, The one that remains faithful [אֲמוּנָה].

The Bible seems to be clear that Jerusalem will suffer a great deal of damage during the Tribulation. How much work will need to be done to make the city habitable is not stated. Nor is it stated whether the people who enter the Kingdom will have the job of rebuilding it, or whether the Lord will supernaturally do some of the reconstruction. My suspicion is that the people will have the job of rebuilding. At any rate, Israel will be regathered into the land from the chaos of the Tribulation, enter the city to reside there, and set about making the place habitable.

Nation, as used here, is a reference to Israel, although the word גּוֹי, meaning nation or people, is often used to refer to the Gentiles. Righteousness and faithfulness will characterize this Kingdom people, and that will be true throughout the duration of the Kingdom. These are obviously positive characteristics, and they are characteristics the nation was noticeably lacking throughout history in terms of their relationship to Yahweh.

Righteous, צַדִּיק, means just or righteous referring to a person, or a nation in this context, who is characterized by righteous actions and morals. It is a concept that is integrally related to justice, i.e., it has legal connotations. That is true not only in Hebrew, but in the New Testament concept of righteousness as expressed by the word δικαιοσύνη. The root of this word essentially refers to conformity with an ethical or a moral standard, which has been revealed by God to His people. In the Kingdom context, it involves a wide range of conduct that was God's desire for His people from the beginning. Service to God is the highest expression of righteousness. The word carries an ethical concept in terms of man's dealing with his fellow man in alignment with God's standards. The result is a harmonious community. An entire nation reconciled to God is a nation living in peace and tranquility. Righteousness is expressed through equal rights for all that is not just a humanistic slogan but a reality.

Faithful, אֲמוּנָה, means trustworthiness, faithfulness, or dependability. In this context, it is used to describe the nation, but the New Covenant promises reveal that the Israelites will, as individuals, all be faithful to Yahweh. For the first time in history, a nation and its people will be completely righteous and faithful to God. "Nation" is singular, but "faithful" is plural. Motyer suggests that this is "expressing amplitude: faith in its fullness, faith in every

circumstance of life" [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, 174]. The New Covenant suggests that concept as well.

"Open the gates" suggests access to a city that is safe and secure which has no need for closed gates as a protective, defensive measure. All of the Kingdom Israelites will be welcomed inside by the King. God is the true protection for Jerusalem, just as He will be the true protection for the New Jerusalem where "the gates will never be closed" (Rev. 21:25). There will be perfect security for the city guaranteed and ensured by the King.

No one and no place on earth has ever known perfect peace prior to the Kingdom.

Isaiah 26:3³ "The steadfast [סָמָךְ] of mind [יִצְרָר] You will keep in perfect [שָׁלוֹם] peace [שָׁלוֹם], Because he trusts [בְּטוּיָתָךְ] in You.

Literal translation: "Inclination/striving be firm keep/preserve/protect peace peace because in you trust."

The Israelites will be steadfast of mind and they will trust in Yahweh resulting in perfect peace for them forevermore. When you consider all the divine discipline the Israelites experienced throughout the centuries for disobedience, this will be a situation they have experienced for brief moments, mostly under Solomon's reign, but never on a permanent, national basis.

Steadfast, סָמָךְ, means to support, to lean upon referring to being established, made secure or firm. In this context, "steadfast is a passive participle, meaning 'maintained' or 'made/resolved to be undeviating'" [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 174]. God is going to give them the resolve to remain faithful. Part of the New Covenant is the placing of the law within them and writing it on their hearts (Jer. 31:33). That is a gift from God to the Israelites.

Mind, יִצְרָר, means form, framing, purpose, something made into shape referring to an inclination, that is, a characteristic likelihood or natural disposition toward a certain condition or character or effect. It may have the connotation of something thought of in the mind.

The Lexham English Bible translates "steadfast of mind" as "a firm inclination." These words are telling us that God, under the auspices of the New Covenant, is going to establish the Israelites as His people in the land and He will ensure that they are naturally disposed or inclined toward Him. God's purpose for them is that faith will be an intrinsic part of their life. Yet, they are not being forced by God to believe; they simply will believe. This is hard to explain, but these are my thoughts on trying to explain it. Once the Jewish people get a concept firmly locked into their national psyche and culture, they are quite tenacious in upholding it. Orthodox Jews are the perfect example; they would rather die than give up their faith. The Kingdom Israelites will be the same way, only they will have placed their faith in the Messiah King who saved them during the Tribulation. They will all finally understand what they were supposed to understand from the beginning because God will place that knowledge and understanding in their hearts.

Trust, בְּטוּחַ, means to trust, to feel safe, to be full of confidence. It expresses the feeling of safety and security that is felt when one can rely on someone or something else. It has the sense of well-being and security which results from having someone or something in which one's confidence is placed. In this case, the Israelites will completely trust in Yahweh.

“Perfect peace” is actually a Jewish idiom emphasizing the peace enjoyed by Israel in the Kingdom by using the word peace twice in succession. The text reads “*shalom, shalom*” translated “perfect peace” by the NASB. *Shalom*, שְׁלוֹמַי, emphasizes wholeness and completeness, but encompasses all of life concerning tranquility, soundness, welfare, peace, prosperity, and success. This word carries a number of senses in the Old Testament: 1) peace; harmonious relations and freedom from disputes, especially during the absence of war. 2) Wellbeing; a contented state of general welfare. 3) Safety; the state of being safe or free from danger. 4) Peace as a greeting; it is a common greeting of goodwill. 5) Completeness; the state of being complete and entire. 6) Health; a state of wellbeing free from disease. 7) Friend; a person you know well and regard with affection and trust. 8) Blessing of peace; a state of peace that is a blessing or favor from God. 9) Satisfaction; the contentment one feels when one has fulfilled a desire, need, or expectation.

“The Hebrew word for peace, *shalom* (שְׁלוֹמַי) is derived from a root denoting wholeness or completeness, and its frame of reference throughout Jewish literature is bound up with the notion of *shelemut*, perfection. Its significance is thus not limited to the political domain — to the absence of war and enmity — or to the social — to the absence of quarrel and strife. It ranges over several spheres and can refer in different contexts to bounteous physical conditions, to a moral value, and, ultimately, to a cosmic principle and divine attribute. In the Bible, the word *shalom* is most commonly used to refer to a *state of affairs*, one of well-being, tranquility, prosperity, and security, circumstances unblemished by any sort of defect. *Shalom* is a blessing, a manifestation of divine grace” [<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shalom/>, accessed 1 Jan. 2020]. “In Israel today, when you greet someone or say goodbye, you say, Shalom. You are literally saying, ‘may you be full of well-being’ or, ‘may health and prosperity be upon you’” [<https://firm.org.il/learn/the-meaning-of-shalom/> accessed 1 Jan. 2020].

The manifestation of divine grace is an element of *shalom* that is really fleshed out in the New Testament, and it is based on the incarnation, the sacrifice, and the resurrection of the God-man who brings perfect peace into the universe. At its core, *shalom* is about reconciliation with God, and it is only in this sense that true wholeness and completeness can be fully expressed. That makes the concept of “perfect peace” a doctrine that will be realized only when the Kingdom begins, which is the point of this verse. “Peace peace,” meaning perfect peace encompasses peace with God, peace with other people, and personal peace within one's own soul. It is only God who can bring about true peace, perfect peace. We know that the Messiah King will be the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 45:7 ⁷The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being [שְׁלוֹמַי] and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.

Isaiah 9:6 ⁶For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace [שְׁלוֹם].

Continuing the thought from verse 3, the Israelites will proclaim their eternal love for Yahweh.

Isaiah 26:4 ⁴“Trust in the LORD forever [עַד], For in GOD the LORD [יְהוָה יְהוּי], we have an everlasting [עוֹלָם] Rock [צוּר].

This verse reinforces the New Covenant promise that they will all know Him. Once Israel accepts her Messiah, no Israelite will ever rebel against Him again.

Forever, עַד, means eternity, future, perpetuity or forever, referring to an indeterminate and unending time going on into the unforeseeable future. It is a synonym of עוֹלָם, meaning everlasting, forever, eternity referring to an unlimited duration of time, usually with a focus on the future.

God the LORD, יְהוָה יְהוּי, Yah Yahweh, translated “God [the] LORD,” with “Yah” being a contracted form of Yahweh, but it is also often translated as though it were Yahweh, i.e., LORD. This could read “[the] LORD [the] LORD.” It is an emphatic form of address. “Yah” is often used in other Hebrew words as a reference to God. For example, hallelujah means “praise God.” According to Motyer, this expression is a Hebrew idiom. “The idiom ‘in Yahweh is an everlasting rock’ means ‘Yahweh is the very essence of what an everlasting rock should be,’ durable, changeless and of saving efficacy” [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, 174].

The Rock is a metaphor frequently used to describe and identify the Lord. Rock, צוּר, means a rock or a cliff. Rocks are seen as places of refuge in the Scriptures (cf. Num. 24:21). “It describes a rocky crag upon which a harassed person could climb, sheltering himself in one of its crannies and there being able to beat off all attackers” [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39*, 473]. Rock was also used to refer to a solid, secure foundation which is how Christ referred to Himself in Matthew 7:24-25 when He said the house founded on the rock would not fall. Christ is the Everlasting Rock.

Those who enter the city are those who trust in God. Part of the reason for trusting God is revealed in verses 5-6.

Isaiah 26:5–6 ⁵“For He has brought low [שָׁפַח] those who dwell on high [מְרוֹם], the unassailable [שְׁנוּב] city; He lays it low [שָׁפַח], He lays it low [שָׁפַח] to the ground, He casts it to the dust. ⁶“The foot will trample it, The feet of the afflicted [עֲנִי], the steps of the helpless [דָּל].”

In Isaiah 25:2, the city was a reference to the unbelieving, rebellious world system and so it is here. God will obliterate this world system and replace it with the Messianic Kingdom which will be populated by believers only. Rebellion, at least until the waning years of the Kingdom, will largely be a thing of the past. Those who are in the top echelon of world

society—economically, socially, politically, and even religiously who are the epitome of God defying pride and power—will, apart from faith, be brought low. Any Gentile rebellion that begins to form during the Kingdom will be crushed by the King who will wield a rod of iron (Ps. 2:9), and at the end there will be a great rebellion, led by Satan, that will also be crushed by God raining down fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9). The end of the Kingdom rebellion is not the subject of these verses.

The true strong city, the city of the King, cited in verse 1 will replace the formerly unassailable city—which will prove to be not so unassailable in the end—and it will be populated by those who have placed their faith in the Messiah King replacing those who rejected Him.

High, **קָרוֹם**, literally means height or loftiness. In this context, it is a figurative reference to pride which is an improper haughty attitude of arrogance as a figurative extension of a spatially high object or place. It has the sense of a high position that denotes power, authority, or status.

Unassailable, **שָׁגֵב**, mean to be high, lofty, inaccessible, unattainable, exalted; it has the sense of protection, i.e., it is a place that shields from danger, injury, destruction, or damage.

The picture here is one of a proud, God rejecting world system, characterized as an “unassailable city,” full of people who think they are self-sufficient and therefore have no need of the Creator God. They think no one can touch them and bring them down much less destroy the entire system they have built throughout history. It is only in their minds that they are unassailable; they cannot withstand the judgment of God.

To bring them low is a figurative way of saying God will destroy them and their system. Two different Hebrew words are used to define “low.”

Low, **שָׁפָה**, means to cower, to crouch, to bow down, to demolish, to throw down. It has the sense humbling someone, conceived of as bringing the person low or down.

Low, **שָׁפַל**, means to bring low, to cause to go down, to humble.

Both of these words represent causative action with an active voice which is to say that God is going to bring these people and their satanically governed world system to nothing. God is going to destroy this satanic system and replace it with the Messianic Kingdom and with believers to populate it. To turn something into dust is to destroy it. It will be demolished and the Kingdom built on the dust that remains. However, the world system, the unassailable city, and those who have profited from it, are not going to voluntarily give it up; they will fight God to the very end.

In the end, the kingdom of unrighteousness, Satan's system, will be replaced by God's Kingdom of righteousness. The very people who suffered under the world system, before and after the Rapture of the church, will now be enjoying life in the Messianic Kingdom after the rebellious ones are no longer present in the world.

Afflicted, עָנִי, means poor, afflicted, humble, or oppressed referring to being in a lowly, needy state, as a class of persons of low status in a society, usually of persons in fiscal poverty, implying a lack of resources. An afflicted person is one who has been the victim of some pain, injury, or harm either physically or mentally which is often associated with recurring treatment or events.

Helpless, עָלֵל, means low, weak, and poor referring to those who have few or no possessions but who are not yet reduced to begging. This word describes people who have little wealth and so are of a humble condition and low status and vulnerable to oppression.

There have always been downtrodden, exploited people in the world. Sadly, most of them are also active participants in the God rejecting aspects of the world system. During the Tribulation, most of the world's people will be in this condition. Those who place their faith in the Messiah will be eternally secure, even though they may continue to experience the dire world conditions existing in the day of Jacob's trouble.

There also seems to be a spiritual element to this situation. Believers in this dispensation have been told to expect persecution simply based on the fact they are believers in Christ Jesus (John 15:20; 2 Tim. 3:12). The Israelites have suffered persecution throughout their history. Part of this is due to the imposition of divine discipline (Lv. 26; Dt. 28), and part of it is Satan's crusade to kill all the Jews as the necessary result of his desire to thwart the Second Coming because the Lord will not return until the nation's leadership calls on Him to return and save the Jewish people (Mt. 23:39). At the end of history as we know it, the believers, Jew and Gentile, will inherit the Kingdom and rebuild it on the dust that is left of mankind's quest to rebel against God and go their own way. Whether they were oppressed because they were poor, or they were believers, or both, those who rule the world now in their smug arrogance and God rejecting mindset will be replaced by many of the people they once ruled over.

Verses 7-10 shift the focus from being thankful for what God has done that places people into the Kingdom, to waiting for Yahweh to act and form the Kingdom into what it is intended to be.

Isaiah 26:7 ⁷The way of the righteous is smooth [מִישָׁרִים]; O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.

Smooth, מִישָׁרִים, means a level way, uprightness, straightness, smoothness, equity, justice, and integrity. Literally, it refers to a straight or level road which stands in opposition to a crooked, uneven road strewn with obstacles. Figuratively, it describes the conduct of people in regard to ethical norms and religious values. This word is translated "uprightness" (KJV, NKJV, ASV, YLT), "level" (RSV, HCSB, NET, ESV, TANAKH), and "straight" (LEB) in other English translations.

In verse 6, the feet and the steps they take in the Kingdom were the subject, and here we read that the Lord will make a way smooth and level for them to travel upon. This is in contrast to the rocky, rutted, uneven, up and down roads travelers had to endure for centuries and still do in many parts of the world. However, this is primarily figurative speech relating to the way of the righteous in the Kingdom. The TANAKH translates this:

“The path is level for the righteous man.” During the Kingdom, the way of the righteous who enter the Kingdom will be a clear, level path to trod upon because God has removed the obstacles that bedeviled them when they were living under the dictates of the world system. They are now living in a completely new system, the Messianic Kingdom.

Isaiah 26:8–9 ⁸Indeed, ~~while following~~ the way of Your judgments [מִשְׁפָּט], O LORD, We have waited for You ~~eagerly~~; Your name [שֵׁם], even Your memory [זִכָּר], is the desire [תַּאֲוָה] of our souls. ⁹At night my soul longs [אֲוָה] for You, Indeed, my spirit within me seeks [שָׁהַר] You diligently; For when the earth experiences Your judgments The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

The beginning of the Kingdom is the context here. In verse 8, during the past seven years, people have seen the judgment of God being poured out on an unbelieving world. Some, perhaps most, of the people who came to faith during the Tribulation did so because it was through those judgments that the Jewish people realized these were calamities that could only come from God. Verse 9 reveals that to be the case. As the world experienced God's judgment, some of the world's citizens learned righteousness which is a characteristic only a believer may possess. This is true of Jews and Gentiles.

Judgment, מִשְׁפָּט, means a decision or a judgment. As an act, it is the judging or assessing of a person, situation, or event, especially one that results in a moral or a legal determination. It refers to the authoritative decisions and the authoritative judgments or sentences imposed by a judge. In the context of the Tribulation, it is the imposition of God's holy and righteous justice, in the form of punitive measures, on an unrighteous nation, Israel, and on an unrighteous world that is in rebellion against God. The purpose is judgment and the attendant punishment righteous judgment requires, but it is also designed to bring the people of Israel and the people of the world to faith so they can turn from unrighteousness to righteousness and pass from eternal death into eternal life.

The people who experience justification salvation will pay attention to the judgments as they fall on the world because they realize they have come from God. As they come to faith, they realize these judgments indicate the soon return of the Lord. “Eagerly” is not in the text; the NASB translators added it for clarity, but that was not necessary. “While following” is not in the text either. A more literal reading of the first clause in verse 8 is “Surely we wait for you in the path of your judgments ...” (LEB).

Name, שֵׁם, means name, but it also refers to one's standing and reputation or fame.

Memory, זִכָּר, means a remembrance or a memorial. It has the sense of recognizing meritorious deeds from the past.

This suggests that the people who come to faith during the Tribulation will seek out more biblical knowledge in order to understand what is going on during this unprecedented time in history and to learn what the future holds for them. To what extent some people will know exactly what is going on and why is unknown although we do know the earth dwellers will acknowledge that the judgments are from God and they are experiencing the wrath of God (Rev. 6:15-17). Certainly, there will be copies of the Bible that people

will be able to access in order to determine what exactly is going on, and as some come to faith, their understanding of the situation will increase. There will also be people in the Tribulation who professed Christianity during their pretrib lives and learned some biblical truth, but were never born again, and who will be able to provide information to people concerning of the things that will be going on around them. On the other hand, the sheep and goats judgment reveals that the sheep are astounded that the Lord is commending them for their faith as they proved it through their care for the persecuted Israelites during the Tribulation (Mt. 25:31-46). That is a well-known biblical truth, at least among dispensationalists, proving that perhaps the people left after the Rapture won't learn much concerning the biblical truths about what is happening to them during the Tribulation. There is not much information provided about what will be known during the Tribulation, but we do know that some people, described as a multitude but still a minority when compared to the total population of the earth, will come to faith while the majority of mankind continues in the rebellion.

Once these people come to faith in the midst of this incredibly dangerous time, they develop a desire for God. Apparently, they will be quite faithful. Desire, תַּאֲוָה, means desire or longing referring to longing over a prolonged unfulfilled desire or need. It should be apparent that once people come to faith during the Tribulation, they would have a desire to see the Lord return which would mean rescue from the dangerous condition extant in the world at that time. Longs, אָוָה, means to desire or crave referring to feeling or having a desire for and to strongly want something or someone. Seek, שָׁקַד, means to look early, to long for, diligently, to be on the lookout for to seek and inquire for referring to trying to get or reach something that one desires. "This constant longing within me (early and at night) indicates that a serious problem exists and that those lamenting desperately need God to address their situation" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 1-39*, 446]. In verse 9, Isaiah applies to himself the same longing for God that was expressed by the saved multitude in verse 8.

These words work together, for both the saved multitude and the prophet combined, to show us the depth of the need people will come to realize they have for the return of the Lord. These words packed together like this indicate an intensity on the part of people who come to faith and long for the return of the Lord. This is particularly true for those who come to faith during the Tribulation judgments.

These judgments will cause the world to learn righteousness in one of two ways. Those who come to faith, that is, those who place their faith in the Messiah King and the Gospel of the Kingdom, will obtain imputed righteousness just as believers always have the moment they believe. Unbelievers will also learn righteousness, but they will learn it by experiencing the judgment that befalls those who reject the imputed righteousness that comes through faith. They will learn righteousness when they face the only holy and righteous God at the Great White Throne Judgment. There they will learn the penalty for rejecting His righteousness when they should have learned it and embraced it.

"... God disciplines people with a time of judgment, people 'learn, should learn' what is right and what is wrong. This recognizes that there is a pedagogical [teaching] purpose in God's acts of judgment. They are educational just like the discipline of a parent, but

sometimes people do not turn to God in repentance, so nothing is actually learned”
[Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 1-39*, 446].