

In One Hour, Everything Is Going to Change



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) June 15, 2020

A Classic Message Abridged

Isaiah warns that in the last days, God will turn the world upside down. “Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste” (*Isaiah 24:1, NKJV*). The King James Version translates this as “turneth it upside down.” According to Isaiah’s prophecy, everything will change in a single hour. Within that short span, the whole world will witness fast-falling destruction, and nothing will ever be the same.

The apostle John gives a similar warning in Revelation. “Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine... For *in one hour* such great riches came to nothing” (*Revelation 18:8,17, my emphasis*).

Isaiah’s prophecy describes every house as shut up, with no one coming or going. “The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in” (*Isaiah 24:10*). The entire city is left desolate, with all entrances and exits shut. “In the city desolation is left, and the gate is stricken with destruction” (*24:12*).

I don’t intend this message to frighten anyone. Paul tells us that as disciples of Jesus Christ, we should be confident that no matter what happens in the world, his shed blood saves and redeems us. Therefore, we are not to fear any news, but to be attentive to what he is doing in the world. I don’t know about you, but when I hear grievous reports, they make me want to tune everything out. Yet in such times, God moves powerfully.

The Bible says sudden destruction comes when the cup of violence overflows. Around the world are numerous wars and bloody uprisings, yet foremost in my mind is all the violence waged against children.

Several things tell me Isaiah’s words point to our generation.

I think of the sexual violence of pedophiles. Children are being abused, raped, kidnapped and forced into enslavement in the global sex trade. The world’s largest church denomination has spent hundreds of millions to settle claims of people molested in childhood by clergy. How long will God endure the silenced cries of children mistreated by those who would represent Christ? Thousands of children in Africa are slaughtered in tribal wars. Young boys are enlisted into militias and forced to murder men in initiation rites. Here in the U.S., reports of school murders no longer shock many but continue to terrorize our children. And the blood of millions of aborted babies cries out from the ground. We may grow hardened to such reports, but God’s heart is grieved by them. There is no worse violence than the brutalizing of children, and heaven cries out for judgment.

God’s shaking is going to change everything in three ways.

1. In one hour, God will change *the whole world*. You well remember that when the World Trade Centers were destroyed, help poured into New York from all over the world with people looking to assist however they could. But the scene in Isaiah’s prophecy is different: this calamity is clearly beyond humankind’s capacity to respond.

As this calamity strikes, it will devastate the economy. Rich merchants will weep and mourn as they face bankruptcy. In an instant, all the wealth they amassed will be reduced to nothing. John describes the scene: “The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour such great riches came to nothing!’” (*Revelation 18:15-17*).

Overnight, all buying and selling will cease. Every restaurant and bar will be shut down, and all drinking and merry-making will be replaced by anguish: “...all the merry-hearted sigh. The mirth of the tambourine ceases, the noise of the jubilant ends, the joy of the harp ceases...strong drink is bitter to those who drink it” (*Isaiah 24:7-9*).

2. In one hour, God will change *the church*. This hour of devastation will suddenly transform churches, no matter what their spiritual state. Isaiah writes, “It shall be like the shaking of an olive tree, like the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done” (*Isaiah 24:13*). The image is of God shaking all that can be shaken, sparing nothing. Then Isaiah gives us an incredible word about what will happen with believers.

Suddenly, in the midst of the dark hour, a worldwide chorus of voices will sing praises to the majesty of God: “They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing; for the majesty of the Lord they shall cry aloud” (*24:14*). A holy remnant will awaken, and a song will be born as they cry, “Glorify the Lord in the dawning light, the name of the Lord God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea. From the ends of the earth we have heard songs: ‘Glory to the righteous [One]!’” (*24:15-16*). Instead of panicking, God’s people will praise his awesome majesty in one collective voice rising by the millions out of every nation.

How will this happen, you ask? In one hour, God will regenerate and restore his church. Dry bones will shake and rattle, and the righteous will be awakened as the Holy Spirit calls multitudes of lukewarm believers back to their first love. Suddenly, their souls will flood with pangs of remorse and godly sorrow, and many will cry out in repentance. Their song of revival will be heard from the uttermost parts of the earth – from Arab lands to China, Indonesia, Africa and all corners of the globe – in one day’s time.

Isaiah tells us wonderful miracles will come as God makes all things new.

Around the world, the Lord’s people will feast on his Word! “The Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees” (*Isaiah 25:6*).

In a time of prosperity, the world’s masses seem to be covered with a veil, unable to see the truth of Jesus Christ. But when God shakes the world through judgment, the shrouds covering the minds of billions will be cast aside. “And He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations” (*25:7*). As that veil of darkness is removed, many will see the Lord in his glory.

I believe the darkest shroud-coverings today are over the eyes and hearts of youth worldwide. This is especially true of college students whose faith has been bombarded for up to four years. Over that time their minds have been indoctrinated by godless professors in classrooms where belief is attacked, mocked and scorned. These young men’s and women’s faith is shipwrecked, and they leave college convinced God is dead.

But in one hour of global devastation, all such hypocritical veils will fall away. When the worldwide song is sung, it will be heard by young people from every walk of life and every nation. Many will harden their hearts and curse God at the sound of this song, but multitudes of others will join in singing of his majesty.

3. Finally, in one hour, God will change us *as individuals*. The focus of our lives will be totally transformed. We’ll no longer obsess about our own adversities. So many worldly things we held dear will no longer be of any value to us because we’ll all be in the same boat. “It shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him” (*24:2*).

Presidents, kings, the world’s richest and most famous – all will tremble just like the poorest of the earth. This cataclysmic event will tear down all false altars. The world’s most prominent idol is money, and America is now facing a monstrous financial disaster. All idols will be crushed to dust, leveling the playing field. The richest and the poorest alike will face the same conditions, and it will all happen within a day.

What good can come of a prophetic message like this?

I remind you, Jesus warned Jerusalem of sudden devastation to come upon that city. It would be burned to the ground with over a million people dying. Christ explained his warning: “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe” (*John 14:29*). He was saying, in essence, “When it happens, you’ll know there is a God who loves you so much that you are clearly forewarned.”

Paul calls such warnings “light,” saying, in short, “You are children of light, because you know what’s coming in the future. So, when destruction comes, and there’s panic all around, you’ll have the calm of the Holy Spirit. Something will quicken inside you, and you’ll remember, ‘God warned me.’ This prophecy isn’t a message of wrath to God’s people but a wakeup call to begin preparing.”

In this day of prosperity, nobody wants to hear a message like Isaiah’s. I certainly don’t. But we cannot ignore it because it is here at our door. In such times, Paul says, when we have knowledge that sudden destruction is coming, we are not to tremble or sorrow as the world does. Instead, we are to comfort one another in faith, knowing that God rules over every aspect of our lives.

“Let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation” (*1 Thessalonians 5:8*). Paul is instructing us, “Arm yourself with faith. Build up your belief now, before the day comes. Learn your song, and you’ll be able to sing it in your trial.” “Therefore glorify the Lord in the dawning light, the name of the Lord God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea” (*Isaiah 24:15*).

This is the hope of our most holy faith: our Lord causes a song to come out of the darkest of times. Start now to build up your holy faith in him, and learn to praise his majesty quietly in your heart. When you sing your song, it will strengthen and encourage your brothers and sisters, and it will testify to the world, “Our Lord reigns over the flood!”

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