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You Have Been a Refuge for the Poor and the Needy 25: 1-5

DIG: What mood shift do you sense in this chapter? What leads Isaiah and his people to exclaim: ADONAI, You are my God? The city and fortified town symbolize all the things in which people have placed their pride and confidence. What will be the result of God's judgment upon these things? How does this relate to 19:23-25? Who are the poor and the needy and how does God shield them?

REFLECT: What is the storm or heat of the desert that is affecting you right now? How has God sheltered you in the past? Where do you need a shelter or cloud cover now? How do you respond to the LORD's faithfulness to you? When was that last time you did so? Who can you point to His faithfulness?

Speaking in the first person, **Isaiah** describes the situation that will exist when the Messianic Kingdom is established on the earth. Like **Chapter 12**, which follows the similar announcements of the destruction of **His** enemies in **Chapters 10** and **11**, this song is deeply personal. **ADONAI's** righteousness and authority will have been vindicated at that time, and **the prophet** expresses gratitude on behalf of **himself** and the one-third of **the Israelites** who will have survived the Great Tribulation (**Zechariah 13:8-9**). When Paul says: **And so all Isra'el will be saved (Romans 11:26a)**, he meant the faithful remnant, the righteous of the TaNaKh, or **the poor and the needy**, that will survive the Great Tribulation. This is the appropriate response to **God** from a people who know **Him** personally and are in love with Him.

ADONAI, you are my God. **Isaiah's** intensely personal testimony sets the tone for the entire song. **He** continues: **I will exalt You and praise Your name (25:1a)**. Instead of the rowdy drinking songs of the lost during the Great Tribulation, here we see the true love of the saved for his **King**. Here **Isaiah** seems to be saying, "I want someone like you to be **my God**. You have shown me that You really belong to me because You have not walked out on me when the times got tough. You have been faithful to me when I was so afraid You had not forgotten me." **You are my God. He says he will praise God's name and he gives three reasons for it.**

First, for in perfect faithfulness You have done marvelous things (25:1b). Isaiah praised God because of His wonderful counsels (NKJ), or perfect faithfulness (NIV). The LORD does marvelous things to save His people. In 9:6 the prophet told us that Messiah would be called Mighty Counselor. Here Isaiah is praising Yeshua for His wisdom when He rules as KING of Kings and LORD of Lords (Rev 19:16). During the Millennial Kingdom Jesus will rule and reign the entire world from His Temple in Jerusalem (to see link click [Db](#) - The Nine Missing Articles in Messiah's Coming Temple). Disputes will be brought to His attention and His counsel will be more astounding than that of Solomon (First Kings 3:16-28).

Isaiah praised God for things planned long ago (25:1c). The LORD does not make things up as He goes along. His plan doesn't include improv. Idols, on the other hand, have no plan. This should not be surprising, because the wind and the rain from which the idols come have no plan. But all believes know a God who, with perfect timing, does something that from our perspective is completely new, but from His perspective was planned before the creation of the world (Eph 1:4). Isaiah knew, and we should know, that He is the only One in whose hands it makes sense to entrust ourselves. No other plan makes much sense.

The **second** reason Isaiah praises ADONAI is His judgment on the city of Babylon (see Chapters 13, 14, and 24:20). You have made the city a heap of rubble, the fortified town a ruin, the foreigner's stronghold a city no more; it will never be rebuilt (25:2). It will never be inhabited or rebuilt again. God's prophet tells us that desert creatures will lie there, jackals will fill her houses; there the owls will dwell, and there the wild goats will leap about (13:21). Hyenas will howl in her strongholds, jackals in her luxurious palaces (13:22a). Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged (13:22b). Wild goats will inhabit it. The Hebrew word means *demons in goat form*. Goats were used as a form of demon worship in places like Leviticus 17:7 where it says: They must no longer offer any of their sacrifices to the goat idols to whom they prostitute themselves. Jeremiah says the same thing. So desert creatures and hyenas will live there, and the owl will dwell. It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah along with their neighboring towns, declares the LORD. So no one will live there; no man will dwell in it (Jeremiah 50:39-40).

These desert creatures, the wild goats, the jackals, owls and hyenas are not literal animals. There is something uncanny about these creatures. In regards to the fall of Babylon, Jeremiah tells us that no one will live in it; both men and animals will flee

away (Jeremiah 50:3). After the fall of **Babylon**, it becomes a **home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird**. But the emphasis is on **demons** in goat form (see [Gi - Edom's Streams Will Be Turned Into Pitch](#)). The only two places that will **never** be inhabited again by human beings during the thousand-year messianic Kingdom and Eternal State (see commentary on [Revelation Fq - The Eternal State](#)) will be **Babylon** and Edom (34:13b-15).

Therefore, this will cause the unbelievers who did not die during the Great Tribulation, and the **ruthless** and rebellious **nations** of the world, to **honor** and **revere ADONAI** during the thousand years of the millennial Kingdom (25:3). **Their** worship will be mandatory (Zechariah 14:16-19), and those unregenerate **peoples** will have one hundred years to accept **Jesus Christ** as **their Lord and Master** or perish (65:20). **Isra'el** will be a fruitful vineyard during that time and will fulfill the promise given Abraham that all the world's people will be blessed through **her** (Genesis 12:3). This theme of the Gentiles knowing and worshiping **God** in the messianic Kingdom is common to the prophets (Isaiah 2:3, 11:9, 49:7; 55:6, 66:20-21; Malachi 1:11).

The **third** reason is for the deliverance of the faithful remnant. **You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in His distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat (24:4a)**. When the **LORD** establishes **His** Kingdom on the earth, a reversal of fortunes will occur. **The poor** and **the needy** will be rescued and **the ruthless** will be **stilled**. Whenever you see these two groups together, **the poor** and **the needy**, it is *always* a reference to the faithful remnant of believers of the Great Tribulation. But this is true only if they are used together. If they are used separately this principle does not apply. **God's** care for **the poor** and **the needy** is mentioned many times in both the TaNaKh and the B'rit Chadashah. The reversal of fortunes, in which those who depend on **God** are helped and those who depend on themselves are judged, is a major theme of Scripture (First Samuel 2:1-10 and James 5:1-6). **The ruthless** in **their** harsh treatment of others are **like a storm** and are oppressive as desert **heat**. Just like **a cloud** that slips in between the earth and the sun produces moments of respite, **God** interposes **Himself** in hopeless situations so that life can go on. Because **if those days were not cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened** (Matthew 24:22).



During the Great Tribulation there will be **four groups of Jews**. First, there will be **apostate Jews** (about two-thirds of the nation) who enter the covenant with the antichrist. Second, **the 144,000** will function as the evangelists of the period. Third, there will be **messianic Jews** who are saved by the 144,000 but not part of that number. And lastly, there will be **the faithful remnant** (about one-third of the nation) that will go through the Great Tribulation as unbelievers in both **Messiah** and antichrist. **They** are the ones who end up in Bozrah (Hebrew) or Petra (Greek) who ask **the Messiah** to come again (see the commentary on **Revelation [Ev](#) - The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**), and are saved. **The poor** and **the needy** when used together are a reference to this group.

The theme of **God** as a refuge is a favorite one in the Bible (**Psalm 46:1**). The context here is the protection of the faithful remnant of *the nation of Israel*, which includes the tribe of Judah, through which **the Messiah** will come. This is part of **God's** plan for salvation. But as far as *individuals* are concerned, once we are **saved**, **the LORD** is not obligated to protect us physically from harm. Our *salvation* is secure (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ [Ms](#) - The Eternal Security of the Believer**), but our *safety* in this world is not. **He** is our spiritual refuge, and our physical refuge when **He** chooses to be. **Satan** is still **the god of this age** (2 Cor 4:4a), **the prince of this world** (Jn 12:31, 16:11), and **the whole world is under the control of the evil one** (1 Jn 5:19).

In the last analysis, we can only be sure of this: **we know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one (First John 5:19)**. What do you say to the believer whose spouse has an affair that destroys the family? What answer is there for the parents whose twelve-year-old boy was sexually abused in a shopping mall bathroom? Where is **the LORD** when a teenager dies of cancer? The head on collision? The rape? It never ends. It is important to understand that we will never know the answer to these tragedies until we **see His face (Revelation 22:4)**. Neither should we blame **God** for

the work of **the devil**. Our only response can be: **Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him (Job 13:15)!**

The context here, however, is the believing remnant of **Isra'el**. **Isaiah** uses two extremes of weather in the Near East to picture the trials from which **the LORD** longs to defend us. They are the thunderstorm and unrelenting heat. In either the sudden intensity of the cloudburst or the constant, debilitating heat, life is threatened. **For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall and like the heat of the desert (24:4b)**. Therefore, during the Great Tribulation, the **ruthless** and rebellious **nations** of the world will be **ruthless** in their treatment of the faithful remnant. **Their** persecution of **the Jews** in the second half of the Great Tribulation will be **like a storm** or the oppressive **heat of the desert**. But **ADONAI** will **silence the uproar of those foreigners** to the land of Israel. **The prince of this world** is great, but **God** is greater (**51:12-13**). **As heat is reduced by the shadow of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is** quickly overcome by **the LORD (25:5)**. Just as a **cloud** slipping between the earth and the sun produces relief from the scorching **heat**, so **God** will intervene on behalf of the faithful remnant just as the armies of the antichrist have them surrounded and closing in for the kill (see [Kg - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah](#)).