

Isaiah: A Prophet for Our Time  
Nowhere to Hide  
Isaiah 21

It is a Christian cliché to say that believers are to be in the world but not of the world. We all know that to be true, and yet we live in communities and serve in churches with people who seem to want both. Cultural Christianity can be difficult to define, but chances are we know it when we see it. We all know Jesus-followers who for a variety of reasons continue to turn to a world that hates Jesus-followers for comfort and security.

1. The world makes us more confident than we should be.
  
2. God will ultimately judge the world and its sinful nature.
  
3. God still loves the lost world and so should we.

There is no refuge from the wrath and judgments of God on earth. There is no place in the physical realm that will shelter us when God makes everything new. Our shelter and refuge are found only in the gospel, (the death, burial, and resurrection) of Jesus. We are born into an earthly citizenship, but we are born again into a heavenly one. Our heavenly citizenship empowers us to live free from the idols that lead us to destruction. Considering the judgment to come, believers must be diligent and urgent with the gospel entrusted to us.

Reflection

What does this chapter show about the rise and fall of earthly nations? How are believers supposed to live in this world given the geographical and time limitations of every nation in history? How are we to be in the world but not of the world? Are you surprised by Isaiah's reaction to the fall of Babylon? What about Jesus weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) and Paul weeping for his fellow countrymen who were lost (Romans 9:2)? What do these passages mean for us and how we view the lostness of the world around us? What does the fact that the Babylonians wanted to party the night they were conquered show us about human nature? How does this chapter motivate us to live a holy life in this present age? How does it point to the need to spread the gospel and be passionate about missions?