

righteousness at the end of the age. The two great apocalypses in the Bible are the books of Daniel and Revelation. Our present section has much in common with these remarkable books, but has not received as much attention and careful interpretation as has been given them.

## **Isaiah 24**

This chapter is cut off from what follows by the fact that chapter 25 seems to refer to a different situation, and that it changes to the second person.

Even a hasty reading of the chapter shows that it divides naturally into five sections. It begins with a long description of sorrow and misery, which runs from verse 1 to the end of verse 12 (and possibly includes the first few words of verse 13). This is followed by a brief passage, depicting joy and praise to God, which extends to the middle of verse 16. Then comes a further description of terror and calamity, in general terms, which runs to the end of verse 20. Verses 21 and 22 tell in specific terms how God will deal with the great leaders who oppose Him. Verse 23 concludes the chapter with a wonderful description of future glory, when God shall reign supreme in Jerusalem.

Thus the chapter moves forward with definite progress through five sections, the first of which occupies nearly half of the chapter.

### **The Starting Point**

Verses 1-13 give a picture of devastation and desolation. The question that immediately occurs is this: what is here described as devastated? Is it a picture of confusion and upheaval in one country, such as might portray the results of an Assyrian or Babylonian invasion of Palestine, or is it a picture of cosmic upheaval at the end of the age?

If we look at verse 3, we can easily imagine that the passage is describing the upheaval in Judah caused by the invasions: "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word." We get the same impression from verses 11 to 13a: "There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land