

Lord, are told to hide themselves for a little. While they remain safe in His presence, apart from all the turmoil here described, He will come forth to punish the people of the earth for their sins. What He will do is vividly portrayed in Isaiah 26:21-27:1.

### **Isaiah 27**

The first verse of chapter 27 belongs with chapter 26 and simply completes the thought expressed in its last verse. Under the figure of Leviathan, the great monster of the sea, the supreme wickedness of the ages is represented. Chapter 27 should begin with what is now called verse 2, where an entirely different thought is introduced.

Thus far in the Isaiah Apocalypse there have been sections dealing with national Israel, such as the first half of chapter 24. Other sections have clearly had in mind, not a physical nation, but the entire body of true believers in the Lord. In each section one of these two viewpoints has been pursued for a considerable space before returning to the other.

God called the nation of Israel to Himself for a very special purpose, to use it as His instrument to keep alive the knowledge of God in a world that tried to forget Him, and to prepare the way for the coming of His Son. It is quite fitting that the Isaiah Apocalypse should end with a section that again deals primarily with the nation of Israel.

Verse 2 introduced the figure of the vineyard, a figure sometimes used in other Scripture passages for Israel. In Isaiah 5, God expressed His disappointment with the people of Judah under the figure of a vineyard (note esp. vv. 1 and 7). In Matthew 21:33-43, Mark 12:1-2, and Luke 20:9-16, Jesus Christ used the figure of the vineyard to show how the nation of Israel had failed. He declared that the vineyard would be taken away from those who had proved unworthy of it and be given to other keepers, thus testifying in advance to the change that was about to take place. (In Rom. 11:17-24, Paul uses the figure of an olive Tree to represent the people of God. Though it would still include many who were Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, it was reaching out to include many non-Israelites). Here in Isaiah 27, God tells how faithfully He protected His vineyard, briefly