

# The Millennium Forecast

The Book of Isaiah

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Text  
Isaiah 27:1-13

Topic  
The LORD identifies Satan with the monstrous Leviathan

Title  
***“Mean Old Leviathan  
Caused Me To Weep And Moan”***

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**The animated *Sleeping Beauty* is rather terrifying.**

Maleficent reveals to Phillip her dark plan to lock him away for a century until he is on the verge of death, at which time she will release him to meet Aurora. She will not have aged a single day. The fairies rescue Phillip and arm him with the magical Sword of Truth and Shield of Virtue.

Maleficent surrounds the castle with a forest of thorns, but Phillip manages to break through. She then teleports in front of him. In her sinister voice she warns him, “Now shall you deal with me, O Prince, and all the powers of Hell!” Simultaneously she transforms into a giant fire-breathing dragon. Phillip throws the sword, blessed by the fairies, directly into Maleficent’s heart, killing her.

**Our text in Isaiah opens with a dragon being defeated by a sword-wielding hero.**

“In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; And He will slay the reptile that is in the sea” (v1).

## **It's no fairytale.**

Leviathan was an ocean serpent, a sea serpent, a dragon. It was real, but biblically also represents Satan. In the Revelation we're told, "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the Earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:9).

He will be "cast out" about mid-way through the seven-year Time of Jacob's Trouble that Jesus called great tribulation. Enraged and having but a short time, Satan will attempt to kill every Jew.

He'll fail. At the Second Coming of Jesus, the apostle John wrote, "Then I saw an angel coming down from Heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him..." (Revelation 20:1-3).

You and I, the Church, aren't mentioned in this chapter of the dragon tale. No worries; we will find application to our own fight with Satan as the roaring lion who is on the prowl, seeking to devour us.

I'll organize my comments around two points: #1 The Dragon Has Been Bested For You, and #2 The Dragon Can Be Bested By You.

### **#1 - The Dragon Has Been Bested For You (v1)**

#### **We grew up with dragons.**

Smaug (*The Hobbit*)... Pete's dragon, Elliot... Puff the Magic Dragon... Cecil the Sea-Sick Serpent... Falcor (*The Neverending Story*)... and Toothless (*How to Train Your Dragon*).

Aren't dragons creatures of mythology? Nope. They existed alongside men. Here are some talking points from the good guys & gals at Answers in Genesis:

1. Dragons were considered real creatures until relatively recently.
2. There are historical accounts, art, petroglyphs, and literature from cultures around the world describing or depicting dragons.

3. Ancient historians and writers describe seeing them firsthand - often in the context of other types of animals that still exist today.

The entire 41st chapter of Job is dedicated to this creature. A Leviathan is described as a fierce and untamable beast. It is covered with impenetrable armor and has a mouth full of deadly teeth. It breathes fire and smoke and churns up the sea like an ink pot. Psalm 74:14 refers to the *heads* of Leviathan, *implying a multi-headed beast*.

Christians who are young-earth creationists (that's us) believe dinosaurs and creatures like Leviathan lived alongside mankind. They went extinct (for the most part) during the Ice Age that was caused by the global flood. (Every now and then a 'living fossil' is found).

Leviathan was an ocean dragon. It was the perfect monster to represent the devil.

Isa 27:1 In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; And He will slay the reptile that *is* in the sea.

"In that day" is the future Time of Jacob's Trouble. The great adversary of God and the people of God, the "serpent of old" who tempted our parents in the Garden of Eden, will finally, fully, be dealt with.

The LORD is depicted having a "sword." In kill-the-beast stories, there is often a particular weapon, usually a storied sword, that is needed.

David Guzik writes, "*While there is an illustrative element here, Isaiah may be more literal than many would like to admit. If Satan could manifest himself as a serpent to Eve in the Garden of Eden, why not also manifest himself as a dreadful sea-dragon?*"

This is a good time to address mythology. It is suggested that the writers of the Bible borrowed from myths in order to show God's superiority over paganism. *I think that pagans borrowed from the LORD.* Besides, this is not mythical whatsoever.

The LORD's sword will be "severe," and "great," and "strong." In the remaining verses, Isaiah will describe the nation of Israel having no worries about the devil. When Jesus returns in His Second Coming, the devil will be incarcerated in the Abyss for the duration of the earthly kingdom. He won't be able, by his cunning and skill, to break out. He *will* be let out, at the end of the thousand years - but not for good behavior.

Satan will organize one final rebellion against the Lord, at the end of the thousand year Kingdom on Earth. He cannot prevail. "The devil, [will be] cast into the lake of fire and brimstone... And... will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

**L**eviathan has been bested by Jesus. The apostle Paul tells us that by dying on the Cross Jesus "disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15). "Principalities and powers" describe two categories of supernatural beings under Satan's command. There are more.

Satan & Company fight-on, right up to the Second Coming. They are no match for King Jesus.

## **#2 - The Dragon Can Be Bested By You (v2-13)**

Bible prophecy is a constant ground of disagreement among believers. In contemporary Christianity, the major disagreements are with the role of the nation of Israel, and the timing of the resurrection & rapture of the Church Age believers. So you know where we stand:

1. We believe God continues to recognize the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as His chosen nation. Israel is the key to unlocking Bible prophecy.
2. We believe that the Lord has promised to keep His Church entirely out of the Great Tribulation.

We hold to a pretribulation resurrection & rapture of Church Age believers. If you want to be more descriptive, we are Dispensational PreMillennial PreTribulation Futurists.

Isa 27:2 In that day sing to her, "A vineyard of red wine!

Isa 27:3 I, the LORD, keep it, I water it every moment; Lest any hurt it, I keep it night and day."

Once again I would point out that both God and Israel do a lot of singing. It is a wonderful spiritual refresher.

Israel is God's vineyard. You might recall that in chapter five God said He would "take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; *And* break down its wall, and it shall be

trampled down" (v5). He was describing the discipline coming upon them for disobedience. But in the end, He restores His vineyard, caring for them.

Isa 27:4 Fury is not in Me. Who would set briars *and* thorns Against Me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.

It's always a good idea to consult other Bible translations. In the ESV this reads, "I have no wrath. Would that I had thorns and briars to battle! I would march against them, I would burn them up together."

Commentators point out that during the Time of Jacob's Trouble, the Lord is pouring out "wrath" on Earth dwellers. "I have no wrath," indicates a time beyond the Tribulation, which is the Kingdom on Earth. With universal peace on Earth, the Lord is left to "battle" weeds in His vineyard. This is a poetic take on the Millennium.

Isa 27:5 Or let him take hold of My strength, *That* he may make peace with Me; *And* he shall make peace with Me."

Believers who survive to the end of the Tribulation are rewarded with entry into the Kingdom on Earth. They will be mortal, and will repopulate the Earth. The children born to them will have a sin nature. It is the Lord's hope that they be at "peace" with Him, i.e., *that they be saved*.

Isa 27:6 Those who come He shall cause to take root in Jacob; Israel shall blossom and bud, And fill the face of the world with fruit.

"Take root in Jacob" might be similar to what the apostle Paul said in the ninth chapter of the Book of Romans. He speaks of Gentile believers being "grafted" as branches in to the original vine.

Israel and believing Gentile nations will share in the life of Jesus. We will be nourished by the same stock. Gentile nations will nevertheless retain their identity. The Church does not supplant Israel, but shares in blessings.

I don't think Jesus was talking about Israel's agricultural yields. Notwithstanding that, it is sort of a miracle how fruitful modern Israel has become. One at report stated:

*Israel is known today for its amazing agricultural produce, its cutting-edge drip irrigation and water conservation, and its expertise in creating new fruits and vegetables. From choice greenhouse cherry tomatoes to flavorful dates to zesty Jaffa*

*oranges, the successes of modern Israeli farmers are legendary. Israel has one of the most nutritious domestic food supplies in the world, even ranking above France and the US. The nation also is exporting high-quality farm produce in all seasons, even while all its Arab neighbors must import food to feed their people. And all this is taking place in a land that is largely desert.*

Isa 27:7 Has He struck Israel as He struck those who struck him? Or has He been slain according to the slaughter of those who were slain by Him?

God deals very differently in the Tribulation with those who are not His children. Those who do Israel harm will be dealt with in judgment, not discipline.

Jews will nevertheless be "struck." We read in the Revelation that "It was granted to [the antichrist] to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation" (13:7). Terrible, yes, but regulated by God.

Your troubles - they are terrible, but regulated by Jesus. You're going to suffer, and more so than an unbeliever. All of us, believer & unbeliever, are affected by the evil that spoiled Creation when our original parents sinned. In addition, Christians may be persecuted for doing good.

Isa 27:8 In measure, by sending it away, You contended with it. He removes *it* by His rough wind In the day of the east wind.

The NRSV renders this, *"By expulsion, by exile you struggled against them; with His fierce blast He removed them in the day of the east wind."*

This is a prophecy that Israel would be "expelled" and "removed." And they were, starting with the Babylonian captivity in the sixth century BC, and again in 70AD with the destruction of Jerusalem, until May 14, 1948 when Israel miraculously returned to the land promised to them.

Isa 27:9 Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob will be covered; And this *is* all the fruit of taking away his sin: When he makes all the stones of the altar Like chalkstones that are beaten to dust, Wooden images and incense altars shall not stand.

The MSG version renders verse nine, *"But the good news is that through this experience Jacob's guilt was taken away. The evidence that his sin is removed will be*

*this: He will tear down the alien altars, take them apart stone by stone, And then crush the stones into gravel and clean out all the sex-and-religion shrines."*

Through the "experience" of the Great Tribulation, Israel will be disciplined. They will realize that they are being disciplined as sons & daughters - *not* judged. There is a huge difference. If you have a loving father, you would rather be disciplined by him than judged by an impartial judge.

Isa 27:10 Yet the fortified city *will be* desolate, The habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness; There the calf will feed, and there it will lie down And consume its branches.

Isa 27:11 When its boughs are withered, they will be broken off; The women come *and* set them on fire. For it *is* a people of no understanding; Therefore He who made them will not have mercy on them, And He who formed them will show them no favor.

The "desolate" "city" is future Babylon. The Bible indicates that Babylon will be rebuilt and serve Antichrist Inc. as the capital of the End Times government and economy.

Isa 27:12 And it shall come to pass in that day *That* the LORD will thresh, From the channel of the River to the Brook of Egypt; And you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel.

Albert Barnes explained,

*The use of ["thresh" and "gathered"] shows that the image is taken from the act of collecting fruit or grain after harvest; and the expression means, that as the farmer gathers in his fruit, so God would gather in His people. In the figure, it is supposed that the garden or vineyard of [the LORD] extends from the Euphrates to the Nile; that His people are scattered in all that country; that there shall be agitation or a shaking in all that region as when a farmer shakes His fruit from the tree, or beats out His grain; and that the result would be that all those scattered people would be gathered into their own land.*

I like that God said they would be gathered "one by one." Where we see a crowd, God sees individuals.

God sees you, one by one. Whenever you read about something God has done for, or promised, believers, it is *for you individually*.

When God gave “the world” His only begotten Son, He gave Jesus to *you*. It isn’t an exaggeration to suggest that Jesus would have come and died for you if you were the only one. At least, that is how the Lord intends us to believe Him.

Isa 27:13 So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

End Times trumpet blasts have Christians confused. They are confused because of the phrase, “the last trumpet.” Apologist Dr. Reynold Showers explains,

*According to First Corinthians 15, “the last trumpet” will be sounded, and then according to Matthew 24 there will be the sound of a trumpet when the Lord Jesus comes out of Heaven in His glorious Second Coming. And so some insist, “Look, you obviously have a trumpet blown at the Rapture. It’s the trumpet of God. It’s the last trumpet. And you obviously have a trumpet being blown at the Second Coming of Christ after the Tribulation Period. **Therefore, the Rapture and the Second Coming must take place at the same time.***

Well, guess what? Neither of those trumpets will be the “last” trumpet blown. After the resurrection & rapture of the Church, and after the Second Coming, for one thousand years the inhabitants of Earth will attend the Feasts of God. Lots and lots of trumpets will be blown... *Especially during the Feast of Trumpets!*

Firefighters have different tones to direct them. So do God’s people:

- The “last trumpet” in First Corinthians will be the last tone the Church hears before the resurrection & rapture takes us to Heaven.
- The “last trumpet” in Matthew will be the last tone in the Tribulation.

Isaiah refers to a “great” trumpet. It gathers Jews from where they were scattered to Jerusalem.

**S**atan is on the loose. He remains the ruler of this world, and he has a hierarchy of malevolent supernatural creatures as helpers.

He isn’t described to the Church as Leviathan, but as a lion:

1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.



If you are a hiker, a camper, you know how to resist certain potentially dangerous beasts:

- If it's a Grizzly, drop down and cover your neck and head with your arms. Maybe he'll leave you alone. Or maybe you're going to be mauled, like Leo DiCaprio in *The Revenant*.
- If it's not a Grizzly, slowly wave your arms above your head and tell the bear to back off.

Do not run - unless you are with someone you are certain you can outrun.

Peter next said, "Resist him, steadfast in the faith..." (4:9).

### **You can best the beast.**

Peter learned how to best Satan. When Judas, in league with Satan, came to point out Jesus to the mob that was sent to arrest him, what did Peter do?

That's right, he pulled out his sword. To paraphrase Sean Connery, "It's just like a Christian to bring a sword to a Cross fight."

### **Jesus was not in a sword fight.**

He wouldn't slay the dragon with physical weaponry. No, Jesus was Himself pierced by the hammered nails which fastened Him to the Cross. Jesus' side was pierced with a spear to make sure He was dead.

He bested Leviathan by submitting to the Cross, humbling Himself, so that God could exalt Him as the Savior of all men, especially those who believe.

You might say that Jesus and Satan 'crossed swords.'

**Since believers are consistently described as being "in Christ," Satan is no match for us - so long as we are abiding in the Lord.**