

Isaiah 25:10-12

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/isa/isa-25/isaiah-2510-12/>

Isaiah predicts the humiliating defeat of God's enemies with a graphic image of how the LORD of hosts (armies) will push down Moab's face into a giant manure pile as Moab flails like a swimmer to escape the suffocating stench.

After prophesying of the joyful and long-awaited blessings for God's people in "that day," the day of Jesus's return when He will judge and restore the earth, Isaiah returns to the gloom and despair of those who were His enemies. Isaiah begins this transition with a line that summarizes *the LORD's* blessings upon His people,

For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain.

The expression, *the hand of the Lord*, in this verse represents God's favor and blessing: *It will rest on this mountain*. The phrase *this mountain* refers to Mount Zion (Isaiah 24:23). Mount Zion is one of the hills upon which Jerusalem sits, and is used in scripture to represent Jerusalem, and hence Israel. The nature of *the LORD's* favor that *will rest on this mountain* was described in the preceding verses (Isaiah 25:6-9).

These blessings included:

- a lavish banquet,
- the removal of guilt and shame,
- the removal of sin,
- the elimination of death for all time,
- the restoration of man's intimacy with God
- the exchange of the world's reproach for honor and recognition by God for faithfulness

After this summary line of God's favor, Isaiah then prophesies doom for God's enemies:

*And Moab will be trodden down in his place
As straw is trodden down in the water of a manure pile.*

Moab was Israel's neighbor to the southeast. They were often antagonistic towards Israel. In this passage *Moab* appears to be the representative name given to describe all who are enemies of God and His people.

While *the LORD's* hand of favor rests upon Jerusalem (and Israel), His enemies *will be trodden down in his place* beneath *the LORD's* feet. The expression *Moab will be trodden down in his place* depicts Israel's enemy under the foot of *the LORD* who has *Moab* pinned down. The phrase *in his place* means the *place he* deserves. Isaiah does not hold back on what *place he* deserves: *a wet pile of manure*.

The *LORD*'s enemies will be *trodden down as straw is trodden down in the water of a manure pile*. This may be an agricultural reference as some *manure* recipes call for *straw* to be stomped into them. If so, this humiliating (for Moab) metaphor shows that their strength compared to the *LORD*'s is as weak as a flaky piece of *straw* compared to the hoof of an ox that tramples it into the *manure*.

Isaiah goes even further with this graphic image,

And he will spread out his hands in the middle of it

As a swimmer spreads out his hands to swim

The scene Isaiah is describing depicts the *LORD*'s foot upon the back of Moab's head, Moab's face in a giant pile of fresh manure, and his hands helplessly spread out flailing about like a swimmer trying to swim. Moab has lost all dignity, he is trying to get a breath of fresh air from the smothering dung. This graphic image is gross and humiliating for *Moab*—and this penalty is just.

Previously, Moab boasted against *the LORD* and cruelly oppressed and betrayed His people,

“We have heard of the pride of Moab, an excessive pride;
Even of his arrogance, pride, and fury;
His idle boasts are false.”
(Isaiah 16:6)

Now *his pride* has been laid *low* and he is facing the humiliating penalty for his blasphemy, treachery, and cruelty,

But the LORD will lay low his pride together with the trickery of his hands.

This chapter concludes with a prophetic warning to *Moab* and every enemy of *the LORD*'s before this humiliating day comes,

*The unassailable fortifications of your walls He will bring down,
Lay low and cast to the ground, even to the dust.*
You will not escape this humiliating judgment: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked.”
(Galatians 6:7).

Your walls which you foolishly believe to be invincible and *unassailable fortifications*, *He will easily bring down, lay low and cast to the ground*. These *walls He will bring down to the dust*. The picture here is of a fortress that is utterly destroyed. God's defeat of His enemies will be total and complete.

This is an echo of what Isaiah prophesied earlier, about there being no escape from *the LORD*'s judgment (Isaiah 24:18). *He will* defeat and punish all of His enemies.

Biblical Text

**10 For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain,
And Moab will be trodden down in his place**

As straw is trodden down in the water of a manure pile.

11 And he will spread out his hands in the middle of it

As a swimmer spreads out his hands to swim,

But the LORD will lay low his pride together with the trickery of his hands.

12 The unassailable fortifications of your walls He will bring down,

Lay low and cast to the ground, even to the dust.