

# Isaiah 24:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

## Analysis

**Fear, and the pit, and the snare** (פַּחַד וּפַחַת וּפַחַד, pachad vafachat vafach)—This alliterative triplet in Hebrew creates ominous rhythm: terror, trap, and snare await. פַּחַד (pachad) means sudden terror, dread. פַּחַת (pachat) is a pit or pitfall used to trap animals. פַּח (pach) is a snare or trap. Together they depict inescapable judgment—no matter which direction one flees, destruction awaits.

**Are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth** (עָלֶיךָ יוֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ, aleikha yoshev ha'aretz)—The address is universal: every earth-dweller faces this threefold doom. The verb 'are upon' indicates imminent, unavoidable threat. This isn't distant possibility but present reality hanging over humanity. Jeremiah quotes this verse (Jeremiah 48:43-44) in judgment against Moab, showing its proverbial use for describing inescapable divine wrath.

## Historical Context

Ancient hunting practices inform this imagery. Hunters drove animals toward concealed pits; if the animal avoided the pit, snares waited as backup. Isaiah applies this to divine judgment—there's no escape route, no clever evasion. This counters human confidence in self-preservation. Just as animals couldn't outthink hunters' comprehensive trap systems, humanity cannot evade God's righteous judgment through cleverness or strength. New Testament echoes this: 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' (Hebrews 2:3). Paul warns, 'When

they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them' (1 Thessalonians 5:3)—the unexpected terror Isaiah describes.

## Related Passages

---

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

---

1. How does the threefold trap (fear, pit, snare) illustrate the impossibility of escaping God's judgment through human effort?
2. What does this verse teach about false securities and the illusion that we can somehow avoid accountability to God?
3. How should awareness of coming inescapable judgment motivate urgency in evangelism and personal holiness?

## Interlinear Text

---

פַּחַד	וּפִת	וּפַח	עַל יְרֵךְ	יֹשֵׁב בַּ
<b>Fear</b>	<b>and the pit</b>	<b>and the snare</b>	H5921	<b>are upon thee O inhabitant</b>
H6343	H6354	H6341		H3427

  

הָאָרֶץ:
<b>of the earth</b>
H776