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## **QT Questions—for Isaiah**

(Here's a short introduction to the book of Isaiah from my Study Bibles.)

- Do you know Christians who live double lives? Who only seem to be playing with God? Isaiah knew people who lived double lives—his fellow Israelites—and he shared God's hatred for their compromise. He challenged them to shape up and love God with all their hearts and minds. Isaiah wanted his readers to see their hypocrisy and change their ways.
- Isaiah was a poet who understood the two-sided nature of God's character: mercy and judgment, grace and discipline, justice and forgiveness, exile and salvation. The tension of these great paradoxes fills the pages of Isaiah's writings, awaiting a resolution only the reader can bring—through faith or unbelief.

### **Isa 1 (8/2/24)**

(\*If some of the questions are confusing, then it's ok to skip it. The intention of the questions is to stir you to think a bit more about the chapter, with the hope to help you to learn more who our God is and how He delights for us to think and live.)

1. Why was God so heart-broken with His people (vv. 2-4) and how are you there; Why was God tired of sacrifices (vv. 11-14) and how are you doing with your worship; what more catches your eye and what do you learn?
- In vv. 15-20, we see our God first rejecting His people, but also consoling them. He tells them that He will not listen to their prayers. He calls them to repent and do away with their evil deeds, and instead, to learn to do what's right before God. And though the people have not done such goodness yet, still God teaches them that He will cleanse and forgive their sins. He teaches them to be obedient and forsake their rebelling. The incredibly wonderful way of God is not to wait for us to do what's right before He turns to bless us, but while still in our sinfulness, He teaches and provides His blessings to the people who are still in their sinfulness. No wonder the apostle Paul taught, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). God's love for sinners like us came while we were still steep in our sinfulness, and not when we already came out. In other words, God's love and forgiveness came to us, when we were guilty and not deserving of His goodness. So, we learn from our God, the time to give our goodness to others is not when they do good (like Santa bringing gifts to those who have been good), but God's goodness is given when we were still bad and not deserving His goodness. And when sinners receive God's goodness when we are not deserving, that is when God's grace ministers to us so deeply, that His grace changes us. So, we humbly and thankfully learn to live in grace because God's grace is what came to us, when we had no right to expect it. Said it differently, the sense of entitlement is not the heart that God's people should ever have. So, we must know, while we don't deserve it, still God delights to give His goodness to us, so we are humbled, thankful, joyful, and deeply in love with our God who treats sinners with love, while we were still in sin.

### **Isa 2 (8/3/24)**

1. What did Isaiah see about the last days and why was this so incredible (vv. 1-5); yet, what was the present reality like and where did they go wrong; are there some ways in your present life that is not matching up to God's wonderful future promise; reflecting in your life, how do you pray?

- This chapter ends with, “Stop trusting in mere humans, who have but a breath in their nostrils. Why hold them in esteem?” It is true that some humans are truly remarkable, especially when compared with others, including ourselves. So, we should learn from them, and appreciate them, for sure. But, as talented and great they may seem, God teaches us to not to trust them. For us humans, we are only a breath away from our death, and that includes, even those people who seem so much better and greater than the rest of us. They are not to be held in esteem, because they are humans and not God. Only God should be held higher, because He is altogether different, altogether lovelier than we can ever be. Our relationship with other people is to love, respect, appreciate, sharpen and learn from one another. Trust is for God, for He alone rules the universe, for He alone is sovereign, for He alone is almighty. Trust in humans will always end in disappointment, because we humans are a mere breath away from our expiration. May we love the people much, but learn to trust only in our God, who alone is the only sovereign God, ruler and sustainer and judge over all of creation.

### **Isa 3 (8/5/24)**

1. What are some of the terrible things happening when God takes away His support over His people in this chapter; how are people defying God’s glorious presence and how do you think that would look in our lives (v. 8); what do you learn?
- Verse 10 looks out of place, “Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds.” It is tucked away in the middle of the woes for the people who are living in sinfulness. Judgment and disasters are everywhere, and yet, still God sees the righteous and takes the time to teach them, they will not suffer the same fate as the evildoers. We are usually consumed with what’s going on around us, and when everyone is falling, we would naturally expect the same for us. But, today, we are reminded and taught again, what’s going on around us is not what will become of us, but we must learn to see that our God sees even in the midst of sinfulness all around us, His people who delight to live after His righteous ways. And seeing His people, God will protect, God will provide, God will bless His people to enjoy the fruit of our deeds. What seems normal for the people in our world does not always have to be our experience, because our lives is ruled not by the happenings around us, but is lovingly and sovereignly ruled by our good God, who watches over us, who cares for us, and who will always lead us for His glory and our good. So, may we not be so easily persuaded and swept away by the flow of this world, but may our eyes and hearts always have them fixed unto our Savior and Lord, and humbly learn that our lives belong to Him, and it is He who will determine our happenings and not the world. Praise the Lord for holding our lives in His hands. Yes, let’s always remember, our lives is in His hands. He holds us as we walk.

### **Isa 4 (8/6/24)**

1. Can you compare the messages of “In that day...” (3:18 and 4:2) and why do you think that is; how does God say He will cleanse the sinfulness of His people in v. 4; what do you learn?
- The imagery from 3:16-4:1 describes God’s people as women more concerned with how they look than with how they act. The ways of the world have seeped deep into the lives of His people. Just as the world believes that beauty is on “how we look”, so, many Christians work hard and earn money, to look better, with finer clothes and accessories and possessions. If we could only pay more attention to God’s description of beauty, we will hear that it’s not in our outer appearances that display our beauty, but it is in our inner character, displayed through

our actions, our words, our attitudes, and our decisions. I wish we, Christians, would truly believe that the fruit of the Spirit displays a beauty that God delights. Wearing pretty clothes, working out to keep our bodies slim, dieting and many healthy choices do indeed make our outer appearances a little more desirable. However, if we are interested in God's view on us, then He would rather see our inner characters grow more like Jesus, than for us to invest our lives more into "how we look." God is not against how we look on the outside, but our God is far more interested in how we look on the inside, and He would have us focus our lives more in building our inside much more than on our outside.

### **Isa 5 (8/7/24)**

1. What happened to the vineyard that God worked so hard to make it good and why was that; what are the six woes you find in this chapter and what do you learn?
  - The reason for all the sadness and anger God feels in this chapter can be summarized with the latter part of v. 24, "for they have rejected the law of the Lord Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel." The reason for our lack of spiritual growth, the reason for our lack of hunger and thirst for God's glory, the reason for our lack of true joy and hope and peace and love and unwavering confidence in our God and in His kingdom, the reason why we get easily swayed and fall and walk like the people of the world is, "for they (for I) have rejected the law of the Lord Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel." The nearer and dearer God's word is to us, the more we love and obey God's word, the more we trust and follow in God's word, the more God's word is the lamp unto our feet, the more sweeter God's word will be in our lives. Therefore, the more we will delight, the more we will rejoice, the more we will fall deeper in love with our God in His word, the more we will truly love Christ and grow more like He. Then, in the vineyard that our God has planted, He will find us in love with Him, delighting to obey Him, follow Him, trust Him, causing our God to rejoice and laugh out of pure delight because we love to learn and obey His word in our lives. What an amazing thought that we can bring God joy, because we delight to trust and obey Him.

### **Isa 6 (8/8/24)**

1. What is the meaning of unclean lips and how can be it be cleansed; why is God sending His prophet to be unsuccessful; what do you learn?
  - In v. 2, we are introduced to Seraphim. Their name means "burning ones," as we assume that they manifest a fiery brilliance. They are angelic creatures that seem to serve as a kind of honor guard for God. They have six wings. With two, they covered their faces in the presence of the exalted glorious God, before Whom they dared not look up to see His brilliance, for they knew they were not worthy to be in His presence. If brilliant angels are not worthy to stand before God's presence, then how much less standing we have as we enter to worship the worthiness of our Brilliant God. Yet, He invites us to His presence weekly. We must examine and prepare ourselves more purposefully for the worship we are invited to enter weekly. With two, they covered their feet. The lowest parts were covered. They did not simply stand in God's presence as they were, but they covered what was not right. Too often, we human creatures think very highly of ourselves, and think we are good enough as we are, before the presence of the Holy and Perfect God. We are never invited to enter into God's holy presence as we are, but we are given Jesus' righteousness to cover us, as we enter to worship the Sinless God. Let's understand, we don't worship God as we are, but we are able to enter and worship our holy God, only because Jesus' covered us with His righteousness. That is why, we enter into the presence of God, in faith, believing Jesus' righteousness has covered our

lowly feet, everything that is not worthy before God's holiness, Jesus covered us. With two, they were flying. They flew to call one another of God's holiness. They flew to bring a live coal, to touch unclean lips. They flew to do God's work, that is, they were instruments of God to bless others to also do God's work, like the prophet Isaiah, who deserved to be in ruins, but was sent, to "Go and tell the people." To see our unworthiness, and yet, to be still used for God's glory, that's the brilliant mystery and grace of God for us. May we fly high to do His bidding, as we always remember to cover, for we are jars of clay, holding and presenting the most amazing treasure the people absolutely need the most.

### **Isa 7 (8/9/24)**

1. What was the present situation like and what did God want His people to do; how did God reassure His people of His deliverance; how is this applicable to you?

- In v. 12, Ahaz response to God can sound very pious, "But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.'" Surely, asking God for a sign as a test is wrong. We should never do it. So, as rightly sounding words Ahaz spoke, reading the following verse, we understand that Ahaz did not speak to exalt God, but his fine sounding words were words of unbelief, lacking faith in his God to deliver him from his present troubles. Many times in our lives also, we speak fine sounding words but void of faith in God. What's most interesting is, for us human logical minds, the promise of God's deliverance can sound very odd, not very relevant. In v. 14, the sign of God's promise of deliverance is, "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call Him Immanuel." Practically thinking, how can a virgin give birth in the first place, which is impossible. Second, how will giving birth to a son help anyone in need, especially when two powerful nations are literally coming to destroy them within a few months? Thirdly, even if the greatest person was to be born, his strength will only be exercised many years later, when he is grown, and thus, as a baby born during the invasion of powerful nations within months, it's not helpful at all. It almost sounds as if God's solution is completely irrelevant, useless, incomprehensible. Does God's word sound like that when you are in trouble? If Ahaz would learn to place his trust in his faith in his God over what he saw, over what he felt, and over how he understood the way the world is, then he would have met a God, who not only provided deliverance over his troubles, but in God's promise, he would have also heard God's deliverance over all the troubles of all people, over all history, from the past to every future generation to come. The baby to be born would not only become the King of all kings, conquering every king and kingdom there is, but He will be the King Immanuel, always with us, to reign sovereignly and perfectly and beautifully for His people to dwell in perfect peace that the present world does not know. Like Ahaz, do we sound pious but lack faith in God? Or, could we humbly hear and believe God's word, even when they seem beyond our logical understanding, and trust that God is true, and we or any other person in the world is not as trustworthy and wise and perfect as our God is. Our faith is about believing and trusting in our God, especially when everyone and everything around us says differently.

### **Isa 8 (8/10/24)**

1. What was the name and meaning of the prophet's son and why was that relevant to their situation; why did this happen and what should they be doing (vv. 6, 11, 17); what do you learn?

- In v. 12, God tells His people, "Do not call conspiracy everything this people calls a conspiracy; do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it." When everyone around us calls it the same, it's difficult for us to not see it that way. When the flood washes everything away, it's

not easy to not get swept away under the flow. So, when everyone criticizes a leader or a person or a situation or an agenda, it's not easy to not see the way everyone around us is screaming about. God teaches us, to not call conspiracy everything the people calls a conspiracy. We are not to fear and dread what they fear. We are to learn to stand, not on the basis of what they say, but we are to learn to stand with our God, even when everyone around us says differently. Our trust and steps should follow our God and not the people. We need His knowledge to know what and who to believe, and we need His wisdom to know how to discern, when it's not easy to navigate through all the clutter, and confusion, and falsehood. Our stance should be with Immanuel, and may His presence be our strength and our guide, so that we would learn to walk away from the world and walk only with our Lord, nearly and dearly, all because it is He alone who will hold our hands and never let go, as we walk through this world.

### **Isa 9 (8/12/24)**

1. What is the light for the people walking in the darkness; what are some of God's anger against His people you see; what is your hope and fear from this chapter?
- In vv. 8-10, if read outside of the context of God's speaking in His anger against His people, it actually can sound very positive and resilient. Though they are fallen, they want to work and rebuild, which is normally a great thing. But, when it is God who is breaking you down, then before we want to rebuild, God's people must learn to think and understand, why God is treating His people so. And God breaks His people down for one reason, and that is, because of the sinful ways we insist in living. And sin is always against God, and thus, whenever God sees sin in His people, He will alert us, either by encouraging us to renounce the sin, and if we are unwilling to obey God, then He will strike against us, so that we would see the terrible impact of sin in us, as God's people. What pleases God whenever we are caught in sinfulness, is for us to humbly repent of our sins. And repentance can be organized as a threefold step—first, own up our sins; second, confess our sin; third, turn away from our sin unto our God and His ways. So, in our passage, the people should have been repenting for their sins, rather than to try to rebuild what's broken. God's way of rebuilding begins with repentance and not to move on to rebuilding before repenting. Rebuilding in God's way is great, but only, when it is done after our repentance. So, let's pray for our God to bless our hearts to genuinely desire to repent first, and only after doing so, with God's grace, let's humbly learn to rebuild after God's way, renouncing our sinful ways. Whether God builds us up or breaks us down, it's always to bless us to learn to live for His glory, renouncing the sinful ways that surrounds our lives, as we walk in the land of deep darkness.

### **Isa 10 (8/13/24)**

1. Why would God use a wicked nation to punish His people and how did that end for the wicked nation and why; despite the punishment, where did God's people find hope and how and why; what do you learn?
- God spoke out against His people, "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees" (v. 1). As God's people, all of our decisions and actions and words should reflect our God, who is holy, righteous, forgiving, magnanimous, gentle, loving, patient, kind, and gracious. When laws, and also personal decisions and actions and words, do not reflect God's goodness, then we must know, God is against them. God will stand against us, because our deeds reflect the devil and not our God. Thankfully, because we are His children, He is not against us, but against our deeds. However, in His love, He will punish us, because

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that's what a loving discipline will do, punish the evil that we are doing, so that we would learn how terribly wrong and contradictory our ways are in reflecting God's goodness. And when we see our evil, we must be quick to repent, to own up our sins, to confess our ugly sinfulness, and to turn away from our sin and turn back to God and His ways to reign over our lives. As much as God responds to our evil with punishment, His heart is much bigger and stronger to bless us to turn back to our God, and humbly learn to walk in His ways, to speak His truth, and to reflect and display God's goodness in us to others, so they can see God's goodness in us and through us. Let's remember, we are here to reflect God, so let's be truthful with our lives, to shine only His goodness, and not speak falsely of our God with our badness. Our God is good all the time, and that's how we must strive to live, because we always live in His goodness.

### **Isa 11 (8/14/24)**

1. Who is Jesse and why is he important in this chapter; what is the future picture like because of the Root of Jesse; how are all these applicable to you?
- In v. 3, we are told, "And He will delight in the fear of the Lord." When we think of the fear of the Lord, the emotional response is frightening, something to avoid, if at all possible. But, here we are told, He will delight in the fear of the Lord. Delight, not frightening, is how Christ feels for the fear of the Lord. If many of us wanted to avoid the fear of the Lord because we thought it would be frightening, we are seeing from the Lord the opposite response, delight. In other words, we also ought to delight in the fear of the Lord. And what we delight in, we want to be near, and if possible, to go even nearer if we could. For Jesus, the fear of the Lord is something He wants to get near because He delights in. Let's not let our understanding of a word, such as fear, mis-lead us away from the Lord. Let's learn to understand our God, His word, and our lives in His ways, and let's learn to interpret our situations, not merely with what we know, but let's diligently and humbly seek to learn more of God's way, so that we would learn to read, to interpret, to understand, and live according to His ways and not ours. Delight.

### **Isa 12 (8/15/24)**

1. In vv. 1-3, what will God's people say in that day; in vv. 4-6, what will they say in that day; how are what they say applicable to you; what do you learn?
- God's people are looking forward to that day, when God's anger will turn away from them and rejoice over their salvation. Of course, we must remember, God's anger came because we sinned against Him. So, God had every right to be angry with us, because we continually sinned against Him. It was our sinning that made God angry. We must first learn well, that our sins are terrible, producing curse for us and anger for God. And God's anger is just, so it just doesn't remove itself, or God can simply forget it, as if it never happened. There's only one way for God's just anger to be removed, and that is, when the awful price of our sins are paid. And that's our dilemma. We know how to make God angry, but we do not have the power to remove His anger against us. So, the fact that God's people in our chapter were able to praise God for their salvation, only arrived because the un-payable price of their sins were somehow paid for. They would know, somehow God did this for them, but how exactly, they would not know. But, we do, we know. We know God sent His only sinless Son, to come to this world, and in order to pay for our sins, He offered up His life as our ransom, so He willingly gave up His life, because He knew He would be the only One who could pay the un-payable price that we owed to the holy God. Jesus became our Substitute for our sinfulness. And seeing what

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Jesus did for us, we praise Him, we proclaim Him, we exalt Him, and we sing loudly with joy, for great is His work of salvation for us. Praise Your holy name! Thank You, Jesus.

**Isa 13 (8/16/24)**

1. Why do you think God is speaking against the Babylonians and what is He saying; what do you learn?

- In v. 9, God tells the Babylonians, “See, the day of the Lord is coming...” For them, the day will be cruel, filled with wrath and fierce anger, destroying “the sinners within it.” Of course, presently, the Babylonians are enjoying their power and victories. However, God is teaching them, what is today will not be how the future will end for them. In the future, the day is coming, when God will hold everyone accountable, where everyone will have to answer for the way they lived their lives. And in that day, the standard for the judgment will not be power in this world, but according to God’s scales, His ways, His words. And everyone who falls short of His standard, will find the day cruel, filled with God’s holy eternal wrath that wages war, that will not stop until His enemy is destroyed completely and permanently. Though this chapter does not speak on it, but we also know, the day of the Lord is also a day of incredible deliverance, goodness, and glory because it will be a day, where all the wrongs will be righted, all the evil will be wiped out, all the sins cleansed, and all the troubles of this present life will be lifted, and His people will be welcomed to enter and enjoy the everlasting beauty and goodness of God’s amazing kingdom. The day of the Lord will be the most frightening day for the people who do not love the Lord Jesus, and of course, the day of the Lord will be the most wonderful and amazing day for the people who love the Lord, because we know He first loved us, as He offered up His life for us on that cursed tree, the cross.

**Isa 14 (8/17/24)**

1. What does God say will happen to His people and why (vv. 1-2); how does the king of Babylon see himself and what will happen to him and his kingdom; what do you learn?

- When arrogance works within people, including us, it knows no bounds. It will seek the highest place, even to sit above God. The Babylonian king’s pomp knew no bound, and his arrogance was no different than Lucifer’s, the morning star, the son of dawn, which is what his name means, and which the Babylonian king thinks of oneself. Though, probably none of us would claim divine titles, and yet, whenever we choose to submit to our will over God’s, have we not made our seats above God’s throne? Disobedience is rebellion, and it’s really no different than willfully trying to dethrone God’s kingship in our lives. All of our sins deserve the wages of sin, but if I were to choose a sin worse than others, it will be pride-arrogance. May I humbly ask all of us, let’s pray in earnest to fight against the tendencies we have with our pride and arrogance trying to surface and take us to unwanted places. Whenever we catch a glimpse of our arrogance, let’s stop everything immediately, even abruptly if we must, and quickly find a quiet place, and humbly and earnestly repent for our ugly sinfulness, each time we enter into battle, for this battle would be long and hard. And whenever we feel we lost the battle, let’s remember, our present set backs are temporary, because the war is actually over, for Christ, our King and our Captain says, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (Jn 16:33).

**Isa 15 (8/19/24)**

1. Do you remember where the land of Moab was and what do you remember about her (Numb 21-25; Ruth 1:1-4); what is God's prophecy on Moab in this chapter; what is the significance of "head shaved and beard cut off"; what do you learn?
- In this chapter, not all of Moab is destroyed, as the fugitives are fleeing from the northern cities to the south, "on the road to Horonaim they lament their destruction" (v. 5). These destroyed northern cities were built by God's people when they were strong, and conquered the Promised Land, on the other side of the Transjordan. However, during Isaiah's day, Moab and much of these parts of the land were subject to Assyrian invasion. I was wondering why God's heart would cry out over Moab (v. 5), and perhaps, it was because the land once belonged to His people. The Father's heart cries out over the loss of what His children suffered. Our Father desires for His children to be well, and He delights when we are healthy and well. But, He cries when His children are not well, when we don't follow Him well. For only when we are near Him in love and in obedience to Him, can we be well. The Father wants us to be well, so He wants us to be near Him, for that's the only way we can be well.

**Isa 16 (8/20/24)**

1. What is Moab asking Judah for (vv. 3-4) and how would you respond to non-believers when they make such request and why; how is the Messiah's reign different than the world (v. 5) and what should that mean for your life; what do you learn?
- Reading v. 6, I found it interesting, "We have heard of Moab's pride—how great is her arrogance!—of her conceit, her pride and her insolence; but her boasts are empty." Moab is not a great and powerful nation, like Egypt or Assyria or Babylon. In fact, Moab is very small, and compared to the other nations, it can be said, that she is small and weak and powerless. So, what's this pride of Moab about? I think, it's not based on reality but on its own feelings of importance, that is, inflated opinion of oneself. There's such tendency in many of us, isn't there? We can think of ourselves more highly than we ought to. Of course, being small does not necessarily mean we are insignificant, and we certainly do not want to be self-deprecating. However, we must not make up what's not right. In fact, when we are small and weak, like Moab, the people in the world want to be strong and powerful, so they may make up what's not there. However, for God's people, we must first of all, accept that we are small and weak. But, that should not determine our strength. We are not the end of ourselves. No, we are not. We are God's people, and for God's people, our strength comes not from within, but from Him. That is why, for God's people, when we know we are weak, that is actually when we know we are strongest, because in our weakness, we will not trust in ourselves, but we will turn away from us and turn to our God and trust in Him, and believe in Him, that I truly can do all things in Him who strengthens me (Phil 4:13). May I encourage us to make an effort to memorize 2Corinthians 12:9, "But He (the Lord) said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness (in our weakness).'"

**Isa 17 (8/21/24)**

1. Can you identify where Damascus is on the map in relation to Israel and do you remember any OT events on them (2Kgs 5-8); why were they receiving this prophecy against them; what do you learn?



- Here's a short explanation on why Israel is mentioned in a prophecy against Damascus.
- This prophecy is against Damascus, the capital of Aram (also called Syria). In chapters 7-8, Aram and Israel jointly rebelled against Assyrian and besieged Judah in an attempt to force them into their alliance. The overlapping imagery connecting Israel and Aram, and at times portraying Aram as almost part of Israel itself, is likely meant to emphasize the intertwined nature of these two powers at this time due to their alliance.

### **Isa 18 (8/22/24)**

1. Where is Cush or Ethiopia (now, it would be the land of Sudan); what does God do and why (v. 4); what are the two images of God's judgment and why would He judge them (vv. 5-6); what do you learn?
- Interestingly, this prophecy ends with, "At that time gifts will be brought to the Lord Almighty... the gifts will be brought to Mount Zion, the place of the Name of the Lord Almighty" (v. 7). The end of these people are not their destruction, but they will bring gifts as worshipers of the Lord Almighty, together with God's people in Mount Zion, the hill in Jerusalem, where God's Temple stood. As we know from God's blessings over Abraham, it was always God's design to bless "all people on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3). Though the prophecy is about their present destruction, but their end will end gloriously, as worshipers of the Lord Almighty. If we, all God's people, would also see that what our end will be like, as worshipers of the living God in His everlasting kingdom, then we can approach our present troubles in a different light, knowing our present struggles will not be our end, but God's glorious blessings awaits us and will be ours forever. Oh Lord, we pray that we would see and believe in Your promise of blessing of our everlasting days to come. Yes, Lord Jesus, come. We wait for You.

### **Isa 19 (8/23/24)**

1. In vv. 1-15, what is God's prophecy against Egypt and why was that; in vv. 16-25, can you find how many times God says "in that day" and what message did He give and why do you think that was; what do you learn?
- In v. 3, we read, "The Egyptians will lose heart, and I will bring their plans to nothing; they will consult the idols and the spirits of the dead, the mediums and the spiritists." When "the wise counselors of Pharaoh give senseless advice" (v. 11), they seek supernatural advice. They know what they have is not enough, so they turn to something more powerful. I think we do that a lot in our lives. When what we have is not enough, we want something more powerful. So, in our world, we are always looking for something more, something more powerful, so all of our troubles will have their solutions. That's how the people in the world would act. However, for God's people, we should know better. We know someone who is the most powerful Being, who has wisdom no one can match, who has power that no power can equal. Yet, despite His presence, despite His willingness, we keep turning to others, like to Egypt, who know they don't have the power that we have in our God. Unlike the people of the world, who fall when their staff is taken from them because they have nowhere else to turn, we are not like them. We have the Almighty God, He is our God, and when He removes the staff from us, it is not meant for us to fall, but for us to learn to look to our God and learn to lean on God alone, and not on the wisdom of the world, neither on the supernatural powers the world keeps touting. God's people must learn and remember, unlike the people in the world, who hates being weak because they hate being powerless, we must learn the beauty and power of us being weak, because it is when we are weak, we will turn away from ourselves, and learn

to look on our God and rely only on Him, the Almighty God. In Christ, when we are weak, we are truly strong, but only when we learn to lean on our God alone, through Christ alone.

### **Isa 20 (8/24/24)**

1. What did God want His servant to do and why; how can we obey our God well like Isaiah; will you take a moment at this time to pray to our God for your heart?
- Wow, I often think a message needs to be said once and then on to the next. Through Isaiah God teaches me that we are slow to learn, and therefore, the message needs to be repeated daily, and here, for three years, stripped and barefoot. I am thinking, how did Isaiah deal with the shame, the public humiliation, the mocking, the embarrassment his family felt, the agony of his self introspection for these long, long, almost unending three years, just to teach a people who were not very interested in learning more of God's way and obey Him? Why repeat a message when the people were not willing to listen and learn, when it's already been said and even demonstrated like here? Wasn't once or twice enough? For God, it wasn't. God's love for His people is amazing, seeing His patience and gentleness and willingness to even display His servant in a shameful way, all to have His people learn and repent of their sins, and in this instance, the sin of not trusting in their God and instead turning to others who seem powerful to their eyes. Just to pull His people back to Himself, God will go to this length. And here, I am thinking of Jesus, His only Son, whom the Father will sacrifice because the sinners' rebellion would not stop until God had to kill His Son. It is unfathomable to me to see the Father sacrifice His Son because of His love for people who were disobedient, who would rather turn to another than to our own Maker. As great as my sin is against God, there's no comparison to how much greater God's love is for an unworthy and undeserving sinner, especially me. Oh Father, I am awestruck and dumbfounded by Your unthinkable love for sinners, for me, for my wife, for Your people in our church, for all of Your people. My heart breaks for how often and how greatly I sin against You. I weep because Your love for me is so much more than I ever deserve. Oh Lord, please, please hold me close, so I won't stray away from Your ways.

### **Isa 21 (8/26/24)**

1. As God prophecies against Babylon, what were they doing (v. 5) and how applicable is it for us; what is the content of God's prophecies against these nations and how applicable is that to us; what do you learn?
- Verse 10 tells us of the state of God's people presently in Babylon, "My people who are crushed on the threshing floor, I tell you what I have heard from the Lord Almighty, from the God of Israel." The Babylonians are eating and drinking because they have conquered Israel and the nations (v. 5). The Israelites were crushed on the threshing floor by these Babylonians (v. 10). That was the present reality, to be sure. But God has spoken against Babylon, and therefore, it will be them who will be crushed. It's natural to determine life as we see the present reality, and Babylon was feasting. But, if we have faith in God, then we will see His word will reign supreme, for His word never fails, for God always accomplishes what He says, just as He did when creating the world out of nothing, with His words. Same for us, it's easy to get swept away by what we see in our present reality. But, I pray for our eyes to see the object of our faith and believe in His word to be more true than we see or feel or even think. May His word reign supreme in our lives. May we learn to joyfully and humbly and lovingly submit to our God because when He speaks they are always true, even when the present realities might seem to contradict God's truth. God is true, and His words are truthful!

**Isa 22 (8/27/24)**

1. What do you notice God has to say to Jerusalem; how does God treat these two people, Shebna and Eliakim, and why; what do you learn from this chapter?

- In v. 11, we read how God's people prepared for war and life, and yet how they forgot the most important truth, "You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the Old Pool, but you did not look to the One who made it, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago." The people built reservoirs of water to prepare better for what's coming, but they forgot to remember life comes from their God. Many people today look to medicine and doctors for their healing, but we keep forgetting that our God is the Great Physician. Many people look to money and savings and relationships to be wealthy and cared for, forgetting it is God who blesses us with the ability to work well, that it is our God who blesses us in bringing blessed people into our lives. Many people keep looking at faith, as if by wishing and praying for what's best, they will receive them as if by magic, all the while forgetting that our faith has no content outside of the object of our faith, which is our almighty and compassionate God, who provides for our needs according to His glorious riches and mercy. Too often we want the gifts, all the while forgetting the good Giver who gifts us. Too often we want the blessings without God, the Giver of our blessings. That is why, it is imperative for us to understand without the Giver, all the blessings we may get are like candies, sweet when we first taste them but bad for our health. I pray that we will truly love and delight far, far, far more in our Giver than His gifts. May our faith be about our God. May our love be with our God. May our greatest joy and truest delight and earnest hunger be on our God more than in anything or anyone else. May no one come a close second.

**Isa 23 (8/28/24)**

1. Where is Tyre and do you remember any connection with Jesus (Mk 7:24); what does God say she should do in this prophecy (vv. 1, 2, 4); how is God involved (v. 9); what do you learn?

- Here are couple of notes.
- How was Tyre destroyed? Tyre's island fortress about half a mile off-shore made it appear unconquerable. If the mainland portion of the city fell, as it did to Babylon in 572 BC, the people retreated to the island until the invaders left—15 years later in the case of the Babylonian attack. But centuries later, Alexander the Great defeated the mainland Tyre. Then, using the timber and stones from its ruins, he built a causeway across the water to the island city. The fortress finally fell in 332 BC. Afterward, Alexander crucified 2,000 people and sold 30,000 more into slavery.
- How was Tyre like a prostitute? A "prostitute" nation compromised ethical standards for the sake of making a profit and building a thriving business with merchants from many countries. Verse 18, with a marked change of tone, reveals that ultimately it was God's purpose that the riches pagan city (symbolized here by Tyre) would be pagan no longer, but would dedicate all its resources to the worship of God.

**Isa 24 (8/29/24)**

1. What does God say He will do to the earth and why; when life has turned bitter and difficult, how do you think through; how does Christ's coming and His truth impact your life then; what do you learn?

- The chapter ends with, “The moon will be dismayed, the sun ashamed; for the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders—with great glory” (v. 23). Throughout this chapter, it is about how God will devastate the earth, where even the merry-makers groan. So, when things are this wrong, then we might think that God’s glory is covered. But, we are told the exact opposite, “the Lord Almighty will reign... with great glory.” We usually only equate God’s glory with victories and successes in our world, but God sees His glory even in devastation. For here, His justice reign and shines, and God receives His glory. God’s glory is not ashamed of devastation, rather He shines even in the midst of darkness. Too often, Christians are ashamed of our faith and even of our God, when things go wrong, and people question us, why is there so much evil when our God is supposed to be compassionate? May I say, even if we don’t always know how to answer the questions thrown our way, we need never be ashamed or even defend our God, as if He did wrong, or was not acting gloriously. Just because we only see devastation does not mean that God is not working gloriously. God is always glorious, and He will always act gloriously, even when things all around us seem to fall apart.

### **Isa 25 (8/30/24)**

1. What does God say will happen on this mountain; can you see a connection to the NT and explain how that happens (1Cor 15:26, 54; Rev 21:2-4); what do you learn?

- As surely as God will wipe out and remove death and tears, this chapter closes with a judgment over Moab. We must remember, there are two sides to the coin. With God’s faithfulness over His people, it also means judgment and wrath for the people who oppose God’s way. Too often, we only think of one side. We can rejoice greatly for God’s triumph in His resurrection, but we too easily gloss over His crucifixion, His pain. Before we arrive to the gate of glory of Heaven, we must remember we must walk through the trails of this world, faithfully as He did for us. Too often we just want to reap the reward without putting in the work of sowing. We know well, in order to get a delicious meal for the family gathering, mom and others have worked hard and long for the rewards we are about to reap. That’s true in any field. In order to get a beautiful new invention, there were countless hours of trials and work that people had to put in. Let’s not be simple minded folks, who only delight in reaping the rewards. Let’s learn to put in the work, to sow hard and well. And when we should reap the reward that we have not sowed, then let’s be humble and thoughtful to be thankful for the people who worked hard to sow. Most of all, just as our reward of our salvation was reaped without our efforts, God sowed the seed of His Son, to sacrifice Him painfully, because that’s the only way we would reap the reward. So, let’s be deeply thankful to our God for sowing what we reap. And when we have to sow for others to reap, let’s not grumble, but be thankful that we are following in the footsteps of our God, and delight that we have this privilege.

### **Isa 26 (8/31/24)**

1. What are the two implications to “In that day” for God’s people and the non-believers; how does God gift us perfect peace (as taught in vv. 3-4); what more do you learn in this chapter?
- Verse 8 reads, “Yes, Lord, walking in the way of Your laws, we wait for You; Your name and renown are the desire of our hearts.” It is true, the more we faithfully learn to walk in God’s way, the more we delight to wait for Him. And the more we lovingly walk and wait for our God, the more we will sincerely desire for our God to be renowned, to be exalted, for Him alone to increase. How I pray that my truest desire and delight will be to see our God’s name and His

glory shine above all else. Yes, Lord, may I truly delight more than anything to see You magnify, to see You exalted, for You alone to increase, and me decrease. Yes, Lord, may this desire be true and become my reality soon and sooner.

### **Isa 27 (9/2/24)**

1. Who is Leviathan about and what happens “in that day” and why; also in that day, what happens to Israel and why; what do you learn?
  - Verse 9 tells us, “By this, then, will Jacob’s guilt be atoned for, and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones to be like limestone crushed to pieces, no Asherah poles or incense altars will be left standing.” As we know, our sins are not atoned with our good works, no matter how good our works are. Only by faith in Jesus, that is, we believe Jesus went to the cross to pay for my sins, can all of our sins find its cleansing and thus our forgiveness. And since faith is not visible, we can see the fruit of our faith by our works, and in this instance, we see God’s people crushing and removing the altars used for idol worshiping. Similarly, we see the evidence of our faith in our works, and if we can learn from Jacob here, we must destroy and put an end to the idols we keep trusting over God. Let’s pray for God’s blessings over us, that we will learn and obey to crush and put an end to the idols we keep holding on to.

### **Isa 28 (9/3/24)**

1. Who did God choose to chastise here and why; what are couple of things God says you understand and how does it apply to you; what do you learn?
  - Israel seems to have made a covenant with death (probably Egypt) in order to avoid death from the powerful Assyrians attacking them. But, God says, they “made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place” (v. 15). Because the Sovereign God is not their cornerstone, then everything they have made, everything they are relying on, is like “the bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around you” (v. 20). There’s the bed but it will be too short, so it won’t be comfortable to lie on. And there’s the blanket but since it cannot over them completely, it will not keep them warm. What they are trusting on may look sufficient, but in reality, it will fall short. We may fall into that same trap. When we see the bed and the blanket, we may think they will be sufficient. In our world, many things look sufficient to us. But, when we lie down, we will experience how short it is, how insufficient it is. Then, only too late, will we learn that our God alone is sufficient, for He alone can be a sure foundation that will never be shaken or broken. May we not rely on what we see, especially when God’s word speaks differently. May He be true, and every person be a liar. May we trust Him more than ourselves, more than me.

### **Isa 29 (9/4/24)**

1. How did God’s people worship their God and how did God accept them and why (v. 13); how are you similar or different than their worship; what were the people thinking about their God and what did God think of their ways (vv. 15-16); what do you learn?
  - In vv. 1-4, we hear God is against His people, as they continue year by year, doing their festivals, going on worshiping their God, as they always have. Later on in v. 13, God will say their worship is a bunch of lip service, following human rules, having no interest in learning and following God’s ways. The rituals were present, the act of worship was present, their wording sounded pious enough as they would repeat what they have learned, but their hearts

were far from truth. They talked the talk, but did not walk their talk. And if we brought up their ways as a mirror to us, then we will also hear that our talk can sound very Biblical, but our walk does not reflect His beauty, His holiness, His generosity, the fruit of the Spirit that display Jesus' character so wonderfully. Oh Lord, there's a great divide in our lives, for our words do not match our lifestyle. Sadly, sometimes, even our words do not overflow with Your beauty but our foolishness. Oh Lord, we repent of our ugly ways. Lord, we want more of You in us, so that You will spillover more unto others. Lord, we want to humbly learn to live that we have been crucified with You, therefore, it is no longer I who live but You in me and through me. Lord, may I truly want You alone to receive the glory, and for You alone to shine and reflect in my life, in our lives. Lord, we don't want to be left alone. We want to walk nearly and dearly with You. Only with You. Your hands is what we want to feel in ours. Thank You Lord Jesus for holding our hands in Yours.

### **Isa 30 (9/5/24)**

1. What were God's people doing that was saddening God and why would that make Him sad; yet, what was God promising His people and why; how is this applicable to you?
  - In vv. 9-11, God's people clearly knew what they wanted. They clearly did not want to hear from God, what was right, to do what was right. On the other hand, they clearly wanted to hear what was only pleasant, even if that was not right. Wow, that sounds a lot like the sermons today in some of our churches, doesn't it? The people flock in to hear blessings, but leave when our sins are mentioned, when we need to repent, when we need to weep, when we need to forsake our idols and turn and walk and follow only the holy God and His ways. Yet, even in the midst of such callousness and rebellion, our amazing God desires to be gracious to them, to us, for He will rise up to show us compassion. God's word is true and right to say, "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). Christ died for me while I was deep in my sinful ways. That's God's love. That's when He loved me, that's how He loved me. Oh Lord, I pray earnestly that as I have tasted Your love, may I truly learn to love others, as You have loved me, and continue to love me.

### **Isa 31 (9/6/24)**

1. What has saddened God towards His people and how is this applicable to you; what does God want His people to learn and do and how is it applicable to you; what do you learn?
  - In our chapter, God could simply tell His people what they are doing is wrong and turn back to Him. Though He does this, He also takes the time to explain what they are doing is wrong, that Egypt with their horses and chariots are not where their trust should be. God sees that His people are easily swayed by their outer appearance of strength, so He takes the time to explain that they are flesh and mortal, and therefore, they are not reliable, though presently and temporarily it may look that way. Our God is so patient and gentle. He could have easily commanded His people that they are wrong and command them to turn back, with no explanation. And though explanation from God to His people is like trying to explain to a two year old on why playing with the knife is wrong, yet, despite the lack of understanding, and despite the lack of obedience, that still does not deter our God from taking the time to explain to His people, as if we were an obedient understanding mature adults. Love always trust. God always trust that we will be obedient whenever He speaks, even though we have failed Him time and again in the past. Our past failures does not make Him distrustful over us. Our God's

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trust for me is something I do not know how to do with other people who have failed me in the past. But, He is my God, and as I learn and behold Him, I want to learn and grow more like He, and learn to trust others, and not assume their wrong because of their past failures. And though, most likely, the people will fail many times, yet, that does not give me the right to assume failure, when God trusts in me through my many failures. Oh, to see and behold our God, and to pray to delight to grow more like He, that's our new life in Christ.

### **Isa 32 (9/7/24)**

1. What does a true reign of righteousness and justice do and how does it look (vv. 1-8); what were the women of Jerusalem feeling and why; when the Spirit of God is poured unto His people, what happens; what do you learn?
  - The women of Jerusalem, the people of God, were more concerned with their physical appearance than having lost their way spiritually. They felt secure, so they were complacent. Or said it differently, does complacency demonstrate false security? Can you relate? Have you seen yourself become spiritually complacent? And if that should be the case, then do we understand it's because of our false security? Or another way to approach this is, are we more concerned with our physical appearance than our spiritual wellness? As we well know, we will be work for the things that concerns us most. And such action, tells us greatly where our primary concern is. May I lovingly encourage you today, will you examine your life not with what you wish or even think, but will you humbly and honestly examine your life with your deeds? Where we give ourselves to do most, reflects where our concern is greatest. May our greatest concern be, not on our physical appearance, nor on the temporal things of this world, but may our greatest concern and therefore our sincerest work be on building our spiritual health well. Let's not just do wishful thinking. Let's put our deeds into our desires. Let's pray that our God will bless us to change however much and however deep we must change. And let's begin to live what we are praying for.

### **Isa 33 (9/9/24)**

1. In vv. 1-6, what is the treasure and what is the key that unlocks this treasure; who are the people who will dwell on the heights and how can you apply them into your life (vv. 15-16); what more do you see in this chapter; what do you learn?
  - In v. 5, as the Lord is exalted, what overflows is His justice and righteousness. A life and a world of justice is not a bare minimum but an overflow of God's exaltation. His glorious ways is filled with justice. That is why, there cannot be a wicked twist of God's straight and holy ways. That is why, God gives us His holy laws, so that His people would learn to walk the straight and narrow way that only follows His holy ways. Once again, walking in God's way is not a begrudging or boring or obligation bound walk. The world keeps preaching that God's straight ways are boring and not creative and not exciting and not fun. And in those names, people keep sinning, and many Christian are easily swayed and persuaded that the world's crooked ways also seems more fun and exciting and looks better than God's holy and so called boring ways. How foolish, how dumb of us to take the view of the world over God's. Let's learn, God's justice is not simply a dispensing of God's firm ways, that may seem like a kill joy to many people, but God's justice is truly an expression of God's beautiful exaltation. So, let's learn a new heart and attitude for God's justice, and pray that we will behold God's amazing exaltation, and therefore, it is not only our duty to keep it, but it should also be our truest joy and delight to walk in God's just ways.

**Isa 34 (9/10/24)**

1. Who was God angry against and why and can you explain a little bit of His anger (v. 8); who was Edom (Gen 36:1) and who would he symbolize here and do you remember a few of their evil deeds against God's people; what do you learn?

- From the notes—Why was the sword of the Lord covered with fat? (34:6-7).
- This sword represents God's judgment against the people of enemy nations, many of whom were living in luxury and ease. Fat symbolized excess—having more than was needed. It was a metaphor for enjoying comfortable circumstances. Fat was also considered the choice part of the meat, and in some cases it was completely burned up as an offering of one's best to God. Therefore, God's judgment would extend to all people of enemy nations, even to the "cream of the crop"—those who were well-off and well protected. No enemy would be spared.

**Isa 35 (9/11/24)**

1. What did blossoms in the desert signify (vv. 1-2); what two characteristics do you see when God comes and why is that (v. 4); what kind of highway is this and how is it applicable to you (v. 8); what do you learn?

- We can see much of the prophecy and vision we see in this chapter is fulfilled by Jesus. And of course, all the amazing visions will be perfectly achieved in God's kingdom, because the Messiah came to deliver us from the evil, the crooked, the sinful, and to lead us to His kingdom where sin cannot do any damage, because sin is not allowed to be present, even as it was in the Garden of Eden. Though Adam and Eve were made sinless, yet, because they had free will, when tempted, instead of freely choosing to obey God and resist the devil, they did the opposite, and chose to eat the fruit God commanded to not eat. In other words, they resisted God and obeyed the devil's leading, that's what our free will does when left alone for us to do the choosing. And the amazing difference between Heaven and the Garden is, while in the Garden, there was the possibility to sin, in Heaven, no such possibility, because we will be, not only sinless, but glorified like our Lord, which blesses us to forever forsake any desire to sin. Being glorified in God's kingdom is different than being sinless in the Garden. What our God has in store for us in His kingdom is much greater and better than what we can possibly know and experience in this world. So, whatever good we know, whatever good we can imagine, it will pale in comparison to what Heaven has in store for God's people, who delight to walk in His highway, set apart to walk in His ways, starting here and all through eternity.

**Isa 36 (9/12/24)**

1. Who were the Assyrians and why were they attacking Judah (2Kgs 18:13-20:19); what was the message they wanted to send to God's people and why; how did God's people respond and why; what do you learn?

- In v. 7, the Assyrians argued, "But if you say to me, 'We are depending on the Lord our God' — isn't He the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You must worship before this altar'?" These Gentiles wrongly understood that the removal of the high places and altars was removing God, when in fact, it was the removing of the idols. Not knowing the true God, these non-believers wrongly interpret the action of God's people, and accuses them of doing wrong before God, when in fact, they were doing right. In fact, these people call Hezekiah's leading the people as misleading them. They have the upper hand at the moment, and therefore, they seem to have a much louder voice for all to



hear. But, just because they can say it loudly or even confidently or even with deep conviction, that still does not make it right. Because the only way to be right is to be right before God, and they were not. We really must learn to block out the noise, even when all the famous and successful and powerful people of the world seem to speak with great conviction and confidence. They are not right with God, therefore, they cannot speak what's right before God. We really have a lot of voices like the Assyrians today, boasting of what's right, when they are not. But, many of God's people get easily persuaded by them, because we don't know, because we do not study God's word, God's truth. We lack discernment because many believers will not make the commitment to study and understand and obey God's word over against the many messages we hear in our world. People of God, let's commit to study God's word, to understand God's truth, so that we will learn to discern His truth from the lies, and rejoice to obey Him and not follow the worldly ways all around us. Let God be true, and every person (that speaks contrary to God's truth) a liar (Rom 3:4).

### **Isa 37 (9/13/24)**

1. What was Sennacherib's message to God's people and yet what happened to him; how did Hezekiah (God's people) respond and what happened to them; who was in complete control over all and what happened; how is this applicable to you?
  - Two things stand out to me most in this chapter. Verse 1 reads, "When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and went into the temple of the Lord." Hezekiah heard and have actually been witnessing that the enemies were on the verge of capturing all of God's lands. And Hezekiah knew how powerless he was to stand against the enemy. He knew he had no power to fight back, and thus, no words of come back to the mocking and ridicule of the enemies. But, what he could not say to his enemy, he says to his God. He tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and entered the temple to stand before his God to confess, "I am down; I am humbled; I have no strength to fight back; I am really powerless in this situation. Only You can help me, God." It was to God to whom Hezekiah spoke. It was to God He went to. It was God who alone will be his refuge. It was God whom he will rely and trust. God is who he sought when he was in trouble.
  - And God's response is beautiful, as usual. In v. 6, "This is what the Lord says: Do not be afraid of what you just heard..." Their words were boisterous, arrogant, proud, and as far as the eyes can see, they did seem true. But, over against what they heard and saw, God told His people, "Do not be afraid of what you just heard." Many times in our lives, are we not overcome by what we heard or seen? May our God give us the faith to hear His words, "Do not be afraid of what you just heard (or seen)." May our faith rest in the object of our faith, in our almighty God, Christ Jesus, and believe and trust and follow Him and His words over against what we hear and see in our world. Let God be true, and every person a liar, it's really true.

### **Isa 38 (9/14/24)**

1. What did God decree for Hezekiah and how did he respond and how did God respond; from Hezekiah's writing, what are couple of things you notice (vv. 9-20); what do you learn?
  - Death is final for us. No humans can overcome it or reverse it. And as we hear God's decree of Hezekiah's impending death, our expectation is that he has an incurable sickness. But v. 21 struck me, because God's solution to Hezekiah's death bound sickness was truly simple and easy, "Prepare a poultice of figs and apply it to the boil, and he will recover." He didn't have to go to the ends of the earth to find the medicine. He didn't even have to go to the river and

wash seven times. All he needed to do was pluck some figs from his garden and apply it to the boil, and he will recover. No heroic action needed. No long and agonizing fasting needed. No all night prayer by all God's people needed. He just needed a few figs and apply, because that's what God told him. When God works, His solutions are amazing, and at times, incredibly simple. Sicknesses and death are beyond us. But with God, they are not that great. To the almighty God, who can create the universe out of nothing with only His words, our struggles are not too great to solve. Our faith is to see our God for who He truly is, and if we can truly see Him, then we can trust and rest in Him, for we have no doubt, His power is more than sufficient than all that we need. Let's pray that our God will bless our hearts to see our God, for who He truly is, His almightiness, His wisdom, and His love, all directed to sinners, to save us, to keep us, and invite us to His everlasting home, to be the bride to His Son. Amazing!

### **Isa 39 (9/16/24)**

1. Why was Hezekiah's showing his treasures wrong; which king from Hezekiah's descendants will eventually be taken into Babylon (2Kgs 24:15); what was his reaction and how should that have made him feel; what do you learn?
  - Verse 8 is very sad, "The word of the Lord you have spoken is good," Hezekiah replied. For he thought, "there will be peace and security in my lifetime." When he says the word of the Lord is good, he has no thought of God's glory. His only concern was for his benefit, for his peace. He actually didn't care that his own descendants would be taken as captives to this very kingdom to whom he just showed off his treasures. He didn't care that his future generation will become eunuchs in the Babylonian palace. How could he turn so selfish, self-centered, so un-loving, so thoughtless, after living most of his life so God glorifying? His story, especially his ending is shocking and frightening to me. And may I add, this ugly selfish attitude and his immediate successor to his kingship, Manasseh, happened during the 15 years of life extension as he desperately prayed for and recovered from his sickness. I am not trying to say that we should not pray for healing, or for an extension of our lives. These are wonderful blessings. However, even the best blessings can turn terribly wrong, if our hearts are not right before our God. And the only right heart that pleases our God is, "So whether we eat or drink (or reign or work or pray or serve) or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1Cor 10:31). When we live for God's glory in all things, at all times, God delights. However, when we do anything, including even good things, like praying, but do so for our own benefits, without God's glory in mind, then, Hezekiah is a warning and a lesson, on what NOT to do.

### **Isa 40 (9/17/24)**

1. How does God comfort His people and how have you also received this comfort; of the many ways God is described, which ones ministers to you and why; what do you learn?
  - As much as our God reveals Himself beautifully to His people, yet, some complain to God, "Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, 'My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God'"? (v. 27). Many times, God's people believe we are not seen by God, or God is disregarding us. Living in this world, we understand the sense of not been seen or feeling left abandoned by everyone around us. Even in a small intimate joyful fellowship gathering, there are people who sit alone as if not seen or abandoned by all. People can do that. We probably have done that to others. While Christians can do that, our God does not. He does not forsake any of His people, any time, at no time. He never abandons His people, ever, under any circumstances, including under the most severe and

difficult situations. Even at the cross, when He Himself was abandoned and killed, He never forsook His people. He reached out to the thief, who lived all of his life running away from the holy God. He spoke to His disciple and mother, who felt helpless unable to be with Him. He came and entered into a locked room, meant to keep all outsiders out because the disciples were afraid of their persecutors and shameful for their guilt of abandoning their Lord when the enemies came to arrest Him in the Garden. While we all have experienced running from the Lord, Jesus instead runs to us, even when we are sinning. He runs for us to seek us and find us and gathers us and gently leads us because He knows how guilty we are, He knows how ashamed we are, He knows how frail we are, He knows what we have done, and yet, still, He desires, He delights to run after us, to capture us, to love us, and to lead us home. So, why do we complain to God like Israel? We do that only when we don't see His beauty and do not understand of His amazing, unending, unconditional, and sacrificial love is what He delights to bathe us with. If we don't see God and His beauty, then we will complain, because that's our nature. So, let's earnestly pray that our God will open the eyes of our hearts so that we will be able to truly see our God and His beauty. Yes, Lord, please, open our eyes to see You!

### **Isa 41 (9/18/24)**

1. What does God desire to prove in the place of judgment (courtroom) and how; when God chooses His people, what more does He do for His people; what do you learn?
- In v. 14, the names God calls His people speak to how powerless they were, "Do not be afraid, you worm Jacob, little Israel, do not fear, for I Myself will help you,' declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Though Israel is a worm and little, afraid of everything and everyone, yet, they didn't have to be, because of their Helper was their Redeemer, the Holy One. Because God is the Helper, He will turn His little ones into a threshing sledge, He can turn the mountains into barren heights, and even produce pools of water in the desert. The Helper can turn the worst of conditions into the most favorable ones. What the worm must learn to do is to learn how incredibly powerful and good his Helper truly is and learn to turn to Him, under any circumstances, especially in the worst of times. We are that worm, little and powerless, ready to be stepped on and crushed. And if we all we see is ourselves, then how can we not be afraid, how can we not be depressed? And if we follow the world's teaching, and learn to look inside and find our strength there, then that's all we will be, a worm full of bravado, but no change in nature or true strength. Let's learn well, our almighty and compassionate God is our Helper. And He is not simply here to assist us, but we must learn to turn to Him, and completely surrender before Him, so that He will have complete reign over our lives. In Him, we truly can do all things, not in our strength with His help, but only in His strength alone because it is He who helps us to do all things. Our God is not a Helper like a maid, but He is the everlasting King, who helps His people to live gloriously under His reign.

### **Isa 42 (9/19/24)**

1. Who is the Servant of the Lord (Matt 3:17) and what will He do and not do; what is peculiar about the new song; what do you learn?
- Many years ago, I read a sermon from Pastor Charles Spurgeon on Isa 42:18-19. His insight blew me away and I was so deeply ministered. You see, the blind and deaf describe the Israelites, as they were not willing to listen and see what their wonderful God was teaching them. As true as it is for God's people, Mr. Spurgeon connected this Scripture to the Servant of the Lord, our Lord Jesus. He saw Jesus dealing with our sins as if He was deaf and as if He was blind to them. Of course, He was not deaf and blind, but He acted as such because if He

didn't, we would be found guilty and require to pay the full price for our sins. Christ did not want to treat His people as guilty sinners, so He closed His eyes and ears, so to speak. Of course, He didn't simply deal with us as if we did not commit our sins. He truly erased and cleansed us completely, whiter than snow, all of our sins. And in the end, God does not have to act as deaf and blind, because our sins will truly and completely be cleansed, erased and forgiven perfectly, so no sin can ever be found in us. That's how we are forgiven in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, Jesus' righteous robe covers us so fully, that that is the only thing the holy and pure God sees in us. Amazing, isn't it? Completely guilty of sin and yet completely righteous, that's God's people in Jesus. No wonder our lifestyle and God's proclamation clashes and confuses us, but in the end, His words are true and will reign over all, even over our sinfulness. PTL! What an amazing God we worship.

### Isa 43 (9/20/24)

1. In v. 2, can you name the events or people through the sea, the river, and the fire whom God delivered in the OT; of the many ways God names and describes Himself in this chapter, which ones captures your heart and why; what do you learn?
  - Twice we are told in this chapter, vv. 7 and 21, why God created His people—"Everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made"; "The people I formed for Myself that they may proclaim My praise." God created us for His glory, to proclaim His praise. That should define our lives, we live to glorify our God, with praises to Him. Will you remember this sentence and recite it often? Let's earnestly pray that in our lives, we will truly glorify our God, as we praise Him each and every day of our lives.

### Isa 44 (9/21/24)

1. Where does God say He made His people and how is that truth relevant to us today; what does God want His people to know about idols and what idols do you see you fall into in your life; what do you learn about God here; how are these truths applicable in your life?
  - After explaining why idolatry is so delusional, God's desire for His wayward going people is this, "I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you" (v. 22). He explains the foolishness of idolatry, and He teaches that our sins are like the morning mist, which He quickly sweeps away, all so that we can "Return to Me." Our God does not want us to walk or linger with the lies and foolishness of sin. The place for us to be is with Him, and because our sins have led us away from Him, He is calling for us to "Return to Me." He wants us back to Him. He wants us to see the lies and return to Him and live truthfully, so we can resist walking into the lies. He wants us to walk away from the foolishness of idolatry that we fall into so easily, so that we would know how to stand under His truth. Indeed, our lives and our worship must be always in His truth, coupled under His Spirit. Just as we must not fall into the lies of idolatry, let's not fall into the lies that what we think or feel is truth. Truth has only one source, and that's from the living God. So, God's truth is the only truth that is heavenly truthful, and everything else that differs with Him, including our thoughts, our understanding, our perspective, our emotions, even our convictions are not truthful because they are not under God's truth. So, people of God, it is absolutely essential that we study and learn and obey God's truth, so that we would learn how to live truthfully, under God's truth. To overly simplify our world's condition, I will say, we are in this big mess because we are not learning and we are not loving to obey God's truth, which is why, we have so many evil and falsehood laws and customs in our world and also in our lives.

**Isa 45 (9/23/24)**

1. Who is God using to bring back His people and why and for whose sake (vv. 1, 3, 4); what do you learn about God in this chapter; how is God's truth from this chapter applicable in your life?
  - The sovereignty and wisdom and ways of God are wonderful but also very mysterious. Why not raise up amongst His people another king like David to lead His people? Why use a Gentile king as His instrument to do His will, when they would not know how to walk rightly as our righteous God would delight? Why allow the Egyptians, the Canaanites, the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Persians, like Cyrus, conquer His people, for these enemies were not acting no more righteous than the Israelites, God's people? Much should be said, but suffice to say, God's people were living amongst these people and were acting no better than these people, so God permits these people to treat them like no different than the worldly people. God's people are not called to simply live differently than the worldly people, but we are called to live as God's people, reflecting, displaying and mirroring God's ways in our lives, so that the people in the world can see through us, who our God is more like. Let's learn why we are living in this world, we are not to simply live as best as we can, we are not to simply live differently than the world, we are to live in such a way that God receives the glory, as we lovingly display the beauty of God's holiness, so that all the people in the world will turn to our God, and they too confess, "You alone are God, and You alone deserve all the glory and honor and praise that we creatures must lovingly and joyfully offer to our Creator."
  - As a side note. Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC and decreed that the exiles of God's people could return to their homeland (Isa 44:28; 2Chron 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-11). Amazing!

**Isa 46 (9/24/24)**

1. To whom is God speaking and why, and who is God comparing Himself with, and what's the difference; what do you learn?
  - The final verses of this chapter reads, "Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are now far from My righteousness. I am bringing My righteousness near, it is not far away; and My salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, My splendor to Israel." God desires to bring His righteousness, His salvation, to a people who are stubborn-hearted, who are nowhere near His righteousness. They did they care to listen and follow God, yet to such stubborn hearts, God wants to come near, not to judge them, not to punish them for what they deserve, but He draws near to bring them His righteousness that they clearly do not have any interest, surely not at the moment. God's ways are truly miraculous, as He draws people who are stubborn, yet He will soften them because He draws near. Steep in sin and evil and darkness, yet because He enters, bringing in His light, people living under this darkness will repent and turn and love the light that has come to deliver them, deliver us, deliver me. God works with people who do not exhibits any potential to change. No wonder we humbly confess, our God truly turns the impossible into our reality. His grace is truly revolutionary, completely creating a new life, a beautiful holy life from where there was no righteousness, where stubborn hearts rejects all of God's holy ways. Our God, You are truly amazing! May I humbly be captured more in Your truth, and deliver me from my ways, O God. I want to learn more of You, and grow more like You, as far away as that seems at the moment.

**Isa 47 (9/25/24)**

1. What is God saying to Babylon and why; from v. 10, will you explain the lifestyle and mindset of the Babylonians (and the people of our world) and when you reflect it in your life, what do you see; what do you learn?
  - From v. 11 and on, when disaster strikes the Babylonians, they will not know how to be delivered from it because they are not able to save themselves. Whatever they trusted in, will not know how to deliver them out of the disaster. As much as they enjoyed life when things went well, now in the face of disaster, they are helpless. And it is exactly the same with the people in our world. They can enjoy all the pleasures when things are well for them, but when disaster strikes, they will not know how to be delivered from their ways. What they trusted in, will not work. Who they trusted in, cannot deliver them. Sadly, many Christians or churchgoers look up to the successful celebrities (or people), who look great in the good times, but when disaster strikes us all, neither the celebrities or many us, have yet to truly learn to look up and put all of our hope in the object of our faith, in our only Savior and our only Lord, our only Deliverer. God's people must learn to not trust in the wonderful people around us. Certainly, we should learn wonderful lessons from them, but they are not to be our hope, our trust, our Deliverer. Only the one true eternal God can deliver us from all of our troubles, especially on the disaster none of us have the strength to fight against. As tempting as the many good things and good people may be, let's sincerely pray that our eyes will be focused and fixed on Christ Jesus alone, our only God, our true Deliverer.

**Isa 48 (9/26/24)**

1. In vv. 1-2, what was God saying to the people and how is this applicable to us; in vv. 17-19, what does God want us to learn and do you see evidences of this truth in you; what more do you learn?
  - From my Bible notes. Why the sudden change in tone? (48:22). This verse is a short warning that when God redeemed His people from Babylon, not everyone would be delivered. The same warning also appears in 57:21, and a similar warning is found at the very end of the book of Isaiah (66:24). Not only would the wicked not be allowed to return to their homeland, but everyone needed to know that God expected repentance as a prelude to His blessing. (\*Please remember, repentance does not bring about God's forgiveness, but through our repentance, we get to taste the sweetness of us being forgiven.) Staying in Babylon would not produce peace; trusting God enough to leave Babylon and return to Jerusalem and Judah would.

**Isa 49 (9/27/24)**

1. In vv. 1-7, what are the many ways the servant of the Lord is described here and which ones stir your heart and why; in vv. 13-16, can you explain what the dialogue is between God and His people and how applicable is it to you; what more do you learn?
  - In v. 21, we read, "Then you will say in your heart, 'Who bore me these? I was bereaved and barren; I was exiled and rejected. Who brought these up? I was left all alone, but these—where have they come from?'" In the midst of their bereavement and barrenness, when their hands should be empty, yet somehow children were born and grew so much, that now, where they are is a place too small. They don't understand and much less can explain how they

could have multiplied when they should be extinct. When they should be counting their sorrows, here they were, overflowing with children, with God's goodness. They can confess that it could not be their doing, because they were exiled, rejected, bereaved and barren. Despite their emptiness, despite their lack of strength, despite not having anything good they could see in themselves, yet, somehow, somehow, here they were, overflowing with God's goodness, so they kept asking, wondering, "but these—where have they come from?" The confusion, the wonder, the joy of God's goodness in us, is surely a mystery, a joyful mystery. That's why, our faith must never rest in only what we know, in only what we see, but our faith truly must rest in the object of our faith, in Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord and Provider of His goodness to a people who do not deserve, and yet, still, He delights to shower us. Our God is really good. His ways are truly mysterious, mysteriously good.

### **Isa 50 (9/28/24)**

1. From vv. 1-3, what do you learn about God and His relationship with His people; in vv. 4-9, what do you learn about the Servant of the Lord and who does He remind you of and how is that applicable to you; what is the lesson you learn here?
  - In the final two verses, we see two different types of people walking. One walks in the dark without a light and yet walks well before God; while the other walks with flaming torches and yet does not walk right before God. How is it that one cannot see and walk right before the holy God, while the other, who is able to see with his light, cannot walk in the path that God has shined? The difference is one, trust. Those who were walking in the dark were walking trusting in God, and so God held their hands and they walked with God. But those who had their own lights, trusted in their own lights, and walked after their desires, walked to do their own things, and thus, they did not walk with God or pursued after God's path. They trusted in what they saw; they trusted themselves to know what they wanted, and walked in their own way. No wonder God wrote Proverbs 3:5-7, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil."

### **Isa 51 (9/30/24)**

1. What exactly is Zion and who is God referring to and how is God comforting her (vv. 1-3); who are God's people fearing and why and how is God comforting her (vv. 7, 12-16); how can you live out God's comfort for His people in you?
  - In v. 13, the terror of the people attacking God's people, made them forget their God because the fear for their enemy was greater than on God and His promise. As sad as that is, we can relate because that happens often to many of us. The terrifying things (and even the good things) can rob our view of our God, because these things (both the good and the bad) have us fixated on them. Whenever God is not in our view, then something else will replace, and what happens usually draws away our complete attention. Surely when we see these terrifying things on our own, they are frightening, for they are too big for us to handle on our own. And when the problem becomes too big, then we seem to shrink, don't we? We look small; we feel small; we are small. May I remind us again, the problem of our lives is not the presence of our troubles (however big and terrifying they may be) but the absence of Christ (our Almighty and amazing God) in the midst of our troubles. When we don't see our God, that's our problem.

**Isa 52 (10/1/24)**

1. What does it mean that these people were called the uncircumcised and what was God saying about them here (Gen 17:7-14); what does it mean that “the Lord will lay bare His holy arm” and how should it impact God’s people; what do you learn?
  - When God’s people were anxiously awaiting the news of the outcome of the battle, the feet of the runner who brought news good were beautiful (v. 7). And how much more beautiful, when the news was, “Your God reigns!” God has fought and brought victory to His people; He brought His salvation to Zion. They would no longer be captives, living as slaves, but free, because their God has rolled up His sleeves to do something mighty and powerful, and all the nations will see how the Lord will save His people (v. 10). The apostle Paul would later use v. 7, to declare the wonder of beautiful feet, for the people who will bring the good tidings of their Savior, who saves the people, held captive in sin and eternal damnation (Rom 10:15). And God will bare His holy arms for all the world to see, but this time, He will do in a way that the world will find it mysterious, perhaps even as wrong. God will bare His strength through defeat, putting death to death. God will be lifted up on the hills of the skull, Golgotha, not as a display of cruel death, but death of the sinless God, who will rise on the third day. What God has in store for His people, we could not fathom, nor the world understand and accept with their own wisdom. God’s way is so much higher than people on their own, that they will find it unacceptable, even repulsive. Yet, God’s way is higher, God’s way is right, and we are not, when we have not learned to humbly accept His way over ours. Let’s humbly surrender and confess, Let God be true! Truly, our God reigns, even when we are “now a captive.”

**Isa 53 (10/2/24)**

1. What about this Servant strikes you and why; which ways of this Servant do you see in Jesus and can you describe; how is it applicable to your life?
  - Before we get to v. 5, where we can understand that the suffering of the Servant was for us, we see repeatedly how we rejected Him, “He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him... He was despised and rejected by mankind... He was despised, and we held Him in low esteem... yet we considered Him punished by God.” He was rejected by us though He came to sacrifice His life for us. We held Him in low esteem even though He came from on high and became lowly, so that He could become our Substitute, to pay the insurmountable price that was ours to pay. He came for us, and yet, we despised Him, we rejected Him, we thought He got the punishment He deserved, never knowing that His punishment was what we deserved and not Him. Oh, how could we be so mistaken about Him and about ourselves? All the misery He received were mine that He took upon Himself. He was the shield that received all the fiery arrows that pierced Him, which is why none of those arrows struck me. Because He was the impenetrable shield to me, I realize I had complete covering because every single arrows shot, every punishment lashed struck Him. He suffered. He was struck. He was pierced. He was wounded. He died. Seeing only His misery without understanding it was for mine He took up, I held Him in low esteem. But, but, when I see, when I understand, when I believe that what He suffered was not for His sins but for mine, I weep and repent for what I put Him through, only to save me, who is not always so grateful, who is not always so humble and loving and joyful to walk with Him, satisfied to hold His hands alone. Oh, Lord, I repent for how ingrate I am. Please Lord, open my heart and mind to see and understand more of You, and bless me to fall deeper in love with You and truly delight to grow more and more and more like You. May You be everything I ever want.



**Isa 54 (10/3/24)**

1. Who is the barren woman and what is the message to her and why and how is that possible (vv. 1-3); for the rest of this chapter, what is the present state of God's people and what was God promising and why would God do that; what do you learn?
- From my Bible notes. Who called Israel's God the God of all the earth? (54:5). Only the people of God, who had heard the message of His prophets, would know that the Lord was truly the God of all the earth. Most other people did not have much respect for the God of Israel because He could not be seen, while their own idols were visible (Ps 115:2-13). Those who acknowledged Israel's God became a part of God's people (Josh 6:25).

**Isa 55 (10/4/24)**

1. Who is God inviting and how and why (vv. 1-5); what is God's promise and how should this impact you (vv. 6-13); what do you learn and how is it applicable to you?
- I love how God's glory and our joy are inter-connected. In vv. 12-13, when God's promise is fulfilled, joy and peace will rule our hearts. In fact, even nature, the mountains, the hills, and the trees, will clap, as if they were given hands, and amazing changes will occur. The transformation in us will be so glorious that we cannot help but be joyful. No wonder, God's grace is described as irresistible. And in the midst of this irrepressible joy, it is ultimately for God's renown, for He receives the glory. So, as we can see, through our joy, because of our God fulfilling His promises, it is He who receives the glory. Or viewed from the other side, as God receives His glory, the result for His people is a joy that overflows and transforms us in the most beautiful way, only as our God's power is able to accomplish for us and in us. Let's behold this amazing and mysterious truth, when we live only for God's glory, in His glory, He always includes our good. God's glory and our good always holds hands and walk together. Simply amazing, simply astonishing.

**Isa 56 (10/5/24)**

1. How would a foreigner usually feel before God (v. 3) and how does God respond to them; as God speaks about His house being a house of prayer, who is God including and why (v. 7); how is this applicable to you?
- In v. 10, God says, "Israel's watchmen are blind, they all lack knowledge; they are all mute dogs, they cannot bark; they lie around and dream, they love to sleep." Hearing this, I immediately think of us Christians today. We are so silent, and act as if we are blind to all the ways that dishonor God in our world, and even more sadly, in our family lives, including our own lives, as well. We Christians rarely bark for the truth for others to hear. We choose to be mute because we are not doing so well ourselves, so the devil keeps infusing his thoughts in us, telling us, who are you to speak, when you are such an ungodly example? Our guilt shames us to silence, too often. As God's people, we must learn to listen to God's truth more than our own little voices. God told us to teach the people there's now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, but instead of speaking out, we are afraid that our words of truth might sound condemning for others to hear, so we act as if we are mute and blind. We are called to be watchmen-women in our world, but when we won't look and won't speak, we have completely rejected God's will for us. He sent us to be ambassadors of His kingdom, but we don't speak on His kingdom. He sent us to be His witnesses, but we rarely speak on what we have seen and heard. And when we do, we do so only under our safe Christian small groups,

and even then, only before the people we feel comfortable speaking with. We decide how to live out God's calling for us, when it is God who has called us, sent us, and given us our calling. We must learn to live as He wills, and not as I see fit. Oh Lord, I repent for my silence and blindness, because it's so much easier and convenient to act as if I was blind and mute. Lord, I need Your blessing to learn to live as You call me, and not to simply blend in and wait out here as anonymously and as invisibly as I tend to be. Oh, Lord, bless me to sincerely and humbly repent before You for my ways. Bless me to turn to You and to Your ways in my life.

### **Isa 57 (10/7/24)**

1. In vv. 1-2, what does God say about the death of His people and how does that impact you; in vv. 14-21, what is God's message and how is it applicable to you; what do you learn?
- In the middle of this chapter, we hear God speak to the people who were unwilling to listen and obey God. In v. 11, God asked, "Is it not because I have long been silent that you do not fear Me?" The people kept doing their sinful acts, without looking over their shoulders, because "I have long been silent that you do not fear Me." In the heart of the people, a silent God was no different than an absent or non-existent God. If God is not present, or worse yet, if God does not exist, then people, who are creatures, can feel they can do whatever they want, without facing any consequences. If God was not real, then who will hold anyone accountable, for there's no Judge to stand before. When I read this verse, immediately I thought of our culture today. So many people today believe either God is not present or non-existent, because He's been silent for so long. And sadly, even for God's people, though God gives us His daily word, yet, because so many Christians do not read, or at times, won't believe God's word is alive, they also think like the people of the world, and think, God must be absent because He is silent. May I lovingly remind and encourage all God's people, God's silence does not mean He is absent. God's people need to know, our God is waiting silently. God waited silently for over 400 years when His people were enslaved in Egypt, until they called for Him. Jesus waited silently during the storm in the Sea of Galilee when the disciples thought they would all die in the storm, until they called Him. Despite His silence, God was and is and will always be very present. Let's not learn from the world. Let's learn anew that God's very presence is often in His silence, because we are not always calling out for Him. Like the most thoughtful and loving friend, He waits for us silently, until we are ready to call Him.

### **Isa 58 (10/8/24)**

1. In vv. 1-3, what is the disconnect between what God wants and what the people think they are doing and how can this apply to you; what is the difference on fasting between the way the people were doing and what God desired and how can you apply this to your life; what do you learn?
- In vv. 13-14, God says we will find our joy in the Lord, "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on My holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words." God delights to give us His joy, but He also wants us to know that joy will be found in our obedience to God and His ways. And when we step out of His words, His joy will not follow. God's joy for us arrives as the fruit of our obedience to Him and His ways. Many times, we think obedience in God is a dutiful obligation that must be done, no matter how displeasing it may be to us because we owe Him our lives. We really

need to understand and think right, for that's not why God commands our obedience "because we owe Him". The reason why God gives us His commands and the reason why He insists our obedience is because through our obedience we will experience God's joy that has no rival in our world. God wants us to experience the greatest joy but He has crafted it to come to us by way of our obedience to God's ways through His word. In light of this, we can conclude the reason why so many Christians are devoid of God's joy is because we are not learning and obeying God's words. Let's find God's joy. Let's study and learn and obey God's word.

### **Isa 59 (10/9/24)**

1. What is happening in vv. 1-4 and how is it applicable today; how does God respond when He sees no one doing what is right (vv. 15-21); what do you learn?
  - From my Bible notes. Why won't God listen to sinners (59:2)? God does listen to sinners. For example, when they genuinely repent of their sins and ask God for forgiveness, God listens and answers. Isaiah's statement needs to be understood within its context. Isaiah was telling his fellow Israelites that even though God could help them, He had chosen not to (8:17). God would not listen to their prayers or be moved by their empty religious rituals (1:13-15). They wanted God to help them when they were in trouble, but they didn't want to serve Him with all their hearts. They didn't want to abandon their wicked ways or their foreign idols. If they wouldn't listen to Him, why should He listen to them? The Bible teaches that God answers prayers. Jesus tells us that we can speak to God as a child speaks to his father (Matt 6:6). God cares for His people and responds to their prayers simply because He loves them. The irony is that when He refuses to answer requests, it's for the same reason—because of His love. A father shows love when he allows his children to learn from their mistakes. If he always protects his children, how will they ever learn and mature? God responds in love when He does not come to the rescue of people who continue to rebel against Him.

### **Isa 60 (10/10/24)**

1. What is the contrast between their present lives and God's promise (vv. 2, 15) and how can this be applicable in your life; for all the goodness of God's promises, what does God want His people to learn and why (v. 16); what more do you learn?
  - From my Bible notes. How would Israel give light to the nations (60:3)? Isaiah painted a picture of the sun shining brightly on the temple high atop Mount Zion, while the surrounding valleys remain in darkness (v. 2). This represents the way God would come in glory to His people. Those in spiritual darkness will look to the light shining through God's people—light characterized by lives of integrity, compassion and peace (Matt 5:14-16).

### **Isa 61 (10/11/24)**

1. When the Spirit of the Lord anoints the Servant what will He do and who else says He will do likewise (vv. 1-3; Lk 4:18-22); of this proclamation, which ministers to you most and why; experiencing God's work, what is the response of His people; what do you learn?
  - In v. 8, we read, "For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing." This immediately took me to the marches of Black Lives Matter. They cried out for justice. Many Christians took up their cause, and cried out for justice, as they taught that God loves justice. Indeed, we can clearly see, God loves justice. But, here I must pause. In my opinion, what

many people, including Christians, were demanding justice was not the same justice God loves. Granted, because of the surging anger, what many people wanted was retribution, as they demanded punishment. Yet, the target was not for all wrongdoers, but only to the select few, like the police. In the big picture, it may have seemed that the people wanted a more equal society, equal opportunity for all, no discrimination against any person, for any reason. Laying aside the mindset of the unbelievers, for Christians to demand this here on earth, is clearly a demand against God's word, or clearly a lack of study and understanding of God's word. In this world, we will have trouble, sin is lurking everywhere, including inside the hearts of all of us. If we did not suffer with the evil of sin, we would never need a Savior to come to deliver us. Therefore, for God's people, we can see the same evil and sin in this world like the unbelievers, but we cannot act and demand the same thing, because we are not the same people. We belong to God and His word must rule our lives. In the worst act of injustice, God acted differently. He did not retaliate, not yet, of course. Instead, God offered His Son, to pay the price of our evil; He took up our sin and "He" paid the painful price. That's God's justice. And as Christians, while we walk with the people in their march, we should have been lovingly and prayerfully sharing the incredible ways of God's justice for them, so they and the police and everyone in our society, will meet the Light of the world, through the small voices and lights we are. We may be jars of clay, but the Treasure inside is so glorious, that whenever anyone should truly see His Light, would they not humbly fall on their knees and repent for the sinful ways they have lived? Let's humbly pray that we too would love the justice God loves, and not follow the ways of the world, even when they seem good.

### **Isa 62 (10/12/24)**

1. In vv. 1-5, what are some of God's beautiful promises and why would He do that; in vv. 11-12, what do you learn about the Lord's proclamation; how is it applicable in your life?
- In vv. 6-7, God gives us these words, "You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth." Oh Lord, bless me to learn to call on You and for Your salvation for our family and church family members who have yet to taste Your loving salvation. Oh Lord, bless me to learn to not give You rest, till I can see the people You have placed in my heart to receive Your amazing salvation. Oh Lord, I pray that I will see Your salvation on them soon, very soon. Oh Lord, bless us. We need Your blessings. We pray for Your salvation.

### **Isa 63 (10/14/24)**

1. In vv. 1-6, how did God accomplish the salvation of the people and how is that applicable for you; can you describe a few of God's kindnesses written in vv. 7-14; what do you learn?
- In v. 17, we read, "Why, Lord, do you make us wander from Your ways and harden our hearts so we do not revere You? Return for the sake of Your servants, the tribes that are Your inheritance." If we simply read this verse at face value, then it's clearly God who made the people wander away, and harden their hearts, so they will not be able to revere God as they wanted. It is God who has forsaken them, though they want Him near. God is to be blamed for their misery, especially in their relationship with God. We immediately realize this is not right. Though that's what v. 17 says, it cannot mean what we just said. As we think properly, we realize it's actually the other way around. Isa 59:1-2 reads, "Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ears too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from

your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.” That’s the evil and danger of human nature. Many times, we will place the blame on others, though we are the guilty ones. And, at times, we will dare to blame God for not doing enough good to us, because He is not answering our prayers the way we hope for, as if my request is perfect and His not answering my-prayer my-way makes Him wrong. Isa 63:17 is very alive in many of our hearts. May we learn God’s word well, so that we will never place any blame on others, especially unto our God, that do not belong. Moreover, may we pray for God’s humility, so that we will see our sins is the reason. However, as we know, seeing our own sinfulness is truly a very difficult thing to do. We just don’t see our sinfulness well. So, we truly have to pray for true humility, so that when our sins are visible, we can humbly acknowledge them, repent before our God, and most of all, see our sins crucified on Christ and His cross. We can own up our sinfulness, because Christ has truly cleansed us and forgiven us of all our sins, including the sin of not willing to see our sins. Our God is truly good and kind.

### **Isa 64 (10/15/24)**

1. In vv. 1-7, can you describe the power of what sin can do in the lives of people; in vv. 8-12, yet, who is present in the lives of the sinful people that gives them hope and how; how is this applicable in your life?

- From my Bible notes, two thoughts.
- What does it mean to wait for God (64:4)? To wait for God means to trust Him, be faithful to Him and commit ourselves to Him (Ps 37:3-7). Waiting for God means trusting Him even when things are going badly—when God has not yet delivered us from our troubles. God does not always intervene immediately when we call on Him for help.
- How can righteous acts become dirty (64:6)? The best and most righteous things we do are distorted and overwhelmed by our sinful nature. Good deeds alone cannot counteract wickedness any more than dry leaves can resist the wind. The Bible presents two contrasting views of humanity: though we are made in the image of God, we are also vile sinners.

### **Isa 65 (10/16/24)**

1. In vv. 1-5, what was God’s heartache; in vv. 17-25, what about the new heaven and the new earth catches your attention and why; what do you learn?

- Let me juggle two verses. In v. 2, God calls the people who pursue their own imagination, obstinate, no good. For many people, we think our own imagination is a good place, as we often think of what’s best. But, our God, who sees our innermost thoughts and desires, says it is not a good place, for we are obstinate. We understand, when the core is bad, when the tree is bad, the fruits cannot be healthy. That’s who we are, that’s where we are. But, when we reach v. 18, we read, “for I will create Jerusalem (His people) to be a delight and its people a joy.” God will create anew and make His people from our core a delight and a joy. And since our core will be new, our imagination will also be new, seeking new things that will glorify our God. We will be re-made, re-born, with a new nature that will imagine glorious things that will truly glorify our God. That’s heaven. In heaven, we will not even have the possibility to sin, like it was possible in the Garden of Eden. Remember, in Eden, though created sinless, Adam had the possibility to sin, and sin he did. But, in heaven, the new creation God makes of us is to create us without the possibility of sin, so no temptation to sin will exist, no imagination to sin will exist, no harm of sin will exist, no one harming us with sin will exist, absolutely nothing about sin will exist in God’s kingdom. What pure delight and joy all God’s people will be in God’s glory, in His glorious kingdom.

**Isa 66 (10/17/24)**

1. In vv. 1-4, what do you learn about God; in vv. 12-13, how does God say He will treat His people and can you remember this in your life; what more do you learn here?

- Let me offer you several notes from my study Bible.
- Why did Isaiah criticize sacrifices (66:3)? Isaiah seems to have carefully chosen his words for their shock value. The most sacred exercises of true God-given religion are like the worst sins when they are divorced from humility of spirit (v. 2). One of the themes of the prophets was that God detests human efforts to please Him by keeping ritual laws without respecting His moral laws. People without integrity are not genuinely religious when they perform rituals—they are merely being superstitious.
- How will God judge the world (66:15-16)? For Isaiah and other OT prophets, God was clearly a God of both judgment and salvation. They knew nothing of a salvation that did not involve judgment. In fact, they saw God's judgment as a sign that He cared enough to save His people. The Bible describes judgment for sin in various ways: It is a place of fire (Mk 9:47-49) and darkness (Mt 8:12). It is a sentence pronounced by the righteous judge (Mt 25:31-46). It is harvesting what you have sown (Gal 6:7-8). It is separation from God (Mt 7:23). Isaiah 66:15-16 pictures God as a mighty warrior riding a chariot and destroying His enemies with fire and a sword. The message is clear: God does not ignore sinners; He punishes them. Isaiah 66:15-16 surely refers to the final judgment of God at the end of the world, when sinners will be separated from God in hell. But it may also point to a cycle of judgment that continues throughout history—nations fall from power, defeated for their injustices. God's judgment, in both instances, is shown to be devastating.
- Why does the book of Isaiah end on such a negative note (66:24)? As Isaiah 55:6 says, Seek the Lord while He may be found. The ending is a realistic, sober look at what a terrible mistake it is for people to reject God's offer of eternal life. The worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched is a symbolic way of saying that there will be no chance to turn back from this fate. Worms and fire are agents of destruction. Those who show no interest in eternal life will not be forced to receive it.
- Oh Father, we pray for Your truth and grace to deeply touch and transform our loved ones to taste Your goodness and be saved from their sinfulness, from their self illusion, from their hardened hearts. Father, we know, without Your grace, no one will taste Your goodness. So, please, call them, come to them, save them, because our salvation is truly impossible on our own. We cannot help them. But You can save them. So to You, we will cry and shout for You to call them and save them. Please, don't leave them as they are. Call them near You, so they can truly see how beautiful and gracious You are. Bless us to learn from Bartimaeus to shout for You, and when we encounter roadblocks, bless us more to shout even louder, because we are desperate for You, our loved ones desperately need You. We believe Jesus' death and resurrection is the price to save sinners. So, we pray that His cross and resurrection will be for them, just as You gifted us in our faith in You. Oh, Holy Spirit, open and bless their hearts to taste Your goodness. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen Lord, yes, amen. Please, may we see their salvation before we are called to come home.